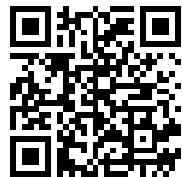
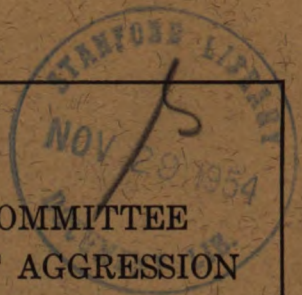

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✓
REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE
TO INVESTIGATE COMMUNIST AGGRESSION
AND THE FORCED INCORPORATION OF THE
BALTIC STATES INTO THE U. S. S. R.

THIRD INTERIM REPORT

OF THE

2) SELECT COMMITTEE
ON COMMUNIST AGGRESSION
1) HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
✓ EIGHTY-THIRD CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION

UNDER AUTHORITY OF

H. Res. 346 and H. Res. 438



Printed for the use of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression

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UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON : 1954

53753

HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE COMMUNIST AGGRESSION AND THE FORCED INCORPORATION OF THE BALTIC STATES INTO THE U. S. S. R.

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THE BALTIC STATES

A Study of Their Origin and National Development; Their Seizure and Incorporation Into the U. S. S. R.

INTRODUCTION

This is the third interim report of the Committee on Communist Aggression (formerly the House Baltic Committee) on the subject of the illegal incorporation of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia into the U. S. S. R.

The committee's first interim report on the forced incorporation of the Baltic States into the U. S. S. R. consisting of testimony given in public hearings at Washington, New York, Detroit, and Chicago in November and December of 1953 was published in April 1954.

The committee's second interim report (H. R. 2650) was published in August 1954, following a series of hearings in Chicago, New York, London, Munich, and Berlin.

The following interim report No. 3 entitled "The Baltic States: A Study of Their Origin and National Development; Their Seizure and Incorporation Into the U. S. S. R." was prepared with the assistance of the Legislative Reference Service and the mid-European law project of the Law Library of the Library of Congress under the general direction and editorial supervision of Dr. Ernest S. Griffith.

The committee wishes to express its appreciation to Dr. Griffith and his staff, particularly Mr. Joseph G. Whelan and Mr. William A. Coblenz, as well as to all others who played a part in the preparation of this study.

SUMMARY

For more than 3,000 years Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have existed on the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea. While being separate and distinct nations, they are popularly referred to as the Baltic States because of this geographical location.

The Baltic States at various times in history have been conquered by the Germans, the Swedes, and the Russians. Lithuania engaged in many wars from the 13th to the 16th centuries against the Tartars and other invading armies from the East. Estonia and Latvia enjoyed their independence as nations up to the 13th century. At that time Estonia and Latvia were conquered by the Knights of the Sword, a militant Germanic order. And later, as a result of the Great Northern War at the beginning of the 18th century between Sweden and Russia, Estonia and a large part of Latvia fell under Russian domination. The remaining Latvian provinces, Courland and Latgalia, however, came under the condominium of the Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth and remained in that state until the partitions in the late 18th century whereupon they passed into Russian hands. Lithuania did not lose its independence until the latter part of the 18th century.

In the middle of World War I it became evident to patriots of the Baltic States that neither Russia nor Germany could win a decisive victory. It also was apparent that the czarist Russian Empire was distintegrating from within. Consequently, many committees and councils, advocating the independence of the Baltic States, sprang up in various centers of Europe and here in the United States. Private American organizations made substantial contributions to the cause of independence for Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.

On February 16, 1918, Lithuania officially declared its national independence. On February 24, 1918, Estonia declared its national independence, and on November 11, 1918, Latvia took similar measures. In the chaos which followed the defeat of Germany in World War I, a newly established Russian Red Army invaded and attempted to destroy the newly established independent states of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. In 1919, this large Russian Red Army succeeded in occupying nearly all of Latvia and Estonia and approximately four-fifths of Lithuania. Relatively small armies of the three respective Baltic States, poorly equipped, but under determined leadership and motivated by the great inspiration of national independence, succeeded in defeating the large Red Russian Army. By the end of 1919, all of the Baltic lands were cleared of the Red Russian invaders.

In 1920, all three of the Baltic States entered into peace treaties with the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. In all of these treaties the Russians recognized the complete independence and sovereignty of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, renouncing forever any claims, territorial or otherwise, in the Baltic States.

These young independent nations were then faced with a gigantic task of reconstruction. They had suffered great devastation as a consequence of wars and invasions by large foreign armies over a period of years. Within 5 years each of the three Baltic States had reached and surpassed their pre-1914 standards of living. This accomplishment was done practically without loans or any foreign aid. The superb energy, the thriftiness, and the determination of the Balts worked this miracle of modern times.

During the period of national independence the cultural and economic life in the Baltic States progressed at a remarkable pace. Notable accomplishments in education, literature, the arts and sciences echoed the spirited renaissance of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. In the field of education alone, the number of students in their universities in 1939 was second only to Switzerland among all the countries of Europe.

Politically and constitutionally, the Baltic peoples had proven their ability to rule themselves competently and effectively.

In the field of international relations the Baltic States had commanded respect. And within the family of nations they played their role with moderation, fortitude, wisdom, and with great energy. In the League of Nations, they were unstinting in their devotion to advancing the larger concepts of world peace and security. They entered into international engagements with the nations of the world. They received and sent out diplomatic representatives. In short, the Baltic States carried on the conduct of diplomatic relations in a manner befitting an independent and sovereign people. With the U. S. S. R. Baltic statesmen bound their nations in treaties of peace

and security, hopeful that Soviet fidelity could be relied upon. A series of agreements concluded with Soviet Russia were based upon two fundamental principles: Soviet acknowledgement and reaffirmation of Baltic independence, national sovereignty, and respect for territorial integrity; and, acceptance of peace, justice, and fidelity as a natural bond of international accord. By 1939, there was established a body of internationally recognized agreements between the Soviet Union and the Baltic States embodying these principles, but as it will be demonstrated below the Soviet leaders wantonly and willfully destroyed these internationally recognized instruments. Thus, the legal and moral structure of Baltic-Soviet diplomatic relations, so carefully and hopefully created during 20 years of national independence, was crushed with one fell blow. Indeed, Stalin spoke frankly the mind of the Soviet Government and laid bare future Soviet plans when in October 1939 he said of the Baltic Peace Treaties of 1920, by the terms of which Soviet Russia recognized and acknowledged the independence and national sovereignty of the Baltic States: "That which was determined in 1920 cannot remain for eternity."

The rise of the dictators and their struggle for world power brought grave problems for Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Like all the smaller nations of Central and Eastern Europe, they could not escape from the diplomatic and military pressures of the dictators Hitler and Stalin. They were finally caught up in and crushed by the powerful political pincers of nazism and communism. The events which led up to the destruction of the independent nations of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania should serve as a warning to all the still free nations and the freedom-loving people of the world.

The pattern of Communist aggression

August 23, 1939, will always remain a day of sadness for the people of the Baltic States. On that day Nazi Germany and the U. S. S. R. entered into a "nonaggression" pact. A secret protocol to this pact divided Eastern Europe into spheres of influence. Soviet Russia was granted a free hand in Estonia and Latvia while Nazi Germany was allotted Lithuania. This same pact cleared the way for Hitler to invade Poland, which he did on September 1, 1939. This was the pact which set off World War II. Soviet Russia quickly invaded Poland from the east and shortly thereafter the two dictators conquered and divided that once free independent nation. This unwarranted aggression isolated the Baltic States and put them completely at the mercy of the dictators.

On September 22, 1939, the Foreign Minister of Estonia was invited to Moscow under the pretext of negotiating a new commercial treaty. When he met with Stalin and Molotov they handed him the text of a mutual assistance pact. Molotov, then Commissar for Foreign Affairs, after explaining the demands of the Kremlin and hearing the protest of the Estonian Foreign Minister gave this ultimatum: "I beg you not to compel the Soviet Government to apply other more radical methods for attaining its aims." It was clear that either Estonia would sign the pact or the Soviet Union would immediately launch a full-scale military invasion. Under these circumstances Estonia signed the so-called pact of mutual assistance on September 28, 1939.

Latvia was subjected to the same treatment when its Foreign Minister met with Stalin and Molotov on October 2, 1939, at Moscow. The

actual signing of the pact took place on October 5, 1939. On September 28, 1939, Lithuania, which had originally been allotted to the Nazi sphere of influence, was handed over to Soviet Russia by the terms of a secret supplementary protocol to the Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact of August 23, 1939. The Lithuanian Foreign Minister was invited to Moscow where he was subjected to precisely the same treatment accorded the Foreign Ministers of Estonia and Latvia. On October 10, 1939, the so-called mutual assistance pact between Lithuania and Soviet Russia was signed.

All three of these "mutual assistance" pacts were identical in many important respects. All three called for the establishment of Soviet bases and airfields in each of the Baltic States and the quartering of Red troops at such bases. In return, each of the sovereign nations were guaranteed that there would be no interference with their internal affairs, including their political structure and their economic and social systems. Moreover, the areas designated for the establishment of Soviet airfields and bases were to remain technically the territory of the Baltic States.

The original intention of Soviet Russia with respect to honoring these pacts may be judged from the following facts:

(1) On October 11, 1939, a matter of hours after the last of the mutual-assistance pacts were signed, a secret NKVD order setting forth detailed instructions for the arrest and deportation of all anti-Soviet elements from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania was signed and issued by a General Serov, then Deputy Commissar of the U. S. S. R. for State Security. This infamous scheme was authorized under order No. 001223. An examination of this document, which will be found in the appendix of this report (see p. 464), reveals the basic plan developed by the Kremlin to subjugate and forcibly to annex the Baltic States. Again, it is important to note that this plan, which by its very detail took many weeks to prepare, was authorized only a few hours after the signing of the last of the mutual-assistance pacts.

(2) Prior to the signing of these mutual-assistance pacts the general staff of the Red Army issued operative maps of the Baltic States which identified Latvia and Lithuania as Soviet Socialist Republics. A true copy of this map was presented in evidence to the committee. This map was dated "first edition, 1939." It is estimated this map was issued in the early fall of 1939. In any case, it was issued many months before the Soviet Russian controlled elections took place in the Baltic States which led to the establishment of parliaments favorable to Soviet Russia. Under the supervision of elements of the Red Army those parliaments petitioned Moscow for incorporation into the U. S. S. R. Thus, it is clear that the Kremlin had already determined to occupy and annex illegally Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania before forcing the representatives of those nations to sign mutual-assistance pacts with the U. S. S. R. It is also obvious that the treaty guaranties made by the U. S. S. R. to each of the Baltic nations, particularly with respect to their sovereignty and independence, were nothing more than propaganda and that in fact these treaties were intended as instruments to destroy the freedom and independence of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.

(3) Finland, another independent nation on the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea, was invited, on October 5, 1939, to send a delegation to Moscow. The supposed purpose of this visit was to discuss problems of mutual concern. However, the Finns were confronted with the same demands made on the Baltic States for the establishment of mutual-assistance pacts. The Finns refused the demands for Russian bases on their territory. Consequently, on November 30, 1939, the Red Army invaded Finland and the Russo-Finnish War was thus under way. Armed aggression was clearly the prearranged plan of the Kremlin for any of the independent nations located on the Baltic Sea who refused the offer of a mutual-assistance pact with the U. S. S. R.

Under cover of these mutual-assistance pacts the Soviet Union was able to infiltrate large numbers of NKVD agents and other subversives within all three of the Baltic States. Each such agent was strategically placed and assigned a particular function. The objective was to prepare the way for carrying into full force the requirements of NKVD instructions No. 001223 at a time and under circumstances determined by the Kremlin.

In spring 1940, the Soviet press started to attack openly the Baltic States. Soviet inspired and directed propaganda called for the overthrow of their legal governments. On May 25, 1940, the Government of the U. S. S. R., in a note to the Lithuanian Government, charged it with the responsibility of kidnapping two Russian soldiers in Vilnius. The Lithuanian Government immediately suggested the establishment of a Russo-Lithuanian commission to look into the matter, such a step being in accord with their existing mutual-assistance pact. The Soviet Union, however, rejected this proposal.

On June 14, 1940, the U. S. S. R. delivered an ultimatum to the Lithuanian Government in which it charged all three of the Baltic States with engaging in a conspiracy against the U. S. S. R. The essence of these spurious charges was that the Baltic States allegedly had transformed the Baltic Entente into a triple military alliance directed against the Soviet Union. This was followed by a swift invasion; and on June 15, 1940, the Red Army was in full occupation of Lithuania.

On June 16, Estonia and Latvia were each handed an ultimatum demanding the right of passage for the Red Army and the dissolution of the legal governments. An answer to these demands was required within a period of 8 hours. There was no other course left open to the Latvian and Estonian Governments but to accede to the demands of the Soviet Union. On June 17, the Red Army invaded and occupied those two Baltic nations.

The Kremlin then assigned three of its top political commissars to the Baltic States. Vishinsky was assigned to Latvia; Dekanozov was assigned to Lithuania; and Zhdanov was assigned to Estonia. The first task of these special agents of the Kremlin was to dissolve the legal governments and to establish new cabinets made up of people with pro-Russian views or warmly sympathetic to communism. Immediately thereafter the usual process of Communist seizure of total power began.

All the principal posts of government were filled by people sympathetic to Soviet Russia. Key positions in the police and other security

forces of the Baltic States were filled with common criminals who were released from prison and by known Communist agents and members of the NKVD.

The Kremlin then decided that elections would take place simultaneously in all three of the Baltic States on July 14, 1940. The characteristic Communist-type elections were then elaborately planned and staged. Only one list of candidates, all approved by Moscow, appeared as the candidates of the Working People's Union. None of the traditional political parties were allowed to advance their list of candidates. Only the Communist Party was recognized as legal. Everyone of voting age was required to vote. The secret ballot which had been so cherished in the independent states of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia was denied the people. By the use of these tactics the results of the election were completely assured long before the first ballot was cast.

Such was the method the Kremlin used to install a servile and obedient government in each of the once sovereign nations of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia.

On July 21, 1940, the Soviet-imposed parliaments of each of the captive Baltic States were ordered into session. These parliaments were called upon to vote on a large number of decrees which had been prepared in Moscow. No amendments or other changes, the normal task of any parliament, were permitted these three servile parliaments. One of the measures prepared in Moscow and taken up in all three parliaments was a resolution petitioning for admission into the Soviet Union. When the respective parliaments voted on this resolution, Red Army troops stood at armed attention and NKVD agents were conspicuous by their numbered presence. However, the Kremlin, despite the most careful preparation for this political masquerade in the Baltic States, overlooked the fact that the constitutions of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania required a popular referendum on such an issue. Thus, the parliaments, even if they had been elected legally and constitutionally, lacked authority to cede the independence of their nations to the U. S. S. R.

Between the period August 3-6, 1940, during the seventh session of the Supreme Council of the Soviet Union, representatives of the servile parliaments of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia appeared in Moscow to present these illegal resolutions calling for incorporation as Soviet Republics their once sovereign and independent nations. The Supreme Council of the U. S. S. R. accepted these illegal resolutions and acclaimed Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia as Soviet Republics. Shortly thereafter, the legal constitutions of the three Baltic States were replaced with the standard constitutions which apply to all Constituent Federative Soviet Republics.

This, then, is the chain of political and military events which led to the illegal seizure and forced incorporation of the sovereign nations of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

It is now obvious that the Kremlin sought to mislead the people of the world into believing that the Communist invasion and occupation of the Baltic States was in concert with the will of the people. The Kremlin alone determined that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were willing to exchange their status as sovereign independent nations for that of an exploited colony in the Red colonial empire.

The infamous NKVD Order No. 001223, previously referred to, was then quietly and systematically implemented. A reading of that order removes any doubt that the Kremlin from the outset intended to destroy all elements of the population likely to resist the plans for Sovietization. All levels of national leadership were to be completely crushed in the three Baltic States. Their place was to be taken by local quislings, NKVD agents, and other aliens. The Kremlin was determined to wipe out in a few months an entire civilization which took centuries in the making.

The mass deportations, which took place in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania during the nights of June 13-14, 1941, were the climax to NKVD Order No. 001223. It is estimated that during the first Soviet occupation 140,000 freedom-loving Balts were arrested by the NKVD and deported to slave-labor camps in the interior regions of the U. S. S. R. Husbands were separated from wives, children from their parents, as this cruel plan was carried out. The outbreak of war between the dictators Hitler and Stalin and the rapid advance of the German Wehrmacht brought a temporary stop to these mass deportations. During the German occupation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the people of the Baltic States uncovered a mass of evidence, including films and original documents, on the fraud and crime committed by the agents of the Kremlin. Thousands of people were spared certain death or deportation to dread slave-labor camps in the U. S. S. R. Hundreds of these same people who fled from their homelands before the second occupation by Soviet Russia appeared before the committee to give oral testimony or present statements on Communist aggression and tyranny in the Baltic States which they witnessed with their own eyes.

Today these once free and independent nations are occupied by the military and political forces of the U. S. S. R. Day by day the Kremlin presses forward with its plan to wipe out an advanced civilization which traces its history back over several thousand years. Day by day the sturdy people of the Baltic States, against tremendous odds, resist the corroding processes of the Kremlin. What ultimately happens to the Baltic States—whether they regain their rightful status as free and independent nations or whether they disappear from the face of the earth—could well spell the difference between genuine peace among all nations and all-out war.

BASIC FINDINGS

(1) In 1939, the U. S. S. R., after concluding a secret pact with the Nazis which divided Eastern Europe into spheres of influence, did impose so-called mutual assistance pacts upon Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

(2) The mutual-assistance pacts so imposed upon the Baltic States called for the establishment of Soviet Russian military bases and airfields in each of those nations, at the same time guaranteeing that there would be no interference with their internal affairs, including their political structure and social and economic systems.

(3) Contrary to the provisions of those mutual assistance pacts and other existing treaties, the Soviet Union, without provocation, did in June 1940 invade and take military and political control over Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, thus committing an act of unprovoked aggression.

(4) Under the protection of the occupying Red army forces, political commissars of the Kremlin (Vishinsky, Dekanozov, and Zhdanov) did dissolve the legal governments of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and arbitrarily established puppet governments to control the people.

(5) A network of political agents of the U. S. S. R. did on July 14, 1940, conduct elaborately staged mock elections in the Baltic States, with the support of powerful Red military forces, the results of which were completely assured long before the first ballot was cast. Only one list of candidates, handpicked by the Kremlin representatives, was presented to the voters, and the exercise of the secret ballot was denied.

(6) By the process of mock elections the political commissars of the U. S. S. R. did install puppet parliaments in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia which on July 21-22, 1940, adopted a resolution prepared in Moscow, petitioning the Supreme Council of the Soviet Union for recognition as a Soviet Republic. This action by the puppet parliaments was in violation of the sovereign will of the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian people and in violation of the legal constitutions of those nations which required a popular referendum on such an issue.

(7) The U. S. S. R. has been and is now engaged in a ruthless program of sovietization in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, employing the well-known Communist tactics of arrest and detention without cause, torture chambers, mass deportations to slave-labor camps, population transfers, and wide-scale political murders.

CONCLUSIONS

(I) The evidence is overwhelming and conclusive that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were forcibly occupied and illegally annexed by the U. S. S. R. Any claims by the U. S. S. R. that the elections conducted by them in July 1940 were free and voluntary or that the resolutions adopted by the resulting parliaments petitioning for recognition as a Soviet Republic were legal are false and without foundation in fact.

(II) That the continued military and political occupation of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia by the U. S. S. R. is a major cause of the dangerous world tensions which now beset mankind and therefore constitutes a serious threat to the peace.

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) That the Secretary of State take such steps as are necessary to cause this threat to world peace to be brought to the urgent attention of the current session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

(2) That the United States delegation to the United Nations take the initiative in removing this threat to world peace by sponsoring a resolution in the General Assembly calling for the full and rapid withdrawal of all the military, political, and administrative personnel of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics from the territories of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

CHAPTER I

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENCE

PART I—ESTONIA

INTRODUCTION

Estonia proclaimed its independence on February 24, 1918. This was the era when the victorious nations of World War I advanced the principle of self-determination, the principle that cemented Estonia's freedom with the political philosophy of the West. Behind its new-won independence stretched centuries of foreign domination going back to the middle of the 13th century. Yet here was one of the peoples of the world who qualified as a clearly identifiable national group in accordance with the formula given to the world by President Woodrow Wilson. Estonia's subjugation through the ages by a series of conquerors had been a continuing injustice. Throughout the centuries, however, Estonians resisted successfully these forces that threatened them, retaining their identity as a nation by keeping alive their individuality, their traditions, and their national folklore.

This chapter outlines briefly Estonia's background as a nation and tells the story of the steps leading to the establishment of its independence.

I. CONSTITUTIONAL AND POLITICAL STATUS OF ESTONIA PRIOR TO 1917

The Estonians are related to the Finno-Ugrian family of nations. Their closest kin are the Finns and the Hungarians. They have nothing in common racially or linguistically with the Russians. Nor does there exist any racial or linguistic relationship with the Latvians and Lithuanians, their sister Baltic nations. The Estonians are as much as any people in Europe a distinct nation.

In early days of recorded history Estonians lived on the shores of the Baltic Sea as a free nation, ruled by a government of their own under a system of assemblies of the people and elected elders.

Their ancient Estonian territory was conquered during the first half of the 13th century by the Knights of the Sword, which later became a branch of the Teutonic Order, and by the Danish King. In 1343, the Teutonic Order bought Denmark's holdings, which constituted the northern part of Estonia. Until 1561 the Estonian territory formed a part of the Livonian Confederation which was itself a principality of the Holy Roman Empire.

A three-pronged set of masters ruled Estonia: the Swedes were in the northern part of the country; Denmark held the islands off the west coast; and Poland possessed the portion in the south. The rising principality of Moscow had initiated the conquest of Estonia

in 1558 but failed to acquire anything for itself. In the years that followed, the Swedish kings united the territory of Estonia under their rule. Their title was confirmed by treaties concluded with Poland in 1628 at Altmark, and with Denmark in 1645 on the island of Bornholm. For the first time after the conquest the entire country was now united under one ruler. The Great Northern War which broke out between Sweden and Russia in 1700, however, ended the Swedish rule in Estonia and brought the country under Russian domination.

Russia acquired Estonia, as it appears on the map today, from Sweden by the Peace Treaty of Nystad in 1721. Until this treaty the Baltic Provinces had served as a kind of wall against the penetration of the Slavs from the East. Although they were then part of the rapidly expanding Russian Empire, they were given a special status and retained their local laws.

The political and social structure existing in the Baltic Provinces is not without significance. As a result of the conquests of the 13th century Estonia became a feudal state. The victorious Germans and Danes were given feudal grants and trade privileges. Thus, they produced the upper classes of landlords and merchants, which were German in language and culture, the forefathers of the German Balts. The indigenous population, after an unsuccessful general insurrection in 1343, gradually fell into bondage and remained for centuries in the lower strata of society. Foreign rulers administered Estonia's economic and cultural life; Estonians had no direction of their own affairs. Under Swedish rule the privileges and prerogatives of landlords had been restricted, and the Estonian peasant was permitted to make some progress economically and in his education. But, profiting from Sweden's defeat in the Great Northern War, the nobility and the city burghers, who were mostly Germans, managed to have article IX inserted in the Treaty of Nystad in their own interest and against the interests of native Estonians. The article stated:

His Imperial majesty moreover promises to maintain all the inhabitants of the province of Livonia, Estonia, and Oesel, nobles and commons, (city) magistrates, artisan corporations and guilds, in all their privileges, customs and prerogatives which they enjoyed under the domination of the King of Sweden.

The successive Russian emperors confirmed the special status of the Baltic Provinces and did little to check the arbitrary rule enjoyed—and abused—by the local nobility. The highest governmental authority in these Provinces was a governor-general appointed by the czars. But the actual administration and the local authority was vested in institutions of nobility, the land councils (Landtag), which represented the landed gentry, the city magistrates, and the clergy. The Estonians were forced into a state of serfdom without any manner of representation in the governing authority. Moreover, they were denied the opportunity for economic independence and popular education.

Yet, liberal thought, fostered in Western Europe during the 18th century, also affected the policies of the Russian Government as they related to the peasants. Under pressure the local nobility retreated step by step. Reforms improving the lot of the peasants were begun in 1802. New peasant laws of 1816 and 1819 allowed the peasant a certain amount of personal freedom. The reforms of 1849-60 confirmed the right of the Estonian peasant to acquire and own land.

Furthermore, economic independence and greater personal freedom paved the way for the rise of Estonian national consciousness. Starting in the 1850's there developed a definite tendency among Estonians to advance into the higher economic and cultural levels of life. Moreover, they became a political factor. This period of "awakening" endured until 1890 when the shift of imperial Russian policy to Russification of national minorities was applied with full force in the Baltic Provinces. Germanized laws, courts, and schools were replaced by Russian institutions:

* * * and from that time on the Estonian nation found itself face to face with two sets of enemies, both bent upon destroying Estonian national feeling, the Balts on the one hand, who sought to retain their economic supremacy, and the Russians on the other, who determined to enforce the rigid uniformity of Russian official culture upon an unwilling populace.¹

The political aspirations of young Estonian intellectuals and politicians received impetus from the revolutionary movements in the beginning of the 20th century. A few city governments came under control of Estonians. Estonian political parties sent their representatives to the Russian Duma; and, finally, the national culture of Estonia was put on a firm footing. This progress in Estonian self-expression was achieved, however, in the face of the earlier drastic efforts to stifle it by invoking policies of ruthless Germanization and Russification.

By the time World War I began, the Estonians had advanced their own national culture and individuality to a remarkable degree. They were organized economically and politically as well as culturally, and had become aware of their mission as a nation. But they were cognizant, too, of the fact that they had many hurdles yet to clear before reaching the goal of complete national independence. One of the obstacles had been the administrative division into two provinces of the territory inhabited by Estonians. The northern part of the country comprised the Province of Estonia, while the southern part, together with the northern part of present-day Latvia, formed the Province of Livonia. Furthermore, some eastern borderlands belonged to the Russian Provinces of Pskov and Petersburg. Basically, the administrative separation of northern and southern Estonia had existed for a long time, having its origin in the 13th century. At that time, the northern part had been dominated by Danish kings and the remaining parts by the Knights of the Sword.

Since the convocation of the first Duma in Russia the political aspirations of Estonians had centered upon a sweeping reform in local government. A united ethnic Estonian Province with an autonomous local government controlled by the majority population—the Estonians—instead of the minority—the Baltic barons—was regarded as the immediate goal. Policies of the czar's government, however, doomed all these hopes and attempts to failure. Not until the fall of the czarist regime in Russia and the universal proclamation of democratic freedoms in 1917 did the opportunity arrive for the realization of Estonian national independence.

¹ Graham, Malbone W., *New Governments of Eastern Europe*. New York, H. Holt, 1927, p. 249.

II. THE AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE OF ESTONIA

A. THE MARCH REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA AND THE DECREE OF MARCH 30, 1917

The March Revolution of 1917 in Russia put in power the provisional government of Prince L'vov. In July the premiership passed over into the hands of Kerensky. Estonian national circles, moved by the stirring events in Russia, took steps to bring about the realization of the dream of autonomy for Estonia. Representatives from all the counties in Estonia met at Tartu on March 24-26 and with the participation of all important civil and political organizations an autonomy bill for Estonia was drafted and approved by them.² It was then submitted to the Russian Provisional Government on March 30, 1917. When additional public pressure was brought to bear upon the Government, not the least of which was a huge Estonian demonstration in Petrograd, the Provisional Government on April 12 confirmed the decree "On Temporary Organization of Administration and Local Self-Government in the Province of Estonia."³

The proclamation of this decree was a great achievement for the patriots of Estonia. The effect of the decree was to unite parts of the Province of Livonia, inhabited by Estonians, with the Province of Estonia itself, thus creating an ethnic Estonian administrative unit and consummating a long-cherished Estonian ambition. A new administrative organization was provided for the Province through which the Estonian populace was able to govern itself. A provisional provincial council (*Maanõukogu*) was to function as the local legislature; its members were to be elected indirectly by representatives of the counties and cities. For the first time, after centuries of foreign domination, Estonians put themselves in charge of their own public affairs, electing their own representatives to their own local government.

The land council (*Landtag*), or institution of the nobility, was divested of the powers it had held under the law of 1845 which made it the highest representative body of the Province. It was limited henceforth to administering matters concerned only with its own members. This radical diminution of traditional authority was accomplished without bloodshed and without violence, a striking contrast in revolutionary techniques soon to happen in Russia.

The autonomy decree was put into effect by regulations announced on July 5, 1917,⁴ and on July 7-8, elections were held to the new Provincial council. The Provincial council was made up of one representative for every 20,000 of population from all of the country's counties and cities. The city councils in the cities elected the representatives. In the counties there were special election meetings to which the rural communities sent 1 representative for every 1,000 inhabitants. The representatives for the Provincial council were elected by these selectees. The county elections took place on July 7

² These included for example the Estonian Federation in Tallinn (*Tallinna Eesti Liit*), a union of civic organizations in Tallinn, and the Federation of Estonian Republicans (*Eesti Vabariiklaste Liit*). See *Vabadussõja Ajaloo Komitee. Eesti Vabadussõda (Estonian War of Liberation)*, vol. I, reprint. Geislingen, Kultur, 1948, pp. 26-27. Hereafter quoted as *Eesti Vabadussõda*.

³ *Sobranie Uzakonenii i rasporiazhenii pravitel'stva (Collection of Laws and Decrees of the Government)*, 1917, 173, 952.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1917, 173, 953.

and 8; the cities elected their representatives later. On July 14, 1917, the Estonian National Council (Eesti Maanõukogu) convened.

The Estonians now controlled their own administration, and they themselves directed the machinery that represented the Estonian nation and acted in its name. Moreover, the Estonians that spoke and acted represented majority rule. The drive toward this kind of self-government was, of course, not new to the yearnings of the Estonian people. In 1864, the Estonian peasants and intellectuals had petitioned the Czar for the unification of all Estonia into one Province. Furthermore, they had asked for the use of the Estonian language in the courts and governmental agencies. And, they had pleaded for the abolition of legal differences and the consequent equalization of levels of privilege among the social classes—peasants, townspeople, and nobility. The petitions were either denied or ignored and, in any event, were never granted.

But now the entire Estonian population was united under its own unified administration. Geographically, it was the Province of Estonia. The decrees of April 12 and July 5, which were the first steps toward statehood, decided that the new Province of Estonia was to have its boundaries determined on an ethnological basis. A representative commission from the Estonian and Livonian Provinces was to define the boundaries in accordance with the results of a referendum. But war and political developments shunted this project to one side; the commission never met, and the boundaries were eventually determined by international treaties.

Involved also in the boundary settlement was a small group of Estonians known as the Setus who lived in the neighborhood of the town of Petseri (Petschora), along the southeastern border of the Province of Estonia. The Setu-Estonians came under the administration of the Province of Pskov and had been subject to strong Russian influences, a situation emphasized by their administrative separation over a long period from the rest of the area inhabited by Estonians. But their ethnic affinity with their other Estonian brethren became a factor of importance when the Estonian people began to use their own language as the official language and live under their own laws. Then the Setu-Estonians petitioned the Estonian National Council to unite them and their territory with the Estonian Province.⁵

They estimated that in four communities—Petseri, Irboska, Lobodka, and Pankjavitsa—there were upward of 20,000 Estonians who made up 80 percent of the population of the area. Revolutionary upheaval in Russia rendered untimely the National Council's drafting of a bill settling the problem in favor of unity. This was set aside, while the Estonian Government took over the administration of the territory on its own pending a final solution. In the end the determination of the frontiers was settled by Estonia's treaty of peace with the Government of the R. S. F. S. R. (Soviet Russia).

⁵The petition of Estonians in the County of Petseri (Petschora) or the Setus for Unification With Estonia, July 1, 1917, printed in *Maanõukogu Protokollid* (Records of Estonian National Council), 1917-1919. Tallinn, 1935, p. 269. Hereafter quoted as *Maanõukogu Protokollid*. The Administrative Department of the Provisional Government, in the report just referred to (pp. 269-271), described the situation of the Setu-Estonians and recommended that the union the Setus asked for be proposed to the Russian Provisional Government.

B. NATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION

Almost immediately the Government of Estonia, as an autonomous administrative unit, granted to its own minorities the rights and privileges it had won for itself, sharing its new found freedoms with the non-Estonian minorities within its boundaries. The czarist regime for centuries and the provisional government in the first months of its operation had barred the Estonian language from public life—the courts, governmental agencies, and schools. But section II of the decree of April 12 empowered the new administrative agencies in the Province of Estonia to decide for themselves the language that was to be employed in Estonia's official life.⁶

On its first meeting on July 14, 1917, the National Council, accordingly, established Estonian as the official language. But in ordaining that all regulations concerning administration in the rural communities should be published in Estonian,⁷ it made the proviso that the language of the minority should be used in those rural communities where the inhabitants were predominantly of Swedish, Latvian, or Russian origin. However, in communications with the central government the Russian language was to be employed. Any inhabitant, residing anywhere in the province, had the right to receive from the provincial and local administration answers to questions on official matters in any one of the local languages. The bureaucracy was made more flexible; the frustrations and oppressiveness which it induced were eliminated under the relaxations and the added services of the newborn autonomous regime, not only for Estonians, but for all the people who came under Estonian aegis.

Wherever Estonian authority felt itself uncertain without the permissive regulations of the Russian Provisional Government, the latter proved deliberately obstructive and dilatory, delaying at every turn the implementation of the decree of April 12. Thus, while there were several memoranda and reports, the Minister of Education never finally put through the decision for transferring public schools to Estonian authority, or for permitting instruction to be changed from the Russian to the Estonian language.

Nevertheless, the Russian revolution had wiped out class distinctions, at least while this revolution lasted and before the subsequent revolution created a Communist or proletarian elite. Thus, while it endured, the provisional government granted voting rights to all citizens, regardless of sex, religion, or social standing, a principle that was included in the decree of July 5, 1917. Under this decree for the first time in modern Estonian history the rural population of non-German origin had the right to elect their own representatives. Before this, the Baltic Provinces had had fastened upon them a system of local representation that excluded the peasants and placed representative authority in the hands of the socially privileged. For a few years the Estonians enjoyed a short-lived representation at the national level when they sent deputies to the first and second Russian Duma in 1905-7. Starting with the third duma, however, their representation was reduced in favor of the German Balts.

⁶ Maanõukogu Protokollid, p. 2.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

Now, to all intents and purposes the provincial authority imparted an all-pervasive democratic influence reaching into every phase of Estonian life except foreign policy, judicial and military affairs. Under the administrative direction of Estonian officials, elected by Estonians, were included matters touching upon the levying and collection of provincial and local taxes, economic affairs, the police authority, education, the supervision of local government, and the management of landed property held formerly under the institutions of nobility.

In accordance with the decree of April 12 establishing the office of a commissioner of the provisional government for the administration of the province, Jaan Poska, an eminent Estonian, was named to this post. Once the national council was convoked the commissioner confined his authority to the business of the central government and reserved to the council all other administrative functions over Estonia. Candidates for the post of commissioner and his deputies were submitted to the provisional Russian government by the Estonian National Council.

Estonian political parties which had taken form from civic organizations and congresses became articulate representing, as they did, the varying views of the population. The civic organizations, first in the field after Russia's March revolution, had in Tallinn initiated the campaign for autonomy. Soon a federation of associations emerged as a central organization. An all-Estonian national congress of national and civic organizations met on July 15 and represented the entire nation. It was abandoned by a fragment of the extreme left, but the remaining delegates, together with delegates from Estonian settlements in Russia and delegates representing Estonian soldiers, established a program for united Estonian political action. This Estonian National Congress advocated a separate Estonian State within a federated Russia. It requested formation of national army units, agrarian reforms, and kindred measures. The Social Democrats and the Social Revolutionaries recognized the program of the Congress. The Communists alone stood apart, refusing participation.

Throughout this kindling of the fires of independence and near independence support came from Estonian soldiers in the Russian Army. Estonian servicemen in Russia and Finland met in congresses and adopted resolutions demanding freedom, reform, and autonomy; but they were mostly concerned with the formation of Estonian national military units. From the increased military cohesion which resulted, there developed the idea for the first congress of Estonian servicemen. They met in Tallinn, July 1-5, 1917, and declaring themselves the authoritative spokesman for more than 50,000 organized Estonian soldiers, announced their support for Estonian military units and Estonian national autonomy. They elected a supreme committee which became indeed the voice of the Estonian soldier until German occupation changed the national scene.

C. THE ESTONIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL

An analysis of the Estonian National Council, discussed above, brings to light party development, political cleavages, and the embryonic growth of the parliamentary system, which Estonia was to adopt during its period of complete independence.

The Council consisted of 62 members: 21 elected by cities and 41 by counties. It was not until October that the Council representation was complete, although its first meeting had taken place July 14, 1917. The right and left wing were almost evenly represented. The middle and rightist parties formed the Democratic bloc; the Socialist parties formed into the Socialist group. The Communists, more widely known at that time as the Bolsheviks, were separate.

The Council was divided into 7 main political groups, each having representatives from the left wing to the right as follows: Communists (or Bolsheviks), 5; Social Revolutionaries, 8; Social Democrats, 9; Laborites, 11; Radical Democrats, 4; Democrats, 7; Agrarians, 13. The national minorities—Germans, Swedes, and independent delegates—had five seats.

The Communists were an arm extended from their home party, the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic Party. They stood solidly in their ideology with the home party's platform and fought against any kind of independence for Estonia. On the other hand, the Social Revolutionaries, who were at first a branch of the Russian party of the same name, broke off their Russian affiliation in September 1917 to form an independent Estonian Social Revolutionary Party. But they accepted the program of the Russian party bearing their name as their platform at least for the time being. This program called for the continued existence of Estonia within a democratic Russian state.

The Social Democrats, like the Social Revolutionaries, were linked to the Russian mother party, but in June 1917 they asserted their independence.

The Social Democrats followed the Marxist philosophy, but they inclined toward an independent Estonia wholly free of Russian domination. A third Socialist group was the Labor Party, organized in 1917, and determined to achieve a Socialist state by peaceful reforms. Eventually, this group, one of the bigger parties, abandoned various Socialist phases of their program, and merged with other center parties.

The Estonian National Council was dominated by these three Socialist parties which the Communists supported, as their strategy dictated, while remaining organizationally aloof.

Opposition to the leftist groups was made up first of the Estonian Democratic Party, the leading champion of Estonian independence. It was the successor to the oldest Estonian political party, the Popular Progressive Party which had been founded in 1905. The Radical Democrats merged in 1919 with the Democratic Party. The Agrarian Union stood at the right. Together these parties formed the Democratic bloc and on most issues offered a solid front in the National Council.

III. FROM NATIONHOOD TO STATEHOOD

A. AUTONOMY—FEDERATION—INDEPENDENCE

Autonomy was the first objective of the Estonian leaders because it was reasonable and within reach. It comported with the background of the immediate decades. There had been no opportunity until the Russian March revolution for any kind of crystallization of Estonian political sentiment. There were no political rights for

Estonians as a nation and few avenues of political communication or opinion. The will to statehood existed and became in time a powerful force among a numerically small people, but it had had no opportunity for expression, organization, or development. The Estonians had been governed locally by the German Balts and nationally by a Russian administration which refused to recognize the existence of any Estonian minority.

In this atmosphere independence seemed a mirage but autonomy concrete and practicable.

Then, as Estonians, under the decree of April 12, assumed command over their own local administration, new perspectives opened up. The first glimpse of the urge for a widening national ambition came in the form of a demand for the status of a federated state within the Russian orbit. This status had already been requested by the Congress of Estonian Servicemen in July 1917. The Estonian National Council at its first meeting made this also known to the Russian Provisional Government in a telegram. In its message the Council informed the Provisional Government that it considered the temporary regulation of Estonian general administration and local government "only * * * the first step" in Estonia's "transformation to its final autonomous standing, based on democratic principles, within a Russian federal republic."⁸ Estonian aspiration had advanced from the desire for status as an autonomous province to the desire for the status of a state with complete national independence.

The rapidly deteriorating military and internal political situation in Russia confronted the Estonian National Council with a perpetually changing relationship toward the more and more uncertain Russian central government. It was in September 1917 that the Estonian National Council began consideration of complete separation from Russia. On the seventh the Council met in executive session and had before it for consideration the Russian demand for evacuation of the country before the advancing armies of Germany which had already seized Riga. The proposal was made to explore the advisability of federation with Scandinavian and other Baltic States.

The profound aspirations of the Estonian people for national independence was perhaps best stated by J. Tõnisson, an outstanding Estonian leader, whose life was closely tied in with the history of Estonian independence:

Our political ideal should nevertheless be (independent) statehood. We have to make preparations for realization of this ideal and not to wait like onlookers for what the fates will bring us by the charity of others. If we as a nation are not able to use profitably the present moment for realization of the ideal of (independent) statehood, then one cannot know when there would be a better moment for it. Now or never. * * * We should now try to realize the idea of statehood hand in hand with other Balto-Scandinavian nations. * * * We have not to demand merely what is useful for Russia, but we must the more demand what is important in regard to the future of our nation. If we are not going to make use of the present moment to strive for political independence, there will probably be no such moment again.⁹

The National Council urged the people to ignore the Russian order of evacuation and to remain where they were. By way of example the

⁸ Ibid, p. 3.

⁹ Ibid, p. 112.

Council itself announced it would remain to "protect the national interests of Estonia."¹⁰

The National Council also considered the problem of having Estonia represented abroad in the event of further international developments.

Into this highly dramatic situation the Communist group in the Council injected itself to checkmate Estonian aspiration for independence. They had vehemently opposed every action directed toward separation from Russia. When the Council met October 9, 1917, the Communists moved that the National Council disown itself, disclaiming any authority as the representative of the people, and that it proclaim new elections. This motion was defeated. In its place the Council adopted this resolution:

1. In rejecting statements to the contrary, the present Estonian Provisional National Council shall be recognized, until formation of a more perfect representation, as the legal popular representative of Estonia;

2. A commission shall be elected according to Section 5, Subsection 7, of the law of March 30; this commission shall draft a bill on the future administration and local government organization for submittal to the National Council;

3. In drafting the bill the commission shall adhere to the principle that Estonia shall remain an autonomous part of a democratic Federal Russian Republic;

4. If adopted by the National Council the bill shall be subject to a final approval by the Constituent Assembly and then shall be submitted to a general referendum.¹¹

The National Council felt itself in a dilemma. It did not quite regard itself empowered to make final decisions for the form the future government of Estonia was to take. This included the problem of its relationship to Russia. The majority of the National Council's members believed that this belonged to settlement by a future Estonian Constituent Assembly. But as an intermediary step there still lingered the hope that statehood, within the Russian federation, could be achieved through the procedures provided by the decree of April 12. The Estonian National Council preferred to adhere to the principles of legitimacy, especially in the light of the insistent opposition of the Communists who fought irreconcilably against national independence and the wavering position taken by the Socialists. Yet at this stage the Laborites and Radical Socialists, wearied by obstruction and procrastination in the Provisional Government of Russia, decided to go along with the proponents of full independence.

The hand of the National Council was, however, forced by the quickly accelerating march of events. Chaos ruled the land. Retreating Russian units were robbing and pilfering the people. The central Russian Government, created out of the ruins of the czarist regime, was helpless and tottering.

In the midst of this world-shaking course of events, the Estonian National Council, a practically unknown entity beyond its own borders, representing a people ignored in the great drama of events about to transpire, sought to save itself and its people. National independence was the primary objective of the Estonian National Council. At this critical juncture it took the boldest of all the steps it had taken hitherto. It passed the historic resolution of November 28, 1917;¹² in this resolution the Estonian National Council declared itself "the

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

¹² English translation in the appendix A, II, No. 1.

sole depository of the supreme power in Estonia." By this action the Council sought to frustrate the Bolshevnik intriguers inside the Council, seize the opportunity for independence history offered, and save Estonia from communism. Thus was the beginning of a great victory that—with a short interruption—was to endure for more than two decades.

B. COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES UP TO NOVEMBER 28, 1917

Estonia now became one of the earliest victims of a system of Communist tactics with which the world has since become familiar. Illustrative of the basic national disloyalty of the Bolshevniks in Estonia was the fact that they remained inseparably associated with the Bolshevnik Party in Russia and served it as its creature in disrupting Estonian unity. By contrast, the Social Democrats of Estonia, who held Socialist views, were an independent Estonian group as far back as 1904. The Bolshevniks in Estonia employed every device in the catalog of parliamentary confusion to nullify the autonomy won for Estonia by the decree of April 12. Through this drive they hoped to destroy the authority the decree granted to the Estonian national agencies. They opposed the elections to the Estonian National Council and intrigued with Petrograd to secure the dismissal of J. Poska, the Provincial Commissioner.

The penetration of the local soviets by the Bolshevniks in general was unsuccessful, and it was not until October 12 that they were able to secure control in the II Congress of Estonian Soviets.

Thus it happened that the Bolshevniks in Estonia tried to duplicate in Tallinn the pattern of the November revolution advanced by their party in Petrograd. The Russian Army and Navy units had been diligently indoctrinated with the Communist philosophy, and the strength and hope of the Estonian Bolshevniks depended upon their support. J. Sepp, a Soviet Estonian historian,¹³ wrote:

Estonian Soviets had a trustworthy force in the revolutionary sailors, soldiers, and numerous groups of the Red Guard. At the disposal of the Soviet were the ships of the Baltic Fleet and the cannons of the fortress.

On November 9, 1917, the Estonian Communists constituted themselves into a military-revolutionary committee and seized the offices of the commissioner of the provisional government. They now proceeded to act as the Estonian representatives of the Russian Central Government. In this coup d'état the local government of the Province remained free from Communist usurpation. Thus, the circumstances of this half seizure worked out so that the Estonian National Council, its executive branch which was the Provincial Administration, and the administrations in cities, counties, and communities, continued intact as before. They operated independently of the Office of the Commissioner of the provisional government which had been captured by the Estonian Communists.

But the aim of the Communists was to seize the remainder of government power in Estonia. The majority of the Estonian population and the national army units opposed them. At first the Communists tried intimidation.

¹³ Võitlus Nõukogude võimu eest Eestis, 1917–19 (The Struggle for the Soviet Regime in Estonia, 1917–19). Tallinn, RK Politiline Kirjandus, 1947, p. 50.

On November 25, 1917, the executive committee of the Estonian Soviets adopted a resolution calling for the dissolution of the National Council. They combined this resolution with an intensive campaign of agitation among workers and Russian troops.

The Estonian National Council now fixed its decisions on two aims. The first was to establish its own continued existence and procedures in law and legitimacy. The second was to prevent Communist seizure of Estonia. The collapse of the provisional government of Kerensky removed the central Russian authority under which the Estonian National Council had been created. The National Council and the National Administration had thus become in fact the highest authority in Estonia. It proceeded, therefore, to assume in full the constituent power which had been bestowed upon it conditionally by the decree of autonomy on April 12, 1917.

C. THE ESTONIAN NATIONAL ARMY

Estonians and Russians served on equal terms in the Russian Army in World War I. The idea of separate Estonian units was first advanced in 1915. But general Russian policy and the extremely heavy losses to which other national units in the Russian Army had been subjected persuaded Estonian political and civic circles to postpone pressure toward the realization of this idea. It was on the initiative of officers and soldiers themselves that the organization of Estonian national units began after the March revolution in 1917. Special organizing committees were set up in Tallinn, Petrograd, and other centers. They proceeded to arrange for the withdrawal to Estonia of all Estonians in the Russian Army. The organization was given urgency because of the decline of discipline in the Russian Army and the need—which became desperate—for the defense of Estonia against the threatening advance of the German forces.

Russian central authority granted permission for the organization of one Estonian infantry regiment on May 20, 1917. In fact, however, the arrival of Estonian servicemen from all over Russia had begun much earlier. When the regiment was quickly and fully organized, steps were taken to get official permission for the organization of an Estonian division. The Supreme Committee of Estonian Servicemen, elected by the Congress of Estonian Servicemen, served as the spearhead for the political and military demands of this newly born Estonian military organization. Failing to receive permission, two more regiments—three in all—and a reserve battalion were organized nevertheless in the fall of 1917, and on December 19, 1917, a divisional command was set up.

The Bolsheviks remained adamantly opposed but were helpless to interfere. Their propaganda for the most part fell on deaf ears, a fact which was proved when the Estonian military units remained steadfastly loyal to the principles of Estonian independence and gave heroic support to the Estonian National Council. In fact, more and more Estonian military units were constantly being organized. The presence of these Estonian units all over the country prevented the Bolsheviks during the critical months between December 1917 and February 1918 from taking over entirely the local administration as they had taken over the Office of the Provincial Commissioner and

the Provincial Administration. Yet, under the threat of the German occupation the Bolsheviks did succeed in dissolving the divisional command, without, however, affecting the existence of the individual units.

In the impending struggle on Estonian soil of the Russian and the German Armies, the Estonian National Council declared the country neutral. The Estonian military units accepted this as Estonia's foreign policy and acted accordingly when the two armies were locked in battle in February 1918. The German command at first respected Estonian neutrality; but once its occupational administration was established, the Germans, in April 1918, dissolved the Estonian military units. This left Estonia wide open and defenseless when the Bolsheviks invaded the country in November.

On the other hand, the assembling of Estonian units on Estonian soil provided Estonia with an experienced officer corps and soldiery that could quickly be called into action. It proved to be strategically important during the 1918 period, for only the support of the national units made possible the proclamation of independence of February 1918.

IV. SEPARATION FROM RUSSIA

A. THE DECLARATION OF NOVEMBER 28, 1917, ON SUPREME POWER

The Estonian National Council considered itself the voice and the will of Estonia. For the first time since the 13th century the whole population was represented in a representative national authority. It had been elected under the provisions of the decree of April 12, 1917, and the regulations of July 5 of that year. Its elected representatives came from the cities and the counties under a system of universal suffrage based on the principles of equality and the secret ballot. The nobility and the city burghers had regarded themselves as the spokesmen and the authority for the whole people, but in the elections to the Estonian National Council their votes counted neither more nor less and carried neither greater nor lesser influence than that of the Estonian peasant. Eight political parties and two national minorities, not excepting Communists and other left-wing groups, sent their representatives to the Council.

The climate of world opinion after World War I, and the far more intense nationalistic strivings inside Estonia, moved its leaders to shed their role as representatives of a Russian province for the sake of achieving the higher aspirations of national independence.

The Communist opposition to this break with the past, headed by the Soviet organization in Tallinn, was threatening to use force. The Estonian National Council, therefore, convened on November 28, 1917, without its Communist members, and pronounced itself "the sole depository of the supreme power in Estonia." The pronouncement took cognizance of the fact that the Central Government in Russia had become ineffective. The Council resolved that only enactments approved by itself were to have force in Estonia. But it declared also that it continued as the sole depository of the supreme power only until the convocation of an Estonian Constituent Assembly.¹⁴ By an accompanying resolution it projected the election of a Constituent

¹⁴ Maanõukogu Protokollid, pp. 273-274, Riigi Teataja (Official Gazette), 1918, 1.

Assembly which was to be vested with the authority to determine what form the Government of Estonia was to take.

But threats of violence and impending conflict hovered over the Estonian National Council. The Communists were organizing mobs. The Council knew it could not continue to meet openly. Thus, it created a compact governing group drawn from the members of the administration and the Committee of Elders of the Council. These included the presidium of the Council and one representative of each political party. They were given the power to enact and publish decisions. They could issue extraordinary ordinances for the regulation of the official affairs of the people of Estonia. This smaller and less exposed government was to function only in the interval between sessions of the National Council, which alone had the ultimate authority to ratify its acts.

The National Council's action was hardly too soon. Before the Council could adjourn the Communists, in a formless mob, invaded the Council Chambers and forced the deputies to leave. A few days later the Communists seized the provincial administration. The country rose up in protest against this Communist violence. Farmers, intellectuals, and workers united in spontaneous messages expressing a national sense of outrage. Military units, factory groups, and civic organizations announced their disapproval. In fact, the postal and telephone workers in Tallinn staged a strike.

But the Communists had the support of the bayonets of the Bolshevik Russian Army.

While the Communists tried to consolidate their position and extend their rule, the National Council and the administration continued to operate in secret.

The resolution of November 28, 1917, had, however, the deepest legal and political significance for Estonia. Summed up, it did this:

It called for a break with Russia.

It created for Estonia its own government as the highest in the land.

It regulated the relations among governmental authorities.

It established new principles of government along democratic lines.¹⁵

As a result of this resolution, the constitutional status of Estonia was fundamentally changed. The Estonian National Council and the provincial administration were elevated to agencies of state power. The status of government on the lower levels remained unchanged. The legislative bodies and constitutional laws of Russia were excluded. In effect, the decision of November 28, 1917, became the first provisional constitution of Estonia. And as a further result the territory of the former Russian province of Estonia now became the sovereign territory of the Estonian Nation.¹⁶

¹⁵ S. Arthur-Tõeleid Klümann, *Õiguskord (Legal Order)*. Tartu, Akadeemiline Kooperatiiv, 1939, p. 173.

¹⁶ J. Poska, the former commissioner of the Russian Provisional Government in Estonia, and later the Estonian Foreign Minister and chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Estonian Constituent Assembly said in his report to the Constituent Assembly on peace negotiations with Soviet Russia (February 10, 1920), that November 28, 1917, was the date of Estonia's separation from Russia. (*Asutava Kogu Protokolid 3. Istungjärg (Records of the Constituent Assembly, 3d sess.)*.) Tallinn, n. d., No. 104 (7), p. 278.

B. THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION

Another legally important date was November 15, 1917 because the Council of People's Commissars issued a declaration on the "Rights of the Peoples of Russia to Self-Determination." This declaration offered the nationalities in Russia "equality and sovereignty" and the "right to free self-determination * * * even to the point of separating and forming independent states * * *"¹⁷

Almost 2 weeks after the Soviet pronouncement, the Estonian National Council had occasion to refer to this right of self-determination, and in a resolution of November 28, 1917, resolved to summon an Estonian Constituent Assembly "for the establishment of a democratic and fully authorized power in Estonia." Thus, the legitimacy of the Estonian State was partially based upon Soviet acknowledgment of Estonia's right of self-determination.¹⁸

But Bolshevik leadership in Russia was not always consistent. It agreed with separation or secession of the border states only when it could not militarily prevent it. In a recapitulation of the principle of self-determination, Stalin who was then the Commissar for Nationalities Affairs in the first Bolshevik Government, gave this reinterpretation:

All border regions of Russia, the nationalities and tribes inhabiting these border regions, as well as all other nationalities, *have naturally the inalienable right of separation from Russia*, and if any of these nationalities would decide to secede from Russia, as was the case with Finland in 1917, the Russian people had only to state the fact and to sanction the secession. But here are not in question the rights of nationalities which are incontestable, but the interests of the masses of people of the center as well as those of the border regions. * * * Well, the *interests of the masses of the people mean that the demand for separation of the border regions, at the present stage of revolution, is a completely counterrevolutionary demand.*¹⁹ [Italics furnished.]

With a stroke of the pen and a few lines in Pravda Stalin had invalidated the "nobly" expressed Soviet dictum of November 15, 1917.

V. THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION — NOVEMBER 1917—FEBRUARY 1918

A. THE ISSUE OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

The Estonian National Council, observing a strict punctilio in matters of preconstitutional legality, was careful to regard itself as the trustee of Estonian sovereignty even when it called itself the depository of supreme power. Thus, its position was basic in that the final decision on the future form the Estonian Government was to take rested with the projected Estonian Constituent Assembly. This Assembly was to be elected in accordance with recognized democratic principles, and its function was to create "the final legislative and executive authority in the country." Here the Council in its

¹⁷ R. S. F. S. R. Narodnyi komissariat po delam natsional'nostei. Politika sovetskoi vlasti po natsional'nomu voprosu za tri goda. 1917—XI—1920. (The Nationalities Policy of the Soviet Regime For Three Years). Moskva 1920, pp. 6-7. Hereafter quoted as *Politika sovetskoi vlasti*.

¹⁸ This reference to the right of self-determination has been called by a neutral observer as a "bona fide acceptance, and perhaps extension, of the Bolshevik decree of self-determination." Graham. Op. cit., 1927, p. 256.

¹⁹ Pravda No. 226, October 10, 1920, The Policy of the Soviet Regime in Regard to the Nationality Problem in Russia. Also pp. 353-354 in J. V. Stalin, Sochineniia (Collected Works), vol. 4, Nolzabr. 1917-20 (November 1917-20). Moskva, Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1947.

devotion to the democratic ideal was willing even to cooperate with the Bolsheviks "to eliminate any undesirable differences in regard to the elections to the Constituent Assembly."²⁰

The Bolsheviks, believing in their political strength, agreed at first to the convocation of a Constituent Assembly. Thus, on November 25, 1917, the Executive Committee of the Estonian Soviets passed two resolutions: one calling for the dissolution of the National Council, and the other asking for elections to a Constituent Assembly.²¹ The Executive Committee then dispatched a letter to the National Council saying:

The Executive Committee resolved on November 12, 1917, to dissolve the Provisional National Council of the Estonian province and to convene the Constituent Assembly on February 15; the elections shall be held on January 21 and 22, 1918.

The members of the Provisional Administration of the province of Estonia shall stay on their posts and take care of current affairs until the Constituent Assembly convenes.²²

The Estonian Bolsheviks were emboldened by their success in the elections to the Russian Constituent Assembly on November 27-29, 1917. This they had foreseen when they forwarded their preemptory letter to the National Council. In the election they polled in Estonia almost 40 percent of the votes, electing 4 deputies against the 4 who were elected by the Estonian national parties.²³

The elections to the Estonian Constituent Assembly on January 21 and 22, 1918, were a sharp disappointment to the Bolsheviks in spite of the fact that they were conducted under the shadow of the Communist terror. Bolshevik reaction to their failure was simply to invalidate the results which denied them their expected majority and to call the elections off before further results made their failure even more conspicuous. Communist writings later carefully avoided any mention of this election. J. Sepp, a contemporary Communist Party historian, in his book, *Võitlus Nõukogude Võimu Eest Eestis 1917-19*. (The Struggle for the Soviet Regime in Estonia, 1917-19), published in 1947, discussed the resolution of the Executive Committee of the Estonian Soviets, but pointedly omitted any reference to the elections in which the Communists were defeated.²⁴

The omission is more significant because it is repeated even more glaringly in the official Soviet Estonian history, *Istoriia Estonskoi SSR* (History of Estonia SSR),²⁵ and in the Soviet Encyclopedia.²⁶ Likewise, there is a discussion of the facts surrounding the election, but no mention of the election, or, of course, the results in the article of R. Mikker in *Istoricheskii zhurnal*—"Bor'ba za sovetskuiu vlast' v Estonii, 1917-19 godu," (The Struggle for the Soviet Regime in Estonia in 1917-19).²⁷

²⁰ *Maanõukogu Protokollid*, p. 273: par. 2 of the Resolution on Convocation of Estonian Constituent Assembly.

²¹ Sepp, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

²² *Maanõukogu Protokollid*, p. 275.

²³ Altogether 299,003 votes were cast. The Bolsheviks received 119,862 votes, the Democratic bloc 68,075. The Labor Party received 64,047 votes, the Social Revolutionaries 17,726, the Radical Democrats 17,022, the Social Democrats 9,244, and the Russian Social Revolutionaries, 3,027. H. Kruus, *Histoire de l'Estonie*. Paris, Payot, 1935, p. 242, n. 1. The Bolshevik vote was swelled by the large number of Bolshevized Russian troops and Russian workers at the naval bases at Tallinn.

²⁴ Sepp, *op. cit.*, p. 62 and pp. 78-80.

²⁵ G. Naan, editor, *Tallin, Estonskoe Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo*, 1952, pp. 325-328.

²⁶ *Sovetskaja Bol'shaia Entsiklopedia*, Moskva, 1934, vol. 64, p. 702.

²⁷ No. 11, 1940, pp. 45-46.

But again events brought Germany and Russia into conflict, while Estonia cautiously trod the path to national independence.

B. THE PEACE TREATY OF BREST-LITOVSK

Soviet Russia and Germany concluded an armistice on December 15, 1917. Germany planned to detach the Baltic provinces from Russia and bring them under its own domination. In the course of the treaty negotiations that followed the armistice the Bolsheviks stalled in order to counteract this design. When the Bolsheviks interrupted the treaty negotiations on February 10, 1918, the Germans interpreted it as a renunciation of the armistice and moved their armies forward. On the northern flank this step meant the German occupation of Estonia and northern Latvia. But, the Bolsheviks were militarily impotent, and after having resumed peace negotiations with the Germans, they signed the peace treaty at Brest-Litovsk on March 3, 1918.

Soviet Russia and Germany disposed of Estonia between them much in the same manner as the movement of chips by the croupier from loser to winner, although Estonia declined this time to accept that kind of settlement for itself in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and its supplement. But, Germany, having been ceded Estonia by Soviet Russia, proceeded to occupy it against Estonian protests, insisting that Estonia had adopted a policy of neutrality.

The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was without significance in determining later the international status of Estonia. The armistice of November 11, 1918,²⁸ as well as the Treaty of Versailles of June 28, 1919, between Germany and the victorious Allied powers, including the United States²⁹ invalidated the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. The pertinent Article 116 read:

Germany acknowledges and agrees to respect as permanent and inalienable the independence of all territories which were part of the former Russian Empire on August 1, 1914.

In accordance with the provisions of Article 259 of Part IX (Financial Clauses) and Article 292 of Part X (Economic Clauses) Germany accepts definitely the abrogation of the Brest-Litovsk Treaties and of all other treaties, conventions and agreements entered into by her with the Maximalist Government in Russia. * * *

In the treaty of March 3, 1918, Soviet Russia renounced its sovereignty over Estonian islands Saaremaa (Oesel) and Hiiumaa (Dagoe). The Central Powers were to determine the future status of these territories in accordance with the views of their population.³⁰ The continental part of Estonia was to be cleared of Russian troops, and a German police force was to be stationed there "until security is insured by proper national institutions and until public order has been established."³¹

German policy sought to create a series of "adjacent satrapies" which, flanking the German Empire on the east, were not to function

²⁸ Sec. XV, U. S. Congress, 4th session, Senate Document No. 348. Treaties, conventions, international acts, protocols, and agreements between the United States of America and other powers, 1910-23, vol. III, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1923, p. 3309.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3330.

³⁰ Peace Treaty between R. S. F. S. R. and Central Powers on March 3, 1918, sec. III. Leonard Shapiro, comp. and ed. Soviet Treaty Series, v. I, Washington, D. C., the Georgetown University Press, 1950, p. 4.

³¹ *Ibid.*, sec. VI.

as a buffer, but were to enter into constitutional relations with the German Empire, and eventually were to be absorbed by it.³² To this end the German Balts in Estonia on December 13 and 30, 1917, announced their own decision on behalf of Estonia to secede from Russia. For the legality of their action they claimed to be employing the authority vested in them through their traditional institutions in Estonia, the Landtag or nobility representation. They said this was the legitimate expression of the will of the people.

The action of the German Balts, however, proved purely academic. In the Estonian view they spoke only for a small minority, the Germans. They had been abolished as a representative institution by the decrees of the Russian Provisional Government. Nevertheless, the German Balts brought their case to Germany, asking on January 28, 1918, that it occupy Estonia. On the same day the Baltic representative, von Stryck-Tignitz, then in Stockholm informed the chargé d'affaires of Soviet Russia that the German Balts had decided to have Estonia secede from Russia.³³

Somewhat later the Germans succeeded in compelling Soviet Russia in a supplementary treaty to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk to renounce its sovereignty over Estonia. Section VII of this supplementary treaty of August 27, 1918, stated:

Russia, taking account of the conditions at present existing in Estonia and Livonia, renounces sovereignty over these regions, as well as all interference in their internal affairs. Their future fate shall be decided in agreement with their inhabitants.³⁴

Presumably this agreement created a clear path to German annexation of Estonia. But Germany's collapse on the western front frustrated the design.

VI. DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

A. PREPARATORY MEASURES

The Estonian National Council continued to function underground, in spite of its forced dispersal, through the compact group it had organized from within itself in order to meet precisely this emergency. Thus, the governing function was placed directly in the hands of this delegated group which consisted of the Committee of Elders, the Presidium of the Council, and the Provincial Administration. The local government agencies acted under its authority and suspended their activity only when forced to do so by the Bolsheviks who gradually extended their rule over the country through Soviet organizations. The situation was tense and divided. Units of the Estonian national army supported the National Council and its resolution of

³² Graham, Malbone H. *The Diplomatic Recognition of the Border States*, pt. II: Estonia. Berkeley, Calif., University of California Press, 1939. Pp. 246-249.

³³ The Land Council or Landtag constituted the German Balt governing group, then more or less defunct, which saw survival for itself only in the occupation of Estonia by Germany. The council's leader and its president was Freiherr Eduard von Dellingshausen who details in his book *Im Dienste der Heimat* (In the Service of the Fatherland), Stuttgart: Ausland und Heimat Verlags-Aktiengesellschaft, 1930, pp. 234-251, the efforts of the local Germans to put Estonia under German domination. These memoirs report the failure to win the Estonian National Council to this solution. The text of the resolution of the Land Council presented to the Soviet Russian Government is printed in *ibid.*, pp. 319-320.

³⁴ In Shapiro, *Soviet Treaty Series*, vol. I, p. 23. Soviet Russia renounced the Brest-Litovsk Treaties on November 13, 1918.

November 28, 1917. The Soviet regime prevailed wherever Soviet troops were in control.³⁵

The national political parties were moving closer to complete independence. Basically, while supporting the right of an Estonian constituent assembly to determine the future of Estonia's government, three parties—the Laborites, the Social Democrats, and the Social Revolutionaries—were opposed to a final separation from a Russian federation. The shift became definitive when the Laborites at their congress on December 23, 1917, pronounced themselves for complete independence. They were followed by the Socialists in January 1918. Then the Social Revolutionaries advanced their own version of independence which insisted upon a workers' republic. The shift of the parties was expressed in a statement of national Estonian policy when the Committee of Elders on January 6, 1918, passed a resolution proclaiming Estonian independence. This was confirmed by a joint meeting of the Presidium of the Council, the Committee of Elders, and representatives of all parties, except the Communists, on January 13-14, 1918.

A statement from these united groups to the press declared to the Estonian people:

We are emphasizing at first that the entire Estonian nation considers itself sovereign and alone authorized to determine the political future of the country, independent of the interests of the great powers. On this basis we consider the complete national independence of Estonia as necessary and as the only normal basis upon which the nation could determine its future.³⁶

Another declaration was issued on January 23, 1918, which contained all the major points later integrated into the final Declaration of Independence.

The January 23 draft served as the basis for instructions to Estonian delegates sent abroad to obtain recognition of Estonian independence from the Allied Powers. It protested against the occupation of Estonia by German troops. It pronounced Estonia neutral. Estonian borders, it declared, should be determined by plebiscites. National minorities should have the right to develop their national culture.³⁷

B. NEW GOALS SET BY DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

The declaration of January 23, 1918, and those declarations that immediately preceded it, provided a firm footing for the advancement of national independence for the national parties in the elections to the Estonian Constituent Assembly. The issue was now clear. It was doubly clear when the Bolsheviks, as noted above, confronted with defeat at the polls, broke off the elections before they were concluded, prevented consummation of the election, and prevented the convening of a constituent assembly. This step and the Brest-Litovsk negotiations between Russia and Germany alerted the Estonian leaders to move fast and escape the ancient process in which their country was forever caught between two mighty antagonists in a perpetual power struggle.

³⁵ See *Istoriia Estonskoi SSR (History of Estonian SSR)*, pp. 326-327.

³⁶ *Eesti Vabadussõda*, vol. 1, p. 39.

³⁷ The translation of the text of the declaration was published in *Pour l'Esthonie Indépendante. Recueil des documents diplomatiques publié par la délégation estonienne*. Paris, Copenhagen. J. H. Schultz, 1918. An English translation is available in Graham, op. cit., pp. 308-309.

On February 18, 1918, the German Army began its advance on all fronts in the Russo-Baltic theater. On February 19, the Committee of Elders and the Presidium of the National Council met secretly, under the threat of the Bolsheviks on one side, and the advancing German armies on the other, and prepared the text of a declaration of independence. Government powers were vested in a liberation committee made up of three members to function pending the organization of a provisional government which was appointed on February 24, 1918. On the same day the declaration of independence was proclaimed. The Soviets were in retreat, and before the Germans took over the Estonian Government had stepped into the vacuum.

The declaration of independence of February 24³⁸ is the historical document of Estonian independence, giving deeper meaning and greater breadth and scope to all other documents preceding it. It swept away the last vestige of affiliation with Russia, and validated by this further documentation the resolution of the Estonian National Council on November 28, 1917. The declaration went even beyond it, for the November 28 resolution, while establishing Estonia as a democratic republic, left open the question of federation with Russia. The declaration of February 24 burned the bridges totally. It not only determined that Estonia should be democratic and independent, but it declared independence to be complete, by announcing Estonia also sovereign. Thus, there was no longer any question of Estonia's statehood resting inside a Russian federation. Extraordinary and fundamental as had been the Estonian National Council's resolution of November 28, 1917, it was the declaration of independence of February 24, 1918 that severed the last tie connecting Estonia with Russia, so that in the light of Estonia's declared will, no future proceedings could ever legitimately unite them again.

The Bolsheviks had lost the issue.

The declaration also: (1) Established boundaries, (2) placed full authority in the liberation committee, (3) declared Estonia neutral, (4) directed the organization of an Estonian army sufficient to maintain internal order and security, (5) set up a basic framework for the future government, (6) reiterated the principle that only a constituent assembly could determine the form of Estonia's ultimate government.

There was to be equal justice under law with the right of free national development for all minorities.

The liberation committee now forbade Estonian citizens to participate in the Russo-German War. It directed all former local government agencies to resume their administrative functions and to remove from power all Soviet authorities.³⁹

Thus, officially February 24, 1918 was in Estonian history the birth date of the Estonian Republic. The famous resolution of the Estonian National Council on November 28, 1917 was its constitutional predecessor.

On February 21, 1918, a form of interim recognition of Estonian governmental authority came when an agreement was reached at Haapsalu between the commander of German troops and the commander of an Estonian regiment. By this agreement the Estonian

³⁸ Published in Riigi Teataja 1918, 1. Translation in appendix A, II, No. 2.

³⁹ Order No. 1 of the Estonian Liberation Committee, reproduced in *Eesti Vabadussõda*, vol. 1, p. 46.

unit was permitted to retain its arms provided it would remain neutral.⁴⁰ Bolshevik troops offered only a token resistance to the rapid German advance and quickly evacuated Estonia.

Estonia was now under German occupation.

C. ESTONIAN DIPLOMACY AND DE FACTO RECOGNITION

The first formal foreign diplomatic action taken by the Estonian National Council came in the form of a protest against the looting of Estonian regions by Russian troops. Its date was October 29, 1917, and it was delivered by the representative of the council, A. Piip, in Petrograd to the respective legations of Great Britain, the United States, France, and Belgium. The protest had been passed in the form of a resolution by the Estonian National Council October 26, 1917, and projected Estonia's problems with Russia onto the international diplomatic stage.⁴¹ It reflected the will of the Estonian people, through their representatives, to protect themselves, and not to be inhibited by Russian domination, in bringing injustices against themselves directly and officially before the court of world opinion.

With the passage of the resolution of November 28, 1917, the Estonian National Council began its effort to win recognition of its independence. The resolution had, of course, declared the council the depository of the supreme power. Steps had been advanced toward a final declaration of independence. Then, in December and January, envoys left Estonia to help win for their country its rightful place beside the nations of the world. The delegation was armed with a memorandum to be presented to foreign governments in which were detailed the basic political decisions of the Estonian National Council, urging these governments to consider the feasibility and validity of the establishment of an independent Estonian state.

The Russian Constituent Assembly had been dispersed by the Bolsheviks on January 23, 1918. That same day its Estonian members called on the British legation, the United States, and French diplomatic representatives to obtain assurances that in the event of a German occupation the Allied Powers would support the Estonian claim to independence, and would oppose annexation of their country by Germany.

Results from these protests were far from immediate but the effect, nevertheless, was to encourage the Estonian National Council to continue the procedure and to remain adamant in their purpose not to cooperate with Germany.

Great results came from the representations of the delegates sent abroad to win recognition. Both the British and the French Governments reacted favorably to the delegations' protests in Stockholm against Germany's claim to represent Estonia and against German plans that would end in the German absorption of Estonia. They replied on March 1 and 20, 1918, to the Estonian delegation that they recognized the Estonian Constituent Assembly as the de facto governmental authority. Even more concrete results were soon forthcoming in the capitals of the Allied Powers.⁴²

⁴⁰ The agreement is reproduced in *Eesti Vabadussõda*, vol. 1, p. 44.

⁴¹ *Maanõukogu protokollid*, pp. 250 and 260. *Eesti Vabadussõda*, vol. 1, pp. 34-35.

⁴² Graham, *The Diplomatic Recognition of Border States*, op. cit., pp. 241-240. Also *Mémoire sur L'indépendance de l'Esthonie présenté à la conférence de la paix par la délégation Esthonnienne*, Paris, 1919; and *Pour l'Esthonie Indépendant. Recueil des documents diplomatiques publié par la délégation esthonnienne*. Copenhagen, 1918.

However, as shown above, this assembly, which was believed by the Estonian delegation to have been functioning, had been actually terminated at its beginning by the Bolshevik invalidation of the elections.

Specifically, the Estonian delegations made the following requests to the Allied Powers:

(1) Recognition of the independence of Estonia within its ethnographical boundaries; (2) recognition of the Estonian Provisional Government, formed by the Estonian National Council, as the legitimate Government of Estonia; and (3) admission of Estonia to the peace conference.

Formal answers were received from Britain, France, and Italy, granting *de facto* recognition to the Estonian National Council and accepting the Estonian delegates as the informal diplomatic representatives of Estonia. France, in its reply on May 13, made a reservation with regard to Russia's prewar debts. Italy, replying on May 27, recognized the Estonian National Council only as an independent body, and preferred to reserve the recognition of the independence of Estonia to the peace conference. Britain had forwarded its reply on May 3, 1918.

The Central Powers remained silent.

De facto recognition by the Allied Powers, however, counteracted German moves to annex Estonia and guaranteed the recognition of actions taken by the Estonian National Council which now knew it had a hearing in the councils of the nations.

VII. GERMAN OCCUPATION AND ATTEMPTS AT ANNEXATION

Estonia was under German occupation from February 1918 until the armistice of November 11, 1918. Backed by the German military government, the Baltic German barons employed every device they could conjure up to transform Estonia into a German duchy with a German prince at its head, or a German colony, or to create some form of union between Estonia and Germany. In this effort they had the help of certain political groups in Germany. The Estonian population resisted passively; the strongest opposition came from the peasantry. At any rate the effort failed. The arrest and imprisonment of a number of leading Estonians, including the Prime Minister, Konstantin Päts, failed to intimidate the population or subdue its leadership. In the program of suppression that followed, the German occupation authorities put the whole country under strict military rule, suspended activities of legitimate government agencies, and subjected their administration to appointees of the German military governors. The provisional government secreted itself but did not diminish its activities. With great vigor the German Balts persisted, but futilely, in their design to annex Estonia to Germany. They revived their land councils. They initiated special assemblies (*Landesversammlungen*) "to effect the annexation of the Baltic Provinces to Germany by a personal union with Prussia."⁴³ The assemblies were separate for Estonia and Livonia. The nobility, the clergy, the towns, and the peasants sent their delegates. Estonians were to be represented only by delegates of peasants who were community elders elected by other

* Dellingshausen, *op. cit.*, p. 266.



elders or appointed by the German military government.⁴⁴ The deputies of the other groups were all Germans or germanized Estonians. Out of 87 deputies sent to the special assembly in Livonia, 32 were from the rural communities (12 Estonians and 20 Latvians) and 16 out of 52 in Estonia were from the rural communities.⁴⁵

But more acute problems of representation beset the Germans.

When the representatives of peasants met in Tallinn on April 9 and in Riga on April 10, 1918, they disqualified themselves, stating simply that they were not authorized to speak in the name of the population. In Riga, they went so far as to issue a memorandum which stated that only the Estonian National Council had the legal right to make decisions affecting the whole of Estonia. In fact, the Estonian representatives abstained from voting. But the German majority went ahead and decided upon the separation of Estonia and Livonia from Russia and elected deputies to a United Land Council to include Estonia, Livonia, and Saaremaa (Oesel). The United Land Council convened on April 12, 1918, and resolved to petition the German Kaiser to form a separate kingdom out of the three provinces. Of course, there was the provision that the separate kingdom would come under German military protection and that there was to be a "personal" union with Prussia.⁴⁶

In the supplement to the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, Soviet Russia had renounced its rights to Estonian territory, and the local Germans now proceeded to employ that fact to secure approval of their annexation plans from the German Kaiser. The Kaiser gave his approval on September 22, 1918, declaring the Baltic Provinces to be "free and independent."⁴⁷ Political crosscurrents inside the tottering German Government, however, obstructed these German plans. The collapse of German arms on the western front added to Germany's distress and compounded the dilemma for the German Balts. Finally, abdication of the Kaiser and the German Revolution buried the dream of the German Balts for possession of the Baltic countries beyond all hope.

VIII. THE SOVIET INVASION OF ESTONIA

A. ITS PREPARATION

The Estenian Bolsheviks, who fled to Russia before the advancing German Army in February 1918, immediately plotted their return. In Moscow, they made the Estenian section of the Bolshevik party

⁴⁴ The German occupation authorities had reintroduced the old Rural Community Act of 1866 under which the elected community elder was not the general spokesman of the population but only the caretaker and administrator in a limited field. This law had been replaced by new democratic regulations in 1917, and elections of new community councils and elders had been held under these laws. The Germans, however, discontinued the activities of these officials and turned back to 1866. With regard to the special assembly of Livonia, the spokesman of the German Balts, Dellingshausen, wrote (Op. cit., p. 268): "On April 10 there [in Riga] the land assembly of Livonia had convened. This, however, had not passed undisturbed. Peasants at several electoral meetings in the county of Tartu [Dorpat] had refused to carry out the elections. According to instructions received from the land assembly of Livonia [Landesvertretung] the assistant county administrators had appointed delegates of the peasant communities who went to Riga to the land assembly. But the representatives of Estenian peasants from northern Livonia refused to participate in the voting for separation from Russia."

⁴⁵ See Grimm, Claus. *Jahre deutscher Entscheidung im Baltikum, 1918-19*. (The Fateful Years for Germans in Baltic.) Essen: Essener Verlagsanstalt, 1939, p. 60.

⁴⁶ The Estenian version of these assemblies is given in M. Martna, *Estland, die Esten und die estnische Frage* (Estonia, the Estonians and the Estenian Question). Olten; W. Trosch, 1919, pp. 94-110. The memorandum submitted by the Estenian community elders in Riga is printed in full on pp. 103-105.

⁴⁷ The text of the recognition document is printed in Dellingshausen, op. cit., pp. 340-341.

their rallying ground. A primary source of strength was the People's Commissariat for Nationality Affairs which happened to be headed by Stalin, whose name, at the time, was only one of many in the Soviet Government. A special Estonian department was organized inside Stalin's Commissariat on May 11, 1918 whose function it was to serve as a nucleus for the Estonian-Bolshevik conspiracy and to provide the mechanism for the organization of Communist Estonian military units.⁴⁸ This department and its affiliates inside the Commissariat organized conferences, sent a delegation to the Brest-Litovsk Peace Conference to oppose German claims, and issued a mobilization order for all Estonian Communists living in Russia.⁴⁹

The Communist effort to organize Estonian Communist military units began in 1917 but proved unsuccessful since only a handful of regular Red Guard troops joined the Bolshevik cause. These attempts, however, were spurned by the Estonian national units which could not be brought under Communist control even when their divisional command was dissolved on February 19, 1918.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, the organization of Estonian units within the Red Army went on in Russia. A recruiting proclamation was issued on April 4, 1918,⁵¹ and an order was even issued from the Commissar of War on May 24, 1918, officially authorizing their commissioning.⁵² Some of these newly organized units fought with the Soviet Army in the ensuing Russian civil war. In the subsequent invasion of Estonia in November only parts of two Estonian Communist regiments participated.

Just as the German Balts wanted Estonia annexed to Germany, so it remained the core of Soviet policy toward Estonia to have it transformed into a Soviet state.

Pesikina,⁵³ reviewing this phase of Soviet history long after the event, wrote:

To strengthen immediately the work in occupied regions, the Narkomnats [People's Commissariat for National Affairs] ordered the leading workers of national commissariats to be sent to the occupied localities. They composed the local staffs for the direction of military operations. Later, after the occupied territories had been liberated, they formed soviet governments. This was the case in Lithuania, Byelorussia, Latvia, and Estonia.

B. THE SOVIET MILITARY ATTACK AND THE ROLE OF ESTONIAN COMMUNISTS

The Soviet aim in employing token forces of Estonian Communist units when the Red Army invaded Estonia was to give the invasion the complexion of an Estonian civil war. The Estonian Government and its military command declared the invasion an act of aggression by a foreign power. But, by a most interesting and circuitous system of dialectics the Soviet apologists have proceeded to prove that in fact it was Estonia which really attacked Soviet Russia. G. Naan, the Bolshevik party historian, has written:

Isn't it clear that the Estonian reactionaries were the politically attacking party in the war? It continued its reactionary policy which was anti-Soviet, against

⁴⁸ E. I. Pesikina. *Narodnyi komissariat po delam natsional'nostei i ego deiatel'nost' v 1917-18 gg.* Moskva, 1950, p. 61. The decree was published in *Izvestia* No. 93, May 12, 1918.

⁴⁹ Pesikina, *op. cit.*, p. 56; Sepp, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

⁵⁰ *Pravda* No. 23, February 12, 1918.

⁵¹ *Organizatsiia Krasnoi Armii, 1917-18*, Moskva, 1943, p. 105.

⁵² *Politika Sovetskoi vlasti*, p. 163.

⁵³ Pesikina, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

the people and against freedom. Yet the Russian Soviet Government had a policy based on self-determination. Therefore the fact that the Red Army started the strategical attack does not weaken the principal thesis at all.⁵⁴

At another point Naan wrote:

On November 22 the Red Army started its attack at Narva. It included Estonian Regiments fighting for the liberation of their fatherland from the oppression of foreign imperialists and their "own" bourgeoisie.⁵⁵

Naan took the position that the Soviet Union was by military means protecting itself against political attack. The Red Army, this official Soviet historian wrote, launched its military attack only after the Estonian "bourgeoisie" began their political aggression against Soviet Russia.

Stalin, himself, wrote on December 22, 1918: "* * * our Navy is protecting Soviet Estonia from possible surprises from the sea."⁵⁶

C. THE ESTONIAN SOVIET REPUBLIC OF 1918-1919: THE WORKERS' COMMUNE

After the Red army attack in November 1918, the Estonian Workers' Commune, composed of returning Communist activists, proclaimed on November 29, 1918, the Soviet Government of Estonia. Two proclamations were issued by the new Government, one to the world, the other to the people of Estonia.⁵⁷ The two proclamations pronounced the Soviet Government of Estonia to be the successor to the Soviet regime that had prevailed in 1917-18. They stated that the laws and decrees issued by the preceding Soviet Government before the German invasion were again in force. The Estonian Provisional Government was declared abolished, and its officials, along with all pastors and landlords, were outlawed.

But the Communist rule proved to be a fiasco. The Estonian Army, helped by units of the British Navy, 2,000 Finnish volunteers, and including a small formation of German Balts (*Baltenregiment*), fought the Communists from place to place, until the whole country was free of them about the middle of January 1919. Soviet rule lasted in occupied Estonian territories only so long as the Soviet armed forces remained there. Thus, as the Red army moved back and forth, Soviet domination lasted usually 2 and sometimes 4, 5, or 6 weeks. The Bolsheviks lacked time to introduce a Soviet constitution. But a project had reached the planning stage earlier in accordance with the resolution of the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets and had been published on February 12, 1918.⁵⁸ Nothing, however, came of the project.

While the Soviets were still more or less occupying parts of Estonian territory, they sought to create the illusion that Soviet Estonia was asking recognition from the Soviet Union. This technique was an effort to counteract the achievement of the Estonian Provisional Government in getting de facto recognition for itself from the Great Powers. Thus, the necessary rites and ceremonies were carefully

⁵⁴ Eesti kodanlike natsionalistide ideoloogia reaktsooniline olemus (The Reactionary Nature of the Ideology of Estonian Bourgeois-Nationalists) Tallinn, RK Politiline Kirjandus, 1947, p. 114.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 109.

⁵⁶ Zhiz'n Natsional'nostei No. 7, p. 160, December 22, 1918; quoted from J. Stalin, op cit., p. 183.

⁵⁷ Politika Sovetskoi vlasti, pp. 132-134.

⁵⁸ Sepp, op. cit., p. 68.

staged and recorded. An Estonian-Soviet delegation appeared in Petrograd in December 1918, and on being formally received by Josef Stalin, asked for recognition for the Estonian Soviet Republic. Just as gravely the Council of People's Commissars issued a decree on December 8, 1918, recognizing the independence of Soviet Estonia and providing military and economic help.⁵⁹ In recording these and kindred events, the Soviet historian, Pesikina,⁶⁰ reported that all the young Soviet Republics "expressed their longing for a federative union with the Russian Soviet Federation of Socialist Republics."

Sepp, another official Soviet historian, with equal authority, wrote: ⁶¹

At this stage the proclamation of Estonia as an independent Soviet Republic, facilitated the solution of problems confronting the Communist party and the Estonian Workers' Commune. It helped to strengthen the local Soviets and it explained to the working masses that the Soviet Regime in Estonia is the Government of the Estonian working people and that the Estonian Soviet Republic is an independent Soviet state of Estonian workers and peasants.

This extraordinary technique of making it appear that a militarily overrun and dominated country was asking for the privilege of being joined to its conqueror, while at the same time the semantics of propaganda called it an "independent Soviet state," was duplicated by a striking parallel example that occurred just 21 years later. On November 30, 1939, the Soviet Union launched its attack on Finland. On December 1, the Soviet information agency TASS reported that a Finnish People's Government had been formed in the town of Terijoki, a settlement that had been evacuated by Finnish troops. This Government, headed by a long-time Finnish Communist, O. W. Kuusinen, who had been in the Soviet Union since 1919, issued a proclamation announcing its existence to the Finnish people. One day later the Kuusinen "government" concluded what was called a mutual-assistance pact with the Soviet Union. This pact satisfied Soviet demands for bases and territorial adjustments which the legitimate Finnish Government had heretofore rejected. While the Soviet Union had its army in the area, the Kuusinen "government" continued to exist. When complete military victory became unlikely this People's Government faded and disappeared.⁶²

D. AGGRESSIVE AIMS OF SOVIET RUSSIA

On December 23, 1918, the All-Russian Executive Committee confirmed the recognition and the independence of the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian Soviet Republics in a sweeping decree that declared "the former attachment of these countries to the old czarist empire does not impose upon them any obligations."⁶³ But the decree also said: "* * * at the same time the Central Executive Committee expresses firm confidence that only now, on the basis of the recognition of complete freedom and self-determination and the passing of power

⁵⁹ *Izvestia*, No. 269, December 8, 1918; English translation in appendix, A, II, No. 3.

⁶⁰ Pesikina, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

⁶¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 113.

⁶² See Carl Gustav Emil Mannerheim, *Minnen (Memoris)*. Stockholm, Norstedt, vol. 1, 1951; vol. II, 1952, pp. 119-123. There is also a German translation by H. von Born-Pilsach, *Erinnerungen*. Zürich; Atlantis Verlag, 1952. The formation of this Finnish People's Government was announced in *Pravda*, No. 333, December 2, 1939, together with a note on its recognition by the Soviet Union. *Pravda*, No. 334, December 3, 1939, published the text of the mutual-assistance pact, and the next day *Pravda* carried an editorial on it.

⁶³ *Izvestia* No. 282, December 24, 1918.

into the hands of the working class, will there be formed a free, voluntary, and inviolable union of toilers of all peoples inhabiting the territory of the former Russian Empire."

Stalin, in his report to the Central Executive Committee, put it more boldly:

The revolutionary development in the border regions is the only means by which it is at present possible to restore the unity of Soviet Russia and to strengthen its power. The border regions have now started on this road. The Council of People's Commissars decided, particularly in regard to this fact, to recognize the right of these nations to independence in order to provide them with the opportunity, after they have taken the power in their hands, to proclaim the unity of the Soviet Republic.⁶⁴

Soviet newspapers were even more outspoken than Stalin. They declared that there was no place for the right of self-determination or independence for these nations. In an editorial *Izvestiia* on December 25, 1918,⁶⁵ declared the Baltic countries to be indispensable to Soviet Russia, insisting that the Baltic Sea "must become a Soviet sea." The Baltic States, argued the *Izvestiia* editorial, separated the Russian revolution from the working classes of western Europe, a barrier, the editorial complained, that should be removed. The editorial concluded: "To achieve this objective Soviet Russia chose the way of least resistance, the establishment of independent Soviet republics in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania."

According to Pesikina,⁶⁶ it was Lenin and Stalin, presumably, who were still hopeful in May 1919 that Estonia could, by one method or another, be drawn into the Soviet fold as one of its so-called republics. In a directive allegedly prepared by these two Soviet leaders calling for a military alliance of all Soviet Republics, Estonia was listed among the Soviet republics. Actually in the formation of the alliance, Estonian representatives did not participate. It comprised in the end only Russia, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Latvia, and Lithuania.⁶⁷

But the omission of Estonia from the alliance involved no subtle explanations; the Soviet armies had been driven from Estonia soil, and the Soviet Russian military situation offered little hope for an early return.

IX. ESTONIAN INDEPENDENCE BECOMES A FACT

A. COMMUNIST INVASION REPULSED

German defeat in World War I and the ensuing revolution in November 1918 brought with them the end of the German occupation of Estonia. The victorious Allies took measures to bring about the evacuation of German troops from the Baltic countries just as soon as the Baltic governments could maintain internal law and order. The Allies also decided to maintain German troops in the area to check any military advances from Communist Russia. The position of the

⁶⁴ *Izvestiia* No. 282, December 24, 1918.

⁶⁵ No. 283.

⁶⁶ Pesikina. *Op. cit.*, p. 150.

⁶⁷ Decree on Unification of the Soviet Republics of Russia, the Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, Byelorussia, for the Fight with World Imperialism, June 1, 1919—*Sobranie zakonov i rasporiazhenii* (Collection of Laws and Decrees), 1919, 23, 264.

Allies was clarified in article 433 of the Versailles Treaty, which, in part, stated:

* * * in order to ensure the restoration of peace and good government in the Baltic Provinces and Lithuania, all German troops at present in the said territories shall return within the frontiers of Germany as soon as the Governments of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers shall think the moment suitable, having regard to the internal situation of these territories.

These troops * * * shall in no way interfere with such measures for national defense as may be adopted by the Provisional Governments of Est(h)onia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

German troops, however, acted on their own initiative once revolution in their own country became known to them, and the consequent breakdown of morale intensified the soldier's natural yearning to return home. Still, the German occupation endured in some fashion for a brief period. The provisional government proceeded to act on the day of the armistice, November 11, 1918, and on November 19 concluded an agreement with the German plenipotentiary, August Winnig, calling for the formal evacuation of Estonia by all remaining German troops. The administration of the country was to be left to the new Estonian Government.⁶⁸

The burden of defense against Communist invasion now fell full force upon the limited army of Estonia. The last battle the German troops had fought before their return home took place November 22, when the Red army attacked the city of Narva, and the Germans had repulsed them. But, in the succeeding attack, on November 28, the Estonian army, not yet fully organized, took the full brunt of the blow. The Estonian Government declared a general mobilization while its army, retreating before the Soviet advance, continued to strengthen its organization. With the help of Finnish volunteer contingents and units of the British navy, the Red invasion was stopped only 20 miles from Tallinn. Strengthened, though hastily organized, the Estonian forces, with the help of their allies, fought fiercely, and within the next 2 months drove the invaders beyond the Estonian frontiers. Fighting continued, however, until the Russo-Estonian armistice of January 3, 1920, but the Estonian Army kept these battles mostly beyond its own borders, and consistently repulsed attacks from the Bolsheviks.

B. ESTONIA ORGANIZES ITS OWN STATE

Estonian strength had been drained by the war; its economy lay in ruins. As one occupation succeeded the other—Bolshevik, German, and Bolshevik again—each took for itself what the other had left until the country was desolate. The systematized looting exhausted Estonia of its food products, raw materials, and industrial equipment. There was no production. Trade and commerce were dead. The treasury of the young nation was empty and seemed to have nothing to count on except hope and its resolution to succeed. Such was the foundation upon which the new provisional government was to function.

First, the Estonian National Council acted on its dictum that it was the depository of supreme power. But it considered as its primary task the duty of convoking a Constituent Assembly, for which it proclaimed election laws on November 24, 1918, and set the election days

⁶⁸ Riigi Teataja, 1918, No. 1.

for February 1-2, 1919.⁶⁹ It then appointed a provisional government which was a coalition of all the political parties of the country, with the exception of the Social Revolutionaries. Upon this provisional government the Estonian National Council conferred the power to govern by decree. But the council reserved for itself the right of validating or rejecting the decrees of the provisional government.

The strained military situation at the front hovered over the new Government as a perpetual threat. Government machinery had to be created from the ground up, and a judicial system was lacking. Local government agencies were established or reestablished out of the former ones. Officials were assigned to counties in order to implement the regulations of the Central Government.

C. CONTINUITY OF LAW IS PRESERVED

Estonia had in the course of time come under the czarist Russian system of law. But this system of law was destroyed by the successive German and Bolshevik occupations. When Estonia proceeded to function as a republic it had, therefore, three different legal traditions upon which to establish its own system. These were czarist Russian, Bolshevik Russian, and Germanic. To these must be added the enactments and decrees of the indigenous Estonian authorities, such as the Estonian National Council and the Estonian provisional government.

The first rejection of any body of law, except that approved or promulgated by the Estonian National Council, came on November 28, 1917, when the Council declared invalid in advance all enactments by the conquering powers which conflicted with its own accepted legal system. Then the provisional government decreed, on November 19, 1918, the effectiveness of czarist Russian law and of all laws established by the respective governments of Estonia that grew out of its independence, such as the Estonian National Council, the Liberation Committee, and the provisional government. It decreed also the ineffectiveness of the laws of the Bolshevik and German occupations.

This decree became the foundation of the Estonian legal order. Upon it the administration of justice and the government of the country rested. The decree stated:

Until the enactment of new laws, or the amendment of former ones, the laws in effect shall be those which were in force prior to October 24, 1917, within the boundaries of the present state of Estonia, unless these laws have been amended by the Resolution of the Estonian National Council of November 15, 1917,⁷⁰ or by the manifesto of the Liberation Committee on February 25, 1918, as well as by the former and present acts of the Provisional Government.⁷¹

Special consideration was given to certain German occupation decrees mostly touching on taxation and customs.

It was by this process of adaptation—of partial elimination of old and undesirable laws where new and better ones had been prepared and promulgated—that the Estonian founding fathers maintained both a careful continuity of law and the order that law made possible. Much of the juridical system of the Russian Empire was salvaged and kept intact. The legal chaos attended upon revolution was obviated,

⁶⁹ Published in *Riigi Teataja*, Nos. 2 and 3, 1918.

⁷⁰ The dates in the decree conform to the Julian calendar. According to the Gregorian calendar these dates would be November 6, 1917, and November 28, 1917.

⁷¹ Section 2, First Act of the Provisional Administrative Acts, *Riigi Teataja* 1918, 1.

and the Estonian Republic meticulously adhered to principles of legitimacy.

X. THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

A. ELECTIONS UNDER SIEGE

Elections to the Constituent Assembly, set for February 1919, were postponed to April 5-7, because enemy troops continued to occupy parts of the country. The political parties conducted an active and zealous campaign. Special regulations were issued to allow as much political activity as possible while Estonia was still in a partial state of siege. In the clarification of issues parties realigned themselves. The extremist parties, such as the Communist Party, which had identified itself with Soviet Russia and fought against Estonian independence, disappeared from the political stage altogether. But, there were also party integrations. The Radical Democrats merged with the Democrats to constitute a National Democratic Party. The Radical Socialists combined with the Labor Party. When the campaign got under way there were actually 10 political parties in the field; 8 of these won representation in the assembly. Altogether 120 seats in the Constituent Assembly were at stake; about 400,000 votes were cast. The proportional representation system governed the election.

The results of the elections reflected a concentration of sentiment toward a middle road and a pronounced rejection of extremism. Thus, the middle parties polled 83 percent of the votes. The Social Democrats proved the most popular party, winning 41 seats with 37 percent of the votes. The Labor Party, with 25 percent of the votes, received 30 seats. The National Democratic Party, polling 21 percent of the votes, took 25 seats. The Social Revolutionaries, a leftist group, polled only 4 percent of the votes which entitled them to 7 seats in the Parliament. The conservative Peasants' League, on the extreme opposite side of the political spectrum, gathered 8 seats in Parliament with 4 percent of the votes counted in their favor. The newest party on the scene, the Christian Democratic Party, polled 5 percent of the votes, which allowed them 5 seats. There were 2 minority parties: The Germans who won 3 seats, and the Russian Party which got 1 seat.

The Constituent Assembly, which was formed as a result of this election, convened on April 23, 1919. The problems that confronted it were overwhelming. It organized a coalition cabinet under O. Strandmann, which included Social Democrats, Laborites, and National Democrats. This government and the Constituent Assembly that named it were now prepared to tackle both the nation's controversial and its routine problems involving the continuation of the war, creation of a stable administration, social legislation, and monetary and fiscal measures.

Two main problems were outstanding: one was the drafting of a constitution, which the Constituent Assembly held uppermost; and the other was the passing of a land-reform measure.

B. THE PROVISIONAL CONSTITUTION OF JUNE 4, 1919

Pertinent to this phase of the review of Estonia's independence was the fact that the declaration of independence issued by the Esto-

nian Constituent Assembly on May 19, 1919, excluded any legal basis for the union of Estonia with any other state.⁷² Having thus through a democratically elected assembly and by a formal declaration pronounced itself unconditionally sovereign and independent, the Constituent Assembly on June 4, 1919, adopted a provisional constitution. The constitution defined the Estonian frontiers, established Estonian as the official language while guaranteeing minorities the use of their own languages, and created a bill of rights. Under the provisional constitution, the machinery of government was set up. The supreme power rested with the Constituent Assembly as the representatives of the people. The assembly's president was the acting head of state. Under the supreme authority of the assembly the government exercised the supreme executive power. The Supreme Court of Justice held the supreme judicial power. The duties of the assembly were detailed.

Agrarian and social reforms were provided for in the provisional constitution. They were also regarded as fundamental in the drafting of a permanent constitution. The assembly held onto the control of foreign affairs. Questions of war and peace resided with the assembly. A separate legislative commission was created to enact current legislation and to act for the assembly between its sessions. Decisions by former Estonian Government bodies were validated by the provisional constitution which provided that it could be changed by a majority vote of the assembly. With the establishment of the supreme court by a law passed on October 21, 1919, the assembly completed its organization of government.⁷³ The supreme court was the court of final appeal and consisted of three sections: civil, criminal, and administrative.

C. THE AGRARIAN REFORM AND THE AGRARIAN ISSUE

The agrarian problem was basic to Estonia, and it was a problem that provoked extreme reactions. Most of the land belonged to predominantly German landowners against whom were pitted by contrast a vast number of landless peasants and farmhands. The major appeal of all political parties to the bulk of the Estonian citizenry, who were rural and agricultural, was on the issue of agrarian reform. Its solution was logically held to rest with the Constituent Assembly so that the provisional government, which preceded the assembly, was careful in the beginning of 1919 to issue only such regulations as would not interfere with or forestall possible reform. The government, however, used its powers to manage estates which would otherwise be abandoned or despoiled.⁷⁴ In February 1919, the Ministry of Agriculture was authorized to take over the estates that had belonged to the land councils or landtag, the institution of the so-called Baltic German nobility which had been abolished by the Russian Provisional Government in 1917. The ministry used the estates for the cultivation of grain crops and even divided and distributed some of them in accordance with the laws of February 17, 1919,⁷⁵ and of

⁷² Eesti Asutava Kogu seletus Eesti riiklisest iseseisvusest ja rippumatuses (Declaration of Independence of Estonia by Estonian Constituent Assembly) in Riigi Teataja 1919, 47, 97. An abbreviated English translation is given by M. W. Graham in his *New Governments*, pp. 650-625.

⁷³ Riigi Teataja 1919, 82/83, 164.

⁷⁴ Law of December 17, 1918—RT 1918, No. 1.

⁷⁵ RT 1919, 11, 27.

February 28, 1919.⁷⁶ The primary object of the regulations of the ministry at this point was not expropriation but to make the most of a usable asset in the fight against the shortage of food grains.

The agrarian issue pivoted on the question of equality of land distribution. Land tenure had its beginnings in Estonia with the conquest of the country by the German knights in the 13th century. There had grown up through time three categories of land ownership, each subject to different legal regulations: Estates of the nobility or Rittergüter, the state domains, and the church estates.

The peasants, however, were excluded from the use of the greater part of the land which was under the direct control of the owners of the estates. The remaining part of the land, the farmland, was used by the peasant on a quasi-feudal basis. After the 1860's some of the farmlands had been sold to the peasants. But the greater number of peasants were tilling the land as tenant-farmers or sharecroppers, and had neither right in the land nor ownership. In 1919, there were only 51,640 peasant-owned farms comprising 42.1 percent of the land. Some 1,149 large estates owned 57.9 percent of the land. Of these estates 80 percent were individually owned, the other 20 percent were under state or public ownership or owned by private organizations. Out of the large estates, however, something like 30 percent were eventually parceled out into 23,023 small farms, either on an ownership or a tenancy basis.⁷⁷

To provide the peasantry with land, the assembly held that the German landlords, whose ancestors had taken the land by force and without a legal title, had misused the privileges they had usurped and had done nothing through the centuries to improve the lot of the peasantry. Therefore, no doubts about either the legality or the moral right of land distribution existed. What they debated was method and time. In the end they created a land act of October 10, 1919.⁷⁸ This established a land reserve under state ownership and control which took over the large estates along with their equipment and appurtenances, pursuant to the definitions of the Baltic civil code. Exempted from the Land Reform Act were the lands owned by churches, cemetery lands, municipal and communal lands, and the property or inventories of tenants.

Estonia, as a sovereign state, kept possession of the larger forest plots and the marshlands. But the fields, the meadows, and the hay lands were distributed. It was allotted either on a policy of hereditary tenancy or on short lease. But, the governing principle was that the land belonged to those working it. There were, however, ownership preferences, and these were granted to Estonians who had distinguished themselves by their bravery in the war, and to wounded soldiers, families of the war dead, and soldiers in general. Former tenants were given ownership. Farms that were too small were increased to help make them self-supporting.

The Estonian Constituent Assembly held to the principle of compensation for those whose land had been expropriated. A special

⁷⁶ RT 1919, 15, 37.

⁷⁷ See Jüri Uluots. *Grundzüge der Agrargeschichte Estlands* (Main Features of Estonian Agrarian History). Tartu: Akadeemiline Kooperatiiv, 1935, p. 151, ff. Also G. E. Luiga. *Die neue Agrarverfassung in Eesti. Ihre geschichtlichen Ursachen und sozialpolitischen Auserwirkungen* (The New Land Tenure in Estonia. Its Historical Causes and Social Effects). Tartu, 1924.

⁷⁸ RT 1919, 79/80, 156.

law to this effect was passed later. Moreover, subsequent laws (1926-27) further liberalized the land act. Under these acts former owners could repossess some of their property.

XI. ESTONIA AT THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE, 1919

After the final defeat of German arms on the western front all the diplomatic success the Estonians had achieved in gaining recognition for the Estonian National Council had been lost and had to be rewon. According to Graham,⁷⁹ "The fortunes of Estonia were involved in virtually every move made by the Paris Peace Conference to solve the Russian problem." The de facto recognition, which three of the principal allies, Great Britain, France, and Italy had accorded the council at the behest of its emissaries, was not clearly fixed because of the insistence of all White Russian governments, especially the Kolchak government, on the principle of an "undivided Russia." But, the Allies, themselves, were faced with a totally changed situation which made recognition under present circumstances wholly different from recognition when the emissaries of the Estonian National Council first requested it and were granted their petition.

When de facto recognition was granted in 1918, German troops occupied Estonian territory and threatened its annexation to Germany. But, with Germany now militarily impotent, and the Versailles peacemakers sitting in judgment, the aggression now came from the new Bolshevik government. For the time being at least, this aggression was checked. On the other hand, the White Russians, at this time successfully fighting the Bolshevik regime, had as much right to the ear and cooperation of the Allied Governments as the Estonians from the standpoint of the interests of the West. The West was now considering the virtues of settlement of the status of national minorities within the former Russian Empire by a Russian Constituent Assembly.

But Estonia's interests were also the interests of the Allies and even of the White Russian forces; for all, over a period, cooperated in military action against the Bolsheviks. Estonia had already stopped the invasion of its territory by Soviet Russia, and was, at the moment, showing clear signs of being militarily competent to defend itself. It was plain also that to continue this defense it needed military help and material from the Allies. Then, there was the problem of White Russian units under General Yudenich's command located on Estonian soil. The general's aims coincided with those of Estonia, that is to say, both desired the defeat of Bolshevik forces. Yudenich, while operating from Estonia, designed his military strategy with a view to liberating the northwestern provinces of Russia from Soviet domination. The Allies' interest in the defeat of Soviet forces led them to press the Estonians into cooperation with the White Russians. This policy helped to bring about the participation of Estonian units with the White Russian Army in May 1919, in the first Petrograd operation. But the Estonians halted their advance when they reached their objective: the establishment of a strategic defense line beyond the Estonian frontier.

⁷⁹ Graham. Recognition. Op. cit., p. 257.

The Estonian delegation presented a memorandum to the peace conference on March 25, 1919, reiterating Estonia's inalienable right to self-determination which the conference was recognizing among other civilized nations, but denying the right of any government in Russia to determine Estonia's status as a nation. Peace, said the memorandum, called for a stable government in Estonia in contradistinction to the anarchy that prevailed in Russia. The memorandum pointed out that Estonians had in fact established an independent state de facto for which they were asking de jure recognition.⁸⁰

An additional memorandum was submitted on April 15, 1919.⁸¹ But neither the two memorandums nor the pleadings of the Estonian representatives before the special Baltic Committee produced any effect. Then, in May 1919, when France and England indicated a desire to favor the Estonian petition for recognition, the United States Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, regarded it inadvisable to make any inroads on the inviolability of the old Russian Empire. The nature of the discussions before the specially created Baltic Committee during May and July in 1919 led to the conclusion that the Allies felt they could then go no further toward helping Estonia than the consideration of some kind of autonomy for it within the Russian Empire. Agreement being impossible, the problem was referred for settlement to the League of Nations. There had been one vital gain for Estonia during these inconclusive negotiations: It had established its right to a hearing before the world, and it had been provided an opportunity to prove its determination to win independent statehood and complete separation from Russia.⁸²

XII. NEW ENEMIES AND "ALLIES"

A. ESTONIANS BATTLE GERMAN LANDESWEHR

The continuing military engagements in 1919 constituted a part of the Estonian history of that year, but victory for Estonian arms simplified a confused situation. In fighting the Red army, the Estonian forces carried the battle down to the River Daugava (Düna) in Latvia. While this cleared northern Latvia of the Red armies, it brought the Estonian forces into conflict with a newly formed German volunteer army which, in pursuing the Bolsheviks, had moved northward from Riga. The German Baltic nobility and their supporters still entertained desperately a clinging hope that they could hold onto the Baltic States over which they had been masters for so long. Their hope depended upon a volunteer unit they called the Landeswehr which was joined with some fragments from the German Regular Army, and some units of White Russians. They managed to suspend the existing legitimate Latvian Government, and moving against the Bolsheviks in the spring of 1919, won partial toleration of their activity from the Allies who, above all, wanted the Bolsheviks defeated.⁸³ The Estonian Government had continued to recognize, contrary to the German policy, the Latvian National Government headed by Karlis

⁸⁰ *Mémoire sur l'Indépendance de l'Esthonie*, pp. 58-60.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 63-68.

⁸² See Graham, *Recognition*. *Op. cit.*, pp. 257-280.

⁸³ Grimm provides a full account from the German point of view of the attempts and frustrations of the Baltic barons to reestablish their economic and political hold on the Baltic States. *Op. cit.*

Ulmanis and extended help to it in organizing Latvian Army units on Estonian soil which later participated in military actions against the Landeswehr.

The forces under German Baltic leadership did take Riga but then moving northward allowed the Red armies to escape to the east. They asked the Estonian Army to leave the northern part of Latvia, and when it refused, they attacked. The Allied Control Commission attempted to bring about an armistice; but when fighting broke out again on June 22, 1919, the German-led forces were routed. After that, the intervention of the Allies led to the disbanding of the Landeswehr and their associated units. Some remaining military groups were inactivated.

B. ESTONIA AND THE WHITE RUSSIAN PROBLEM

The Estonians had successfully defended themselves against the Bolsheviks and the Germans and were now confronted with the problem of a third army on their territory—the White Russians. At the end of 1918 the German occupation authorities in northwestern Russia organized military units to be used against the Bolsheviks. The German evacuation left this task unfinished. When these units retreated to Estonian territory in December 1918, they were without discipline and demoralized, and constituted more of a threat to the young republic than any help they might give in possible future difficulties with the Bolsheviks. As the result of a special agreement concluded with them on December 6, 1918, they were placed under Estonian command and given Allied support. In due time they participated in several military operations.⁸⁴

In the spring and summer of 1919 White Russian political and military leaders had planned to use Estonia as a base for their proposed conquest of Petrograd and northwestern Russia. To a great extent they recognized the Kolchak leadership and generally proposed a united Russia. At the same time, this group had only contempt for Estonian national aspirations. Under Allied pressure to support the White Russians, the Estonians participated with the northwestern White Russian Army in the first attack on Petrograd in May and June of 1919. Before Petrograd the White Russian Army, however, collapsed, and in August 1919, beat a hasty retreat.⁸⁵

Estonia was reluctant to give its full support to these military adventures in the face of its own mounting problems and the hostility of the White Russian leadership for Estonia's independence. Under Allied pressure the White Russian leaders organized a separate Northwestern Russian Government of their own and on August 11, 1919, recognized the independence of Estonia.⁸⁶ However, the newly organized Government had no authority over the White Russian military units—the northwestern army. The army command, headed by General Yudenich, took its orders from Admiral Kolchak and openly displayed its contempt for an independent Estonia and the independ-

⁸⁴ Vasilii Gorn, *Grazhdanskaiia volna na Severozapade Rossii* (The Civil War in Northwestern Russia). Berlin, Gamaiun, 1923, pp. 33-54.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*; also Bernhard Linde, *Kolchak and the Russian Border Peoples*, *The Est(h)onian Review* (London), vol. 1, No. 2 (Aug. 1919), pp. 63-65; E. Kraav, *End of Petrograd Operations*, *The Est(h)onian Review* (London), vol. 1, No. 4, Oct. 1919, pp. 129-130.

⁸⁶ See Gorn, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-130.

ence of other border states. A second attack on Petrograd in October 1919 again failed, and this time the northwestern army, after crossing the Estonian border, was first disarmed by the Estonians, and after the conclusion of peace it was disbanded.

XIII. RUSSIA MAKES PEACE WITH ESTONIA AT TARTU

Aside from the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk on March 13, 1918, which was renounced in the armistice of November 11, and which Russia also declared null and void, the first treaty the R. S. F. S. R. (Soviet Russia) made with a foreign country was signed between its Government and the Government of Estonia at Tartu on February 2, 1920. Overtures came first from the Soviet side through Chicherin, its Commissar for Foreign Affairs. On August 31, 1919, he proposed negotiations to the Estonian Government looking toward cessation of hostilities, establishment of boundaries, and recognition of Estonia's independence and sovereignty. When the negotiations began on September 17 at Pskov, the Estonian delegation left the conference because it considered the Soviet refusal to permit other border states to participate in the negotiations a typical Russian effort to destroy cooperation among the Baltic States.⁸⁷ Lithuania and Latvia, having been informed of the impending negotiations, had expressed willingness to participate. However, when the negotiations were resumed at Tartu in December, Latvia and Lithuania, being unprepared, did not send their representatives, so that Estonia proceeded alone. Estonia wished the Allies to be considered because of their important help to Estonia in the war of liberation. The only answer came from Britain which recommended that Estonia proceed on its own and in accordance with the wishes of its Government. An armistice was, therefore, concluded on December 31, 1919, effective January 3, 1920, and the treaty of peace was signed February 2, 1920.⁸⁸

Before signing, however, the Government of the R. S. F. S. R. offered both diplomatic and military obstructions. Having set down terms which Estonia could not and would not accept, the Soviets then supported their position with renewed attacks on the northern front. When these attacks failed, the negotiations were terminated to the satisfaction of the Estonians.

By the Treaty of Tartu, the Russian Soviet Republic recognized Estonia as a *de jure* independent state. It declared that the R. S. F. S. R. renounced "voluntarily and forever all rights of sovereignty formerly held by Russia over the Estonian people and territory by virtue of the former legal situation, and by virtue of international treaties, which, in respect of such rights, shall henceforth lose their force." The treaty stipulated that "no obligations towards Russia devolve upon the Estonian people and territory from the fact that Estonia was formerly part of Russia" (sec. II of the peace treaty).

The boundary settlement was reached after mutual concessions. Estonia relinquished its demands for territory toward Petrograd. To these it had felt entitled on ethnic grounds. Estonia was satisfied with a strategic frontier east of the Narva River and east of Irboska.

⁸⁷ The Estonian Review (London), vol. 1, No. 4, Oct. 1919, pp. 134-139.

⁸⁸ The treaty is found in Estonian Official Gazette, *Riigi Teataja* 1920, 24/25, 94. English translation is available in League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. XI, pp. 29-71, and in Shapiro, Soviet Treaty Series, vol. I, p. 34.

The border lakes were to be neutralized with neutral zones adjacent to both sides. The Soviet Russian Republic agreed to join in an international recognition of Estonia's neutrality.

By the economic clauses of the treaty, Estonia was relieved from any responsibility for Russia's prewar debts and obligations. All government property on Estonian soil now belonged to Estonia. The Soviet Government agreed to pay a lump sum of 15 million gold rubles to cover various claims of Estonia held by Estonian citizens. In addition, Estonia was to receive certain timber concessions. On the other hand, the Soviet Government was to have transit rights through Estonia free of duty to facilitate the use of Estonian harbors by Russia.

Non-Estonians in Estonia and Estonians in Russia were given the right of option, that is to say, the right to acquire the citizenship of the other state with the stipulation that they emigrate to the country of their choice.

What basically marred the Treaty of Tartu and left the relationship between Estonia and Soviet Russia in a state of nervous suspension was the patent insincerity of the Soviet Government as proclaimed by its own founders and leaders. The Soviet Government viewed the peace treaty with Estonia as a major achievement⁸⁹ but announced also that it did not accept the treaty as permanent and that the aim of repossessing Estonia had not been abandoned. Even before the signing of the treaty, *Izvestiia*, the Soviet Government newspaper, carried this comment in a report of a workers' and peasants' conference:

Comrade Lenin answered a question about the terms of the peace with Estonia. He said that we made many concessions. The principal one was the cession of disputed territory with a mixed Russian and Estonian population.

He said that we do not want to shed the blood of workers and Red Army soldiers for the sake of a piece of land, especially since this concession is not forever. Estonia is going through a Kerensky period. The workers are beginning to see the meanness of their established leaders who are ransacking the labor unions and have killed 20 Communists. They will soon overthrow this government and form a Soviet Estonia which will conclude a new peace with us.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Lenin's report to the first session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee—*Izvestiia* No. 23, Feb. 3, 1920.

⁹⁰ *Izvestiia* No. 18, Jan. 28, 1920.

PART II—LATVIA

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Latvians are a branch of the Baltic group of peoples who, as tribes bearing a kinship with the Lithuanians, lived in the geographic area that is now Latvia. In his *History of Latvia*, Prof. Arnold Spekke described the group that included the Latvians as being "the most archaic in Europe and particularly rich in reminiscences * * * of a common primitive Indo-European language."¹ Latvian historians consider Latvia to be the heir of several medieval Latvian tribal kingdoms, which as early as the eighth century set up a chain of fortifications against encroachment by the Slavs.² Archaeological research has revealed, moreover, that in their early history the Latvian people had their own monetary system and their own system of weights and measures. They melted imported gold and silver coins and re-fashioned such articles of adornment from the molten fluid as rings, necklaces, bracelets, and brooches. "They had," wrote Prof. Arveds Schwabe,³ "their own penal codes, their own kings, their own states, their own national administration and taxation, their own strategically arranged lines of fortified castles."⁴ Moreover, like the other Baltic states, Latvia may be considered part of the borderland of western civilization.⁵ Before the cloud of subjection to foreign domination had descended upon them, the Latvians enjoyed international relations and made treaties with their neighbors, including the Scandinavian countries. Livonia (Vidzeme, Livland),⁶ consisting of Latvia and Estonia, became integrated into the Holy Roman Empire in 1207. Pope Honorius III declared the converted people of the Baltic lands the children of God and equal in rights with all other Christian peoples. This protection of the dignity of the individual had great appeal and produced many converts to Christianity.

Riga, founded in 1201 by Bishop Albert, was the commercial center of the area. In 1225, it had become a *civitas* or self-governing city and 2 years later joined the powerful Hanseatic League. Subsequently, Riga developed into an important Hanseatic port and constituted a relatively strong force in the Government of Livonia. The three major governing forces of the time in Livonia were the prince-bishops, the Teutonic Order, and the city of Riga, exercising its authority through its own independent municipal administration.⁷ Henceforth, Latvia came under German domination and for

¹ Spekke, Dr. Arnold, *History of Latvia*. Stockholm, M. Goppers, 1951, p. 30.

² Balod's, Dr. Francis, *L'ancienne frontière slavo-latvienne*. Warszawa 1928; also *Det äldsta Lettland*, Stockholm, 1940.

³ Schwabe, Dr. Arved, *The Story of Latvia—A Historical Survey*, Stockholm National Latvian Foundation, 1950, pp. 1-10.

⁴ See also Bilmanis, Dr. Alfred, *Latvia as an Independent State*, Washington, D. C., Latvian Legation, 1947, p. 65.

⁵ Halecki, Oscar, *Borderlands of Western Civilization: A History of East Central Europe*, New York, Roland Press, 1952.

⁶ Variations in spellings of various geographical locations are inserted in parentheses when used for the first time in this report.

⁷ Olins, Peter Z., Dr., *The Teutonic Knights in Latvia*. Riga, 1928, pp. 46, 82.

centuries fell within the German cultural orbit. A review of Latvian history brings to light the primary fact that while the sovereigns of Latvian territory changed with the fortunes and misfortunes of conquest and despotism, the Latvians, whatever their lot, persisted in their existence and survival as a nation. Survival as a nation is a dominant theme that runs strong and unbroken through the ancient and the modern story of Latvia.

The former Teutonic Order, which had merged in 1237 with the Livonian Order, was disbanded under the influence of the Reformation in 1562. Its last master, Prince Gothard Kettler, became hereditary Duke of Courland and Semigalia under the suzerainty of the Polish King. Thus, after the Knights of the Teutonic Order and the prince-bishops, the second period of domination set in, the period of Polish domination, which continued from 1562 to 1795 in Courland under the dynasties of Kettler and Biron and under Polish governors in Livonia. Under Duke Jacob James Kettler, godson of King James of England, Courland (Kurzeme, Kurland) waxed prosperous, enjoying considerable international fame, and establishing treaties of commerce and friendship with England, France, and other western European countries.⁸

There followed a period of Swedish rule lasting from 1629 to 1721. This, however, was limited to Livonia where Swedish Governors-General headed the system of administration. Swedish rule had some distinct advantages for Latvia because while this rule lasted and while Sweden remained strong, Russia was prevented from expanding to the Baltic Sea. More than that, Swedish rule by its very nature was civilized and humane beyond the accepted customs and practices of the times. Charles XI in 1681 abolished by ordinance serfdom and bondage which the Livonian feudal rulers had imposed upon the Latvian peasantry. "Schools were opened for all classes of the population and self-governing parish organizations emancipated the church from the influence of the landed nobles," wrote Dr. Alfred Bilmanis.⁹ The Academia Gustaviana-Carolina was opened in Tartu by Gustavus Adolphus in 1632. In principle, it was accessible to Latvian and Estonian peasants' sons, and in the late 19th and early 20th centuries it played a prominent part in producing the leadership for the national emancipation of Latvians and Estonians.

But Russian rule, bringing with it German Livonian nobility back in power, erased the Swedish reforms. The Russians now fastened the fourth period of foreign domination on Latvia and the last prior to World War I. Their rule in this era prevailed from the 1721 Treaty of Nystad ending the Great Northern War, until 1918. Specifically, Russian rule covered only Livonia after Nystad, but with the partitions of Poland in 1773 and 1795, it included Latgalia and Courland. By the terms of the Treaty of Nystad and by other subsequent actions, Russia recognized the privileges and institutions existing in all of its Baltic Provinces. Special laws of the Baltic Provinces remained in force. Agrarian reform, for example, bringing about peasant emancipation against the opposition of the German Baltic barons, brought some relief to the Latvian peasantry, including the right to own land. In fact, emancipation of the Baltic

⁸ Urch, R. O. G., *Latvia, Country and People*. Riga, 1935, pp. 50-53.

⁹ Bilmanis, Alfred, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.

peasantry was effected in the early part of the 19th century even before it was brought about in Russia itself. When, however, Russia, beginning in 1888-89, sought to russify the Baltic countries, the Latvian people exhibited determined opposition both to their immediate German overlords and to the Russian powers who sought to strip them of their national identity. Finally, the Russians imposed upon the Baltic countries their own language, municipal institutions, police and administrative patterns, and their own courts and officials.¹⁰

But the Latvians held to their traditions and their language. One of their great literary sources was their *dainas* or folksongs numbering some 650,000.¹¹ Moreover, their folklore helped them endure the deprivation of their political rights and their possessions by the German landlords. The sense of national individuality erupted in numerous outbreaks during the 18th and 19th centuries to remind the world of the political awareness of Latvians. What followed was a Latvian renaissance. With the right to redeem their farms and buy lands of their own, and the right—after 1863—to settle in towns, or emigrate altogether, Latvians made marked progress. An articulate press, Latvian theaters and choirs, original Latvian music, and literature developed, and in addition there was created a Latvian city and country middle class. In 1868, the Riga Latvian Association was founded. Intended to be a purely philanthropic association, it developed into the real nucleus of the national renaissance. It also organized the first national Latvian song festival in 1873 in Riga, during which the Latvian national anthem, "God Save Latvia," was sung for the first time. Latvian organizations such as student fraternities (e. g., Lettonia, founded in 1870 in Tartu), Latvian cooperatives, savings banks, civic and cultural groups emerged and contributed generally to the growing national spirit of Latvians. Such was the background that set the stage for the revolution of 1905 and the achievement of independence in 1918.

II. THE REVOLUTION OF 1905

Peasant riots that occurred in 1771, 1779, and 1784, directed chiefly against the German overlords were cruelly suppressed. In the 19th century there had been outbreaks in 1802, 1805, 1823, 1830, 1844, 1863, and 1899. But the revolt of 1905 which was part of the general Russian revolution of 1905 was centered at first in urban factory areas. Initiated by the labor movement, this revolt spread, however, into an agrarian revolution directed against the landed nobility. The Social Democrats of Latvia, who were in close contact with the Russian Marxist movement, were largely responsible for the revolution, but, at the same time, the revolution of 1905 was also the fight of the National Latvians against the Germans. It also formulated for the first time the demand for a Latvian state.¹² In 1903, however, a demand had been made at Berne, Switzerland, for the election of a "Latvian Constituent Assembly convoked independently from the all-Russian Constituent Assembly."¹³ This demand, printed in the *Farmhand*, a periodical of the Latvian Socialist Association, was

¹⁰ Kluge, Adolf. *The Baltic States and Russia*. *The Baltic Review* (New York), No. 1, December 1953: 32.

¹¹ Bilmanis, op. cit., p. 138.

¹² A. Schwabe. *The Story of Latvia*. Stockholm, 1951, p. 31.

¹³ Bilmanis, Dr. Alfred. *History of Latvia*, Princeton University Press, 1951, p. 262.

reiterated by a resolution adopted by the All-Latvian Conference of Rural Communities on November 19, 1905, in Riga.¹⁴ But, by 1906 the revolutionary movement had collapsed and thousands fled to the United States, Canada, and Brazil, and those who remained were subjected to court-martial and suppression by military expeditions. One of the results of the insurrection of 1905 was the granting to the Latvians, as well as other peoples in the Russian Empire, the right to elect their representatives to the Imperial Russian Duma. This representation was reduced so that in 1912-17 there were only two Latvian delegates. But these two, J. Goldmanis and J. Zalitis, had a profound impact on the history of Latvian liberation in its incipient stages, in spite of the fact that their effort to achieve autonomy for Latvia proved fruitless.

III. THE LATVIAN MOVEMENT FOR AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE DURING WORLD WAR I

In 1915, the second year of World War I, the German Army took the Russian Naval Base of Liepaja (Libau), penetrated north to the Daugava River, and occupied all of Kurzeme in the southwestern part of Latvia. The Latvians dreaded most the conquest of their country by Germany because they knew that meant the end of their national aspirations. The German occupying authorities created a separate administrative unit, Das Land Ober Ost, out of the occupied Lithuanian and Latvian areas west of the Daugava River (Dvina, Duena). Russian forces still retained Riga and the right bank of the stream. Over 400,000 of the population of Kurzeme abandoned their homes before the German advance to become refugees in Russia. The Latvian representatives in the Russian Imperial Duma pleaded for the right to form Latvian military units which could be concentrated along the Daugava River and around Riga.¹⁵ General Ruzsky, commander in chief of the northern Russian front, issued an order—No. 322—on August 1, 1915, permitting the organization of Latvian voluntary rifle regiments under Latvian officers. These regiments had their own colors, the red-white-red flag of Latvia and were made up wholly of Latvians. The Latvian members of the Duma, J. Goldmanis and J. Zalitis, proclaimed to their people:

The fate of our nation once more is in the balance. After seven hundred years of suffering and waiting, the dream of the cultural rebirth of our people must come true. Forward, under Latvia's colors for Latvia's future.

A total of 8 field divisions and 1 reserve division were formed—130,000 Latvian soldiers. The Latvian Rifles held the Riga front against strong German forces for 2 years and up to the Russian revolution of 1917. The Latvian Rifles were divided, however, after the Bolsheviks seized control of the Russian Government: Some opposed the Bolsheviks, while others supported them. Those who returned ultimately to Latvia formed the core of the Latvian National Army.¹⁶

Political organization of an independent Latvia moved rapidly with the abdication of Czar Nicholas II during the Russian March revolution of 1917. The organizational plans reached their climax when

¹⁴ Bilmanis, Dr. Alfred. *Latvian-Russian Relations*. Washington, Latvia Legation, 1944, pp. 34-35.

¹⁵ Ekis, L. *Latvia: Struggle for Independence*. Washington, D. C., 1942, p. 4.

¹⁶ Schwabe, op. cit., pp. 36-37.

Latvia, on Latvian Independence Day, November 18, 1918, proclaimed itself a sovereign state. A provisional Latvian government was established. The organizational activities had, of course, a long background, and had their basis in Latvian social, cultural, and political groups.¹⁷ During the war contact was maintained among all Latvians in Russia, and on August 30, 1915, a conference of representatives of Latvian refugees took place in St. Petersburg. Out of this conference of some 128 delegates, the Latvian Central Refugee Relief Committee—*Latviešu Bēglu Apgādāšanas Centrālkomiteja*—was elected. Its activities from August 1915 to January 1918, when the Soviets disbanded it, were as much political as they were concerned with relief for Latvian refugees in Russia.

Goldmanis and Zalitis, the Latvian representatives in the Duma, were the voice of the Latvian people and of the Latvian Central Refugee Relief Committee, and they worked in the closest collaboration with its board. Proposed legislation was discussed and debated and drafts carefully prepared and revised. But more than that, the committee coordinated the activities of the various Latvian relief organizations and united them under a common ideology at the same time creating new groups and providing them with money and supplies. Activity was intense and purposeful. Just as the Latvian Rifles came to be known as the nucleus of a Latvian National Army, the Latvian Central Refugee Relief Committee was regarded somewhat in the light of a preliminary Latvian Parliament.

Unoccupied Estonia held general elections for an Estonian National Council on July 7-8, 1917, which led the Latvian Central Refugee Relief Committee in St. Petersburg on October 29, 1917, to call a constituent congress for a Provisional Latvian National Council.¹⁸ On March 25-26, 1917, a Congress of Representatives of Latvian Rural Communities had met in Valmiera and elected a provincial council for Vidzeme. They, in turn, chose as High Commissioner, Dr. A. Priedkalns, a member of the Social-Democratic Party, and selected as his deputy, Karlis Ulmanis, a member of the Farmers Party. Ulmanis was to play a considerable role in the history of Latvia's independence and was eventually to become its last President. Priedkalns and Ulmanis were duly confirmed by the Russian Provisional Government. Kurzeme and Latgallia duplicated the action at Valmiera. The refugees of the Kurzeme area assembled in Tartu for a Congress of Rural Communities of Kurzeme on May 8-11, 1917. Two lawyers were elected; Janis Chakste was elected High Commissioner and Heinrichs Rūsis, Deputy Commissioner. The Latgallian Congress of Rural Communities convened in Rezekne on April 27, 1917, and elected a provincial council. The council elected Jazeps Rancans, later a Roman Catholic bishop, and Deputy President of the Latvian Parliament, as High Commissioner.¹⁹

Only after these provincial councils had been elected did the Russian Provisional Government issue its decree of July 5, 1917, granting territorial autonomy to the Provinces of Vidzeme and Kurzeme.²⁰

¹⁷ *Latviešu Konversācijas Vardnīca—Latvian Encyclopedia*, Riga, Gulbis, 1927-28, vol. 1, p. 2019.

¹⁸ Schwabe, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

¹⁹ Bilmanis. *A History of Latvia*, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

²⁰ Collection of Decrees of the Provisional Government, text 954; Russian Provisional Government Herald, No. 126/172; English translation: Bilmanis. *Latvian-Russian Relations*, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

At the suggestion of the Provincial Council of Vidzeme, a Latvian National Political Conference was convened in the castle of Riga on July 30, 1917, to discuss the legal status of Latvia. Representatives of the following organizations were present at the gathering: The Council of Social Organizations of Riga, which was established on March 8, 1917, and which represented nearly all the Latvian cultural, economic, and relief organizations of Riga, 7 representatives; the Provincial Councils of Vidzeme and Kurzeme, 6 representatives; the City Council of Riga, 6 representatives; the Council of Workmen's Deputies of Riga, 6 representatives; the Council of Latvian Workmen, 3 representatives; Soldiers and Landless Peasants, 3 representatives; the Latvian Rifles, 18 representatives; the Latvian Farmers Union, set up on May 12, 1917, 1 representative.

The political conference approved unanimously the following resolutions:

1. The Latvian nation (*Latvijas Tauta*), like other nations, has the full right of self-determination.
2. Latvia shall be indivisible, uniting (the provinces of) Vidzeme, Kurzeme, and Latgale.
3. Latgale as an individual component of Latvia should enjoy independence in all matters of local municipal government, language, schools, and churches.
4. Latvia shall be a political, autonomous unit within a Republic of Russia which is based on the principles of democracy.
5. Legislative, executive, judicial, and local municipal powers in autonomous Latvia shall be in the hands of the Latvian nation and its Parliament (*Saeima*), which is to be elected on the basis of universal, secret, direct, equal suffrage without difference of sex, and [with] proportional representation.
6. The Conference protests against annexations, and any attempt to determine the legal political status as well as the frontiers of Latvia or its constituent parts without the knowledge and acquiescence of the Latvian nation.²¹

These resolutions, adopted on the eve of the imminent disintegration of imperial Russia, represented a courageous and detailed program of national unification for Latvia. The resolution relating to annexations was clearly directed against Germany; and the second part of that resolution, which protested against changes in the legal political status of Latvia, its frontiers, or its constituent parts without the consent of the Latvian nation, was directed against renewal of Russian centralization or any peace based on a territorial cession partitioning the country. The American scholar, Malbone W. Graham, has written of this historic declaration of the Latvian Political National Conference:

This declaration, in the light of the later peace negotiations between Germany and Soviet Russia, is highly significant. The urge to actual independence was strong even in July; for tactical reasons, however, independence was not advocated by the extremists, owing to the desirability of securing unanimity on an immediately practical program. Nevertheless, the idea was as manifest in the Lettish lands at the end of July 1917, as it was in Finland. Individual party congresses, following the general conference in Riga, carried the independence movement still farther, the Farmers' Union—the strongest political party—openly demanding the neutralization of the future Latvia by international action.²²

The Russian Army disintegrated after the March revolution, and fraternization with the enemy was common. No resistance was shown to the German Army. As a consequence, Riga fell on September 3,

²¹ Bilmanis, *History of Latvia*, op. cit., 281-82. *Latvijs Desmitgados*, Riga, Jubilejas Komisijas Izdevums, 1928, pp. 19-20.

²² Graham, Malbone W., *The Diplomatic Recognition of the Border States*. Pt. III: Latvia, Berkeley, University of California, 1941, p. 402.

1917, as has already been stated, and the Germans occupied most of Latvia.

The Democratic bloc, a coalition of the representatives of different Latvian parties in Riga, which was occupied by German troops, made another demand for a republican, neutralized, indivisible Latvia in late September 1917. This demand was in the form of a petition to the German Reichskanzler, which stressed that the future of Latvia was an international problem and referred to the categorical demands emanating from the decision of the Latvian Political Conference of July 30, 1917, as well as to the principle of self-determination of nations. The text of this petition is as follows:

In view of the advance of the German army, the question of Latvia's future becomes an international problem, since not only its neighbors, Germany and Russia, but all Europe must be interested in the solution of the problem.

On the basis of the decision of the Latvian Political Conference of July 30, 1917, and of the principle of self-determination of nations, and, taking into consideration the new state of affairs, we, the undersigned, emphasize that the future fate of Latvia should not be made dependent upon the issue of an armed conflict. For the sake of a peaceful solution, the legal question connected with Latvia must be decided on an international level. Taking into consideration in particular the fact that the establishment of continued friendly relations between Germany and Russia is possible only if all interests around the Baltic Sea are harmonized in a spirit of mutual understanding; which in its turn is impossible if one or another country retains in its hands the most important part of this area; we, striving for a democratic peace which must also assure the political and economic future of Latvia, propose that Latvia be neutralized in such a way as to become an autonomous state, guaranteed by international law. A republican, neutralized indivisible Latvia, free to choose its own constitution, and to administer its territory and its neutral seacoast and harbors, is a categorical demand emanating from the decision of the Latvian Political Conference of July 30, 1917.

The Latvian nation considers the successful cultural development of the Baltic area and the insurance of its economic progress to be the only possibility of solving this question. Hence, all efforts aimed at germanizing, russifying, or colonizing the Baltic should be rejected.

Without the slightest hatred against the German people, we decisively and firmly reject the planned annexation of Latvia or any part of it to Germany, regardless of the legal manner in which this might be effected, since such a step would contain the germs of a new conflict, and would hinder the possibilities of Latvia's economic development.²³ [Italics furnished.]

The language of this petition, especially when considered in the light of the fact that Riga had been occupied by the German Army on September 3, 1917, showed clearly the determination of Latvia to fight for its independence. This petition and the earlier declaration of the Latvian Political National Conference both based their demands for a free and sovereign Latvia on the principle of self-determination of all nations, a principle that was later to become important in the organization of the world after the close of World War I and in the League of Nations. Latvia saw in it a confirmation of its inherent right to freedom from domination by foreign powers and to national and political independence.

History had confirmed the Latvian nation in its view that it fought for survival and for no lesser cause.

Prof. Max M. Laserson, one-time member of the Parliament of Latvia,²⁴ wrote of these events:

It was under these extraordinary difficult circumstances, when the danger of national disappearance or extirpation faced the Letts as a stark reality, and

²³ Bilmanis, A History of Latvia, op. cit., pp. 291-292.

²⁴ The Recognition of Latvia, American Journal of International Law (Washington), vol. 37, 1943: 235.

when the German soldiers who participated in the Baltic battles were promised that they would be permitted to colonize Latvia in great numbers and use the land that was fit for agricultural pursuits, that the national movement, at first moderate, was most violently accelerated among the Letts. They were no longer satisfied with mere autonomy or home rule and now clamored for full independence.

By the time of the November Revolution of 1917 in Russia, when Lenin and the Bolsheviks assumed power by a coup d'état, there had been organized in Latvia a number of groups representative of certain elements of the Latvian people. These organizations had sent representatives to the Latvian Political Conference in July 1917. However, there was no overall group that was authorized to be the supreme representative of the Latvian nation and of the Latvian lands. Consequently, there was convened on October 1-2, 1917, in St. Petersburg, at the headquarters of the Latvian Central Refugee Relief Committee, a special conference for the purpose of establishing a Latvian National Council (*Latviešu Nacionālā Padome*). This conference, which was attended by 20 representatives of social groups and political parties from Kurzeme, Vidzeme, and Latgale, decided to establish an organizational committee of 26 members to prepare for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly of the National Council.

The organizational committee met in St. Petersburg during October 18-21, 1917, and agreed upon convoking immediately a Latvian Provisional National Council. The first session of the council was scheduled to take place at Valmiera on October 29, 1917, but because of the Bolshevik Revolution it was postponed, and finally met in Valka on November 16, 1917. Bilmanis wrote of this historic meeting:

Valka, situated on the Latvian-Estonian border, had been the site of the first Constitutional Diet of the Livonian Confederation in the fifteenth century. It was now to become the cradle of Latvia's independence and, as the site of the first National Assembly, the temporary political capital of Latvia.²⁵

The First Latvian National Assembly was opened by J. Goldmanis, member of the Imperial Russian Duma and organizer of the Latvian Rifles. A presidium was elected. The poet, Karlis Skalbe, proposed that the Assembly be proclaimed the Latvian Provisional National Council and entrusted with the convocation of a Latvian Constituent Assembly. The declaration containing these proposals was adopted unanimously. It stated:

(1) Whereas the representatives (of the following organizations), having been invited to the Provisional National Council, have convened in Valka on November 16 and 17 (1917): Provisional Land Councils of Kurzeme and Latgale, the former right-wing part of the Vidzeme Land Council, Latvian Warriors National Association in Latvia and Inner Russia, the Latgallian Rifles Section of the Executive Committee of the United Latvian Rifle Regiments, the Latvian Central Refugee Relief Committee, the Baltic Refugee Relief Committee, the Latvian-Latgallian War Victims' Committee, the Organizational Committee of the Congress of Latgallian Cooperators, and the following political parties: Latvian Farmers Union, Latvian Democrat Party, Latvian National Democrat Party, the Petrograd group of the Latvian Radical-Democrat Party, and

(2) Whereas this assembly is representative of the largest Latvian social organizations and those political parties, which profess a national point of view.

Be it resolved: The assembly proclaims itself as the Latvian Provisional National Council (*Latviešu Pagaidu Nacionālā Padome*) and proceeds to the agenda.²⁶

²⁵ Bilmanis, *History of Latvia*, op. cit., p. 290 in fine.

²⁶ Translation from the Latvian original text in *Latvija Desmit Gados (Ten Years of Latvia)*, Riga, 1928, p. 25.

The new Provisional National Council then adopted a declaration that may be described as the first declaration of Latvian independence. This historic document has the following wording:

Alien nations are crossing swords over our country and are asking to whom it will belong. At this moment *let the voice of the Latvian nation resound throughout the whole world: THIS LAND IS OURS. LAY DOWN YOUR SWORDS: WE OURSELVES WANT TO RULE OVER OUR LAND AS A FREE NATION.* We do not want to become the prey of anyone. The time has come for the Latvian people to plow up the frontier lines drawn by foreign nations—Russians, Poles, and Germans, in partitioning our native land as their booty. *Let Kurzeme, Vidzeme, and Latgale become a united Latvia; it is the land of one nation, which must not be divided either by rivers or frontier posts. May Latvian plow and sawing box freely move over it.*

Heavy has been the fate of our people under the yoke of foreign nations. Our way has been the way of the orphan, but deep in our souls we have retained a hatred of our oppressors. *Not once alone has our people revolted in order to purchase its freedom with its blood. When the nations of Europe went out into the great battle for their independence, also Latvia's sons raised their sword and their banner for a free Latvia.* These heroic struggles which cost us so many treasured souls are dear to us. Our lives' efforts have gone up in smoke and ire. Our people have been scattered to the four winds.

Together with the land of the nation also the holy body of the nation has been torn to shreds, one part behind German barbed wire fences, the other in the land of the Russians. Some tread the paths of refugees, others serve foreign powers in foreign armies. *Mother Latvia wishes lovingly to gather these torn shreds of the nation and to unite them anew, that they may become one whole and healthy national body, for the Latvian nation shall not die, but shall live.*

In order to unite the scattered nation and the divided land of the people into one indivisible political unit, into Latvia—the Latvian Provisional Council has been created.

It has been formed at the most difficult moment, when the enemy stretches out its hands over Latvia, when our national will power is broken, and when in bitter party struggles we have lost sight of those great goals which history places before the eyes of all small and oppressed nations.

Be worthy of this great moment and *unite around your Provisional National Council.* May it become your guiding star, leading to a free and united Latvia. The Latvian Provisional National Council is comprised of the organizations and parties which have been able to unite upon the ruins of our native land in order to raise their voice against the partitioning of Latvia and to gather together the scattered nation around the cold hearths of our homeland. *The Latvian Provisional Council protests against any partitioning of Latvia, and particularly against the annexation or association of Kurzeme or of all Latvia with Germany, and proclaims Latvia, i. e., Kurzeme, Vidzeme, and Latgale, as an autonomous and indivisible political unit, whose internal form of government and foreign relations will be decided by its constituent assembly, which will express the will of the people.*

The Latvian Provisional National Council considers the convocation of the Latvian Constituent Assembly in concert with other social organizations and institutions to be one of its principal tasks.

The great world of liberation has sounded: self-determination of nations. Wait no longer for any other liberation. Grasp what history offers you and be ready to clear your doors of foreign oppressors. *Take this land yourselves, which our fathers have purchased with blood and sweat, and raise there a better state than the one which is now collapsing.*

Long live free, united Latvia! ²⁷ [Italics and capitalization furnished.]

The Latvian Provisional National Council issued on November 19, 1917, a Declaration to Foreign Countries and Peoples, which stated:

Having in view the tendency of the Latvian people toward an independent policy and an autonomous Latvia—tendencies which were clearly distinguishable in the days of the struggle for liberty in 1905—by *basing its claim on the principle of the right of nations to self-determination.*

²⁷ Latvian text in Pasaules Vesture (History of the World), edited by Alex. Grins, vol. 4, Riga, 1930, p. 585; English translation: Bilmanis, Latvian-Russian Relations, op. cit., pp. 42-43.

The Latvian Provisional National Council protests energetically against any division of Latvia, and above all against the annexation of Kurzeme or any of Latvia to Germany. It repudiates formally all intimacy with Germany.

*The Council declares: Latvia, which embraces Kurzeme, Vidzeme, and Latgale, is an autonomous state entity (autonoma valsts vienība). Its status, as well as the questions concerning its foreign relations and internal organization, shall be determined by its Constituent Assembly and a National Plebiscite.*²⁸ [Italics furnished.]

The American scholar, Malbone W. Graham,²⁹ has pointed out the significance of the issuance of these two documents by the Latvian Provisional Council. He has stressed that the concept, presented in the declaration of November 16, 1917, by the First Latvian National Assembly, stating that the status, and the domestic and foreign policy of Latvia could be defined only by a Latvian constituent assembly and national plebiscite, was the turning point in the independence movement. He called this "the initial step * * * [that] bridged carefully the transition from the autonomist to the independence program," adding:

While the idea of a separate constituent assembly might have been in consonance with the idea of autonomy, and might even have been construed as coming within the notion of constitutional self-determination, the demand for an independent policy, particularly with regard to foreign affairs, could not be so construed.

Graham, in a more detailed survey published in 1941, presented the following evaluation of the significance of the Provisional Latvian National Council:

Although lacking any formal juridical foundation—revolution does not permit the observance of all the niceties of procedure—the Latvian National Council possessed great moral authority and, because it had cast out socially dissident elements, internal solidarity and cohesion.³⁰

Because of the importance of the Provisional National Council in the development of governmental processes in Latvia, the administrative procedures of the council are of interest. A Supreme Board was elected to serve as the Executive of Council. This board was comprised of nine members and the heads of the executive departments. V. Zamuels, a lawyer and leader of the Latvian Constitutional Democratic Party, served as President.

The executive departments were set up as follows: Foreign Affairs (6 members); Defense and Reconstruction (3 members); Finance (3 members); Agrarian Affairs (4 members); Cultural Affairs (5 members); Committee for the Election of the Latvian Constituent Assembly (5 members); Committee to draft a Constitution (12 members).³¹

Valka was designated as headquarters for all departments except that for Foreign Affairs. With a view to establishing relations with Allied diplomatic representatives and to obtaining as soon as possible recognition for Latvia from the Allied Powers, the Department of Foreign Affairs was located in Petrograd. Liaison of a confidential nature was established with various embassies in Petrograd, especially with those of England and France.³²

²⁸ Latvian text: Latvija Desmit Gados, p. 25; the English translation, however, is not precise, in La Revue Baltique (1918), No. 1, p. 20.

²⁹ Graham, Malbone W., New Governments of Eastern Europe, op. cit., p. 326.

³⁰ Graham, Malbone W., The Diplomatic Recognition of the Border States, Part III: Latvia, Op. cit., p. 403.

³¹ Latvian Encyclopedia, op. cit., vol. II, 1934-35, p. 21350.

³² Laserson, Op. cit., p. 236.

Formal diplomatic recognition was, of course, viewed as a long-range goal, but there was considerable favorable reaction to this new move of Latvia. The French Ambassador, Mr. Noulens, as early as January 22, 1918, expressed his sympathy with the aims of the Provisional Latvian National Council, and promised that the coming peace conference would give these aims consideration. The British Chargé d'Affaires in Petrograd, said: "Fight for an independent Latvia. I believe you will reach this goal."³³

The concern of Latvia for the peace of the world as well as its own well-being was expressed by Goldmanis on January 5, 1918, shortly before the dissolution of the All-Russian Constituent Assembly by the Bolsheviks, in a protest against the imminent Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. He said:

The Latvian nation desires peace as ardently as any other nation; but we Latvians consider it unfair of Russia to conclude a separate peace with Germany at Brest-Litovsk, deserting her allies the United States of America, England, and France in their fight against Germany. The Latvian nation does not want peace of death, a peace which is a grave for our mutilated country. We are expecting a peace that will bring justice to every nation, and this will only be possible after the victory of the United States of America, England, and France.

Goldmanis concluded by stating that the Latvian nation considered itself justified in deciding its future in accordance with its vital interests, and by pointing out that the Latvian problem had become international:

The Latvian problem has become international. It can no longer be solved in this House. The Latvian people will decide on its internal structure and its relations with other nations in its own Constituent Assembly.³⁴

In this manner a representative of the Latvian Provisional National Council officially announced the secession of Latvia from Russia, and from that moment political relations between Latvia and Russia were actually severed. On the same day, the Communists dispersed by force the All Russian Constituent Assembly which had been elected on November 25, 1917, and in which there were only 175 Bolsheviks of the total membership of 707.

The Latvian Provisional National Council held its second session in Petrograd on January 30-31, 1918. A resolution was passed stating that Latvia should become an independent democratic republic comprising Kurzeme, Vidzeme, and Latgale. The council also recognized the necessity of obtaining international recognition of the indivisibility and independence of Latvia. A Legal Affairs Department and a Department for Latvian Colonies abroad were added to the seven executive departments. The function of the latter was to have contact with the 200,000 Latvian refugees in Russia and to effect their return to Latvia. The council also protested against any partition of Latvia or restrictions of the right of self-determination of the Latvian people.³⁵

H. W. V. Temperly³⁶ emphasized that Latvia was declared an independent democratic republic as early as January 17-18, 1918.

³³ J. Seskis. *Latvijas Valsts Izcelšanās* (The Rise of the Latvian State), 1921, p. 46, as quoted by Laserson. *Op. cit.*, note 3, p. 236.

³⁴ J. Goldmanis. *Zvaigznu Pulku Atmirdza*, Stockholm, 1947, p. 19 (in Latvian).

³⁵ *Latvian Encyclopedia*, *op. cit.*, vol. II, 1934-35, p. 21354.

³⁶ Temperly, H. W. V. *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*. London, Oxford University Press, 1924, vol. VI, p. 295.

Despite this declaration of the clear will of the Latvian people for independence, the Peace Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, signed on March 3, 1918, dismembered Latvian territory. Latgale was left to Russia, Kurzeme to Prussia, and provision was made that "Livonia will be occupied by a German police force until security is insured by proper national institutions and until public order has been established" (article 6). The steps taken by the German occupation power in implementation of this treaty are summarized in paragraph 5 of the "Protest of the Latvian Provisional National Council against Annexation of Latvia by Prussia," released July 7, 1918.³⁷

In order to create a juridical and moral basis for * * * acts of violation of justice within the dismembered portions of Latvia, the military authorities have hastened to form *Landesrats* composed of the mayors of rural communities and cities and of the representatives of the great landlords of German origin. These resolutions passed at the sessions of the *Landesrats* give an absolutely false idea of the political tendencies and will of the Latvian people. The *Landesrats* are usurping the right of the people to political self-determination, masking the final annexation of Latvia to Prussia. Thus on March 8, 1918, the *Landesrat* of Kurland passed a resolution setting up the province of Kurland as a duchy and offering the crown to the Hohenzollern dynasty; on April 12, 1918, the "United *Landesrat*," composed of representatives of the municipality of Riga, of Livonia, of Oesel Island, and of Estonia, decided to set up the Baltic provinces as a monarchy joined with Prussia by a personal union through its king, and to offer the crown of the new monarchy to the German Emperor. The German government has just given the order to conclude military and economic conventions between the Duchy of Kurland and Germany.

Bilmanis has described the formation of a Baltic *Landesrat* in Riga on April 12, 1918, by permission of the occupation authorities. He wrote:

This body was composed of thirty-four German-Balt landed nobles of Livland and Estonia, some German representatives of the Evangelical Lutheran General Consistory and of the cities, and a dozen Latvian and a dozen Estonian peasants, picked Elders of rural communities, entirely ignorant of the purposes for which they were ordered to appear in Riga. The intention of this *Landesrat* was to request the Kaiser to recognize Livland-Estonia as a united independent Baltic State with the *Landesrat* as the repository of its political power. *The Latvian and Estonian Elders flatly refused to vote on such an issue, claiming incompetence to make a decision of this kind. However, the motion was duly adopted by the German-Balt technical majority and laid "at the feet of the Kaiser."*³⁸ [*Italics added.*]

The Latvian Provisional National Council reacted immediately against such steps, submitting a vigorous protest to the German Imperial Chancellor, Count Hertling. The Provincial Council of Livonia addressed similar protests to the Chancellor and to the commander in chief of the German army of occupation. Both protests were unavailing. Therefore, the Latvian Provisional National Council decided to protest the dismemberment of the territory of Latvia to "the Governments and nations of the entire world." Emphasis upon the principle of self-determination of peoples in connection with the interests of world democracy for a just solution of the problem of Latvia at the general peace conference appeared here for the first time. The Council further emphasized that an occupying power had no legal right to create by appointment agencies (*Landesrats*) not

³⁷ Foreign Relations of the United States 1918, Russia, vol. 2, 833-835.

³⁸ Bilmanis. History of Latvia. Op. cit. Pp. 301-302.

representative of the will of the Latvian people." The will of the Latvian people was stated in the following words:

1. *The Treaty of Brest of March 3, 1918, dismembering the territory of Latvia, is an act of violence against the right of the people to self-determination and must be regarded as null and void.*

2. The Latvian people do not desire the annexation of Latvia to Germany nor the personal union of Latvia with Prussia.

3. The decisions of the *Landesrats* are gross falsifications of the wishes of the population of Latvia.

4. The military and economic conventions which the German Government is about to conclude with the *Landesrats* of Latvia will not be recognized or carried out by Latvia and the Latvian nation.

5. The Latvian National Council protests against the violation of the freedom of the press, of speech and of assembly, of personal liberty and of travel, against the arbitrary replacing of the mayors of communes and cities by the occupying power.

6. *It deems an urgent necessity the recognition of the Latvian National Council as the supreme institution of the Latvian State until the war refugees shall have returned to their homes and the political constitution of Latvia shall have been drawn up and put into effect.*

7. *It demands the creation of an independent and indivisible Latvian State under international guarantee.*^{38a} [Italics furnished]

It was recognized, however, that the issuance of a declaration was insufficient to counteract the activities of Germany in the Baltic. Therefore, it was decided to increase the activities of the Foreign Delegation (*Arzemju delegati*), the agency set up during the first session of the Latvian Provisional National Council at Valka, November 18, 1917. Members of the delegation were: Janis Chakste, who was to become the first President of the Republic of Latvia; Zigfrids Meierovics, who later became first Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Janis Kreicbergs. The delegation was empowered to work toward the recognition by foreign powers of the Latvian National Council as the *de jure* and *de facto* government of Latvia, to attempt to attend the peace conference, to inform world public opinion about Latvia, and to maintain liaison with neighboring states while abroad.³⁹ During the second session of the Council it had also been decided that in case of complete German occupation of Latvian territory, all powers of the Council would be vested in the Department of Foreign Affairs and/or the Foreign Delegation.

Meierovics was sent to England in August 1918, while Chakste and Kreicbergs established in Stockholm a special Latvian bureau for foreign affairs. This bureau was active until May 19, 1919, when it was absorbed by the Latvian Legation established in Stockholm. Meierovics championed the cause of Baltic cooperation, including at that time Estonia and Finland, and came into close contact with the group of Liberals around Lloyd George. He was even successful in securing the support of the British Conservatives. Professor Laserson has summed up the position of Latvia at that time as follows:

What influenced the attitude of the Allied Powers with regard to the final recognition of Latvia *de jure* was the dual aspect and the somewhat dubious future of Latvia as well as of the other Baltic States during the transition period. On one hand, the Allies wished to put an end to the further strengthening of Germany on the shores of the Baltic Sea. . . . ; on the other hand, the *Allies wished to have the freedom to choose either to cede the territory of Latvia to new Russia or to recognize the independence of a Latvian State, depending upon the condi-*

^{38a} Foreign Relations of the United States 1918, Russia, vol. 2, 833-835.

³⁹ Le Conseil National Letton, in *Revue Baltique*, No. 1 (September 1918), p. 20.

tions which prevailed at that time. England and France had also to reckon with the opinion and influence of the diplomatic representatives of pre-Bolshevist Russia, who were still functioning in some countries, especially since, in *England and France, a movement in favor of an undivided Russia was supported by many political circles.* The prospects for such a movement were not clear. Moreover, Latvia, because of its geographical position and history, was predestined to be a natural buffer State against any possible German expansion, especially in the light of the 700-year-old history of German domination and social oppression in Latvia." [Italics furnished.]

Germany and Bolshevik Russia had in the meantime signed on August 27, 1918 a supplementary treaty to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Part IV was entitled "Estonia, Livonia, Courland, and Lithuania." Article 7 appeared to be an invitation to Germany to establish dominion over the Baltic. It stated:

Russia, taking account of the condition at present existing in Estonia and Livonia, renounces sovereignty over these regions, as well as all interference in their internal affairs. Their future fate shall be decided in agreement with their inhabitants. No obligation of any kind toward Russia shall accrue to Estonia and Livonia through their former union with Russia.

It has been said that the treaties of Brest-Litovsk "inspired a unity of purpose and a degree of cooperation between American and the Western Powers which all previous negotiations between them had failed to achieve."⁴¹ It did help to create a better climate for Latvia's plea for independence as German designs in the Baltic were now clear to all. The German Emperor Wilhelm II proclaimed on September 22, 1918, the independence of the Baltic Duchy and recognized its Landesrat. The British Government countered this move by the provisional recognition of Latvian independence. Meierovics had in less than 2 months successfully aroused the interest of the British Government in the formation of Latvian Legions in order to police the country after the German withdrawal⁴² and in the recognition of the Latvian provisional government. The British Foreign Minister, A. J. Balfour, told Meierovics on October 23, 1918, that his Government had decided to recognize the Latvian National Council as constituting the Government of Latvia on a temporary basis pending the convocation of the peace conference.⁴³ This verbal declaration was confirmed by a formal note on the day of the armistice, November 11, 1918. This note constituted a reply to a written appeal from the Latvian Foreign Delegation asking Great Britain and the Allies to protect Latvian independence. It stated, in part:

I am happy to take this opportunity of repeating the assurance which I gave you on the occasion of your recent visit. *His Majesty's Government* have viewed with the deepest sympathy the aspirations of the Latvian people and its desire for liberation from the German yoke. *They are glad to reaffirm their readiness to grant provisional recognition to the Latvian National Council as a de facto independent body until such time as the Peace Conference lays its foundations of a new era of freedom and happiness for your people.* In the meantime *His Majesty's Government will be glad to receive you as the informal diplomatic Representative of the Latvian Provisional Government.*⁴⁴ [Italics furnished.]

Owing to the German revolution and to the proclamation of a German Republic on November 8, 1918, the occupation regime in Latvia

⁴⁰ Laserson. The Recognition of Latvia. Op. cit., p. 236.

⁴¹ Wheeler-Bennett, John W. The Forgotten Peace; Brest-Litovsk, March 1918. New York, 1939, p. 363.

⁴² Graham. Recognition of the Border States; pt. III: Latvia, op. cit., p. 406.

⁴³ Laserson, op. cit., p. 237.

⁴⁴ Full text in Bilmanis. Latvian-Russian Relations, op cit., p. 58.

became less effective. Consequently, most of the members of the Latvian Provisional National Assembly found it possible to return to Riga where they joined with Latvian statesmen who had weathered the German occupation there. They formed the first Latvian Provisional Parliament, the National Council (*Tautas Padome*), which at its first solemn inaugural meeting on November 18, 1918, proclaimed the independence of Latvia and established a provisional government.

IV. FROM THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE (NOVEMBER 18, 1918) TO THE CONCLUSION OF THE LATVIAN-RUSSIAN TREATY OF PEACE, AUGUST 11, 1920

The new parliament or National Council had been established on a coalition basis, and all national minorities of Latvia—Germans, Jews, Poles, and Russians—sent representatives. Janis Chakste, the lawyer who later became President of the Constituent Assembly and the first President of the Republic of Latvia, was elected President of the Council. Gustavs Zengals, also a lawyer and later to become second President of the Republic of Latvia, was elected Vice President. Because Chakste was absent, the Vice President read the declaration of independence in the solemn ceremony, which took place on November 18, 1918, in the National Theater at Riga.⁴⁵ The German occupation authorities had refused to permit the Council to meet in the House of the Diet.⁴⁶

Karlis Ulmanis, who had been appointed Prime Minister by the National Council, and who a few days later set up the first Latvian Cabinet of Ministers, made public the political platform of the National Council of Latvia.⁴⁷ The platform provided that, pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, legislative power was to be exercised by the National Council, to which the provisional government, as the acting executive, was to be responsible. Provision was made for a republican form of government on democratic principles. This form of government was to be finally confirmed by the Constituent Assembly which was to be elected on the basis of a general, equal, direct, and secret vote of both men and women, with proportional representation. There were also special provisions on civil rights and on cultural and even on political rights of national minorities, who were to participate in the provisional government on the basis of the coalition principle (art. III, par. 3, and art. IV, par. 2). Article VI stipulated that national defense should be conducted through conscription and volunteers. Article VII provided for the establishment of self-governing municipal corporations to be elected in the same way as members of the Constituent Assembly.

The German Republic, on November 26, 1918, through the German Civil Commissioner in Latvia, recognized the Latvian National Council as depository of the state power of Latvia and the provisional government as its executive body. However, at the same time the German military command in Riga opposed general Latvian mobilization as provided for in the political platform.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ For text see appendix, p. 418, No. 1.

⁴⁶ Ulmanis, *A History of Latvia*, op. cit., p. 307.

⁴⁷ Pp. 418-419, No. 2.

⁴⁸ Article VI (1).

Two acts signed by August Winnig, an official of the German Government, were instrumental in establishing relations between Germany and Latvia. On December 7, August Winnig signed an agreement, according to Dr. Malbone W. Graham, of a "military character—but not in fact a political treaty, although so called." Graham stated that Winnig signed this agreement as "Deutsche Gesandter bei den Regierungen der Republiken Estland and Lettland (German envoy to the Governments of the Republic of Estonia and Latvia)."⁴⁹ On December 26, 1918, Winnig was appointed Minister to head the German Legation set up at that time in Riga, Latvia's capital. On the 29th, Winnig signed a "Treaty between the Plenipotentiary of the German Reich and the Provisional Latvian Government," making it possible to grant Latvian citizenship to German volunteers in the Latvian forces.⁵⁰

In the interim Soviet troops had invaded Latvian territory on December 5, 1918. They captured Riga on January 3, 1919. A Latvian Soviet Government, headed by Peteris Stucka, later to become Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, had been set up and recognized on December 22, 1918, by the Council of People's Commissars of Soviet Russia.⁵¹ Three days later the Soviet official newspaper *Izvestiia*⁵² stated:

*Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are directly on the road from Russia to Western Europe and are therefore a hindrance to our revolution, because they separate Soviet Russia from revolutionary Germany. * * * This separating wall has to be destroyed. * * * The Russian Red Proletariat should find an opportunity to influence the revolution in Germany. The conquest of the Baltic Sea would make it possible for Soviet Russia to agitate in favor of the social revolution in the Scandinavian countries so that the Baltic Sea would be transferred into the Sea of the Social Revolution. [Italics furnished.]*

The Constitution of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic, as approved by the Congress of the Soviets on January 13, 1919,⁵³ provided for the taking over of articles 9–23 of the Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and the vesting of the supreme power in the Congress of Soviets and the Central Executive Committee.

Compulsory labor was introduced for "the parasitical bourgeoisie."⁵⁴ A series of nationalization decrees were passed, including the nationalization of land (decree of March 19, 1919 (*ibid.*, No. 23)) and the nationalization of banks (decree of February 16, 1919).⁵⁵

Revolutionary tribunals were set up, and during the 5 months of Soviet domination in Latvia (January 3–May 22, 1919), according to Communist records, at least 3,632 persons were executed by fir-

⁴⁹ Graham. *The Recognition of Latvia*, op. cit., p. 503, note 29.

⁵⁰ Graham, *ibid.*, full English translation of the Treaty of December 19, 1918, is reproduced by Bilmanis. *History of Latvia*. Op. cit., p. 313.

⁵¹ Manifesto of the Soviet Government of the Tollers, Landless Peasants, and Soldiers of Latvia (Manifest Sovetskogo Pravitel'stva Rabochikh, Rezzemel'nykh i Strelkovo Latvii in "Zhishn' Natsional'nostel'" No. 7, December 22, 1918). Edict of the Council of People's Commissars of the Russian Soviet Republic concerning the Recognition of Independence of the Latvian Soviet Republic (Dekret Soveta Narodnykh Komissarov o Priznanii Nezavisimosti Sovetskoi Respubliki Latvii) in *Izvestia Vserossiiskogo Iсполnitel'nogo Komiteta*. No. 282, December 24, 1918; also in *Sobranie Uzakonenii i Rasporiazhenii*, December 29, 1918, No. 98, text 1005. English translation in George Popoff. *The City of the Red Plague*, New York, 1932, pp. 49–51.

⁵² December 25, 1918, No. 238, p. 1.

⁵³ Russian text in *Politika Sovetskoi Vlasti Po Natsional'nomu Voprosu za tri goda. 1917–XI–1920*. (Moscow), 1920, p. 55–57.

⁵⁴ Decree of March 18, 1919, *Izvestiia Sotsialisticheskogo Sovetskogo Pravitel'stva Latvii*, No. 22.

⁵⁵ For English texts, see Popoff. Op. cit.

ing squads on order of these numerous tribunals. The law of the "judges" has been described as being "the Bolshevik revolutionary conscience."⁵⁶

This first occupation of Latvia by the Red army was short in duration, for on May 22, 1919, Riga was liberated by a joint action of the Latvian Army, and the German territorials (Landeswehr) and other German units.

In the meantime the Provisional Government which had withdrawn to Liepaja continued to oppose German occupation forces in their plan to incorporate the Baltic countries into the German Empire. A unit of German territorials (Landeswehr), commanded by von Manteuffel, attempted to overthrow the Ulmanis government on April 16, 1919. Latvian Cabinet members took refuge on a Latvian ship in the harbor which was being guarded by the Allied naval squadron.

With the support of the German occupation authorities, a mixed German-Latvian government, headed by Pastor Andrievs Niedra, was installed in Liepaja on May 10, 1919; but after the truce of Strazdumuiza (Strasdenhof) on July 3, 1919, Niedra and the other members of his cabinet had left Riga.⁵⁷

After conquering Riga, the German territorial troops had moved northward where they suffered defeat at the hands of a joint Latvian-Estonian army. After the battle of Cesis (Wenden) on June 22, 1919, a truce was arranged by the Allied Control Commission. The truce of Strazdumuiza provided for the end of the German occupation of Riga by July 5, 1919. Provision was also made for repatriation of German citizens, determination of the future of German-Balt territorials (Landeswehr) by the Chief of the Allied Military Mission,⁵⁸ and the administration of Riga by a British officer, Colonel Tallents. The legitimate Latvian Government returned to Riga on July 8, 1919.

But not all German troops had withdrawn from Latvian territory. Contingents commanded by Bermond-Avalov, described as an adventurer, attacked Latvian troops on October 3, 1919, under the pretext of opening a new anti-Bolshevik campaign.⁵⁹ His forces reached the suburbs of Riga, but were repelled with the assistance of the Allied Navy stationed in the Gulf of Riga. As a consequence of the Bermond-Avalov adventure and the protection afforded him by the German Government, Latvia severed diplomatic relations with the German Reich on November 26, 1919, and declared a state of war.

Diplomatic relations between Latvia and the German Reich were resumed on May 5, 1920, and a treaty of peace was concluded on July 15 of that year.

The liberation of Latgale was achieved on January 30, 1920, with the assistance of the Polish Army, although skirmishes continued there until the conclusion of peace with Soviet Russia.

Latvia concluded a cease-fire agreement with the Soviet Russian Republic on April 12, 1920. A treaty on the repatriation of war refugees and war prisoners was signed on June 12, and on August 11 of

⁵⁶ Schwabe, Arveds: *Histoire du peuple Letton*. Stockholm, 1953, p. 181.

⁵⁷ Spekke, op cit., p. 350. Bilmanis. *A History of Latvia*, op. cit., pp. 320-323.

⁵⁸ This was achieved by the reorganization of the Landeswehr, as the 13th Tukuma Regiment under the command of British Col. H. R. L. G. Alexander, later Field Marshal Alexander of World War II.

⁵⁹ German intervention with respect to the legal Latvian Government was in contravention of the provisions of the Peace Treaty of Versailles, arts. 116, 117, and 433.

that year the treaty of peace was concluded at Riga. In this treaty, the Soviet Union recognized unreservedly the independence, self-subsistence, and sovereignty of the Latvian Republic, voluntarily and forever renouncing all sovereign rights over the Latvian people and territory.

The Latvian Provisional Government had in the interim scheduled elections for the Constituent Assembly on April 17-18, 1920. Of the 150 seats, 79 went to the rightwing parties, 57 to the leftwing groups, and 17 to the national minorities.⁶⁰

The Constituent Assembly met on May 1, 1920, and on the 27th solemnly proclaimed again the independence of Latvia, stressing that the sovereign power of the state belonged to the nation.^{60a} A provisional constitution, adopted on June 1, 1920,⁶¹ conformed to the principles established in the political platform of November 18, 1918.⁶²

It set forth the powers, functions, and authority of the Constituent Assembly. Provisions were made for the impeachment and trial of the members of the Constituent Assembly and of the members of the Cabinet of Ministers (art. 10). The President of the Constituent Assembly, Janis Chakste, was authorized to represent the state internationally, to declare war, and to sign treaties. On September 25, 1920, he signed the ratified treaty of peace with the Government of Soviet Russia which had been ratified by the Constituent Assembly on September 2, 1920. Russian ratification had been completed on September 9, and on October 4 the exchange of ratifications took place in Moscow.

V. DE JURE RECOGNITION AND ADMISSION TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Once the Government of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic had unqualifiedly recognized Latvia de jure by the Peace Treaty of Riga, August 11, 1920, Latvian independence was complete. On January 26, 1921, Latvia was recognized de jure by the Supreme Council of Allied Powers acting on behalf of the great powers of Europe; ⁶³ de jure recognition by the greater part of the Latin American Republics ensued.⁶⁴ After Latvia had become a full member of the League of Nations on September 22, 1921,⁶⁵ recognition by other nations followed. The United States extended its de jure recognition to Latvia on July 28, 1922.⁶⁶ Thus, Latvia had received full international recognition as an independent and sovereign state by admission into the family of sovereign nations.

⁶⁰ Bulletin of the Latvian Information Bureau, No. 24, Paris, May 6, 1920, quoted by Graham. *New Governments*, op. cit., p. 33, note 4.

^{60a} See appendix, p. 419, No. 3.

⁶¹ See appendix, pp. 419-420, No. 4.

⁶² See appendix, pp. 418-419, No. 2.

⁶³ Bilmanis, *Latvian-Russian Relations*, p. 81, giving integral text.

⁶⁴ Bilmanis, *Latvia as an Independent State*, p. 51.

⁶⁵ Bilmanis, *Latvian-Russian Relations*, pp. 106-110.

⁶⁶ *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1922*, vol. II, pp. 873-874. See appendix, p. 420, No. 5.

PART III—LITHUANIA

I. LITHUANIA BEFORE WORLD WAR I

The independence Lithuania had achieved after World War I was a goal in history for which it had been striving ever since it had fallen under Russian domination in 1795. It was not the first independence Lithuania had known; for this nation had a long history of national greatness, extending far back to the 12th and 13th centuries. The historical evidence to support Lithuania's right to national independence and statehood rests, therefore, in part upon the historical record of its 800 years existence as a nation-state.

Lithuanians, like the Latvians of today, are the descendants of one of the eastern branches of the Indo-European race. More specifically they belong to the Aistian race (Baltic).¹ Some tribes of the Aistians, who had lived along the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea in the area between the Vistula and Daugava, perished in battles and other forms of catastrophes; for the Vikings, the eastern Slavs, the Poles, the Tatars, and the Teutonic knights, in turn, laid waste, pillaged, and murdered the relatively weaker Aistians.

Five hundred years before Christ, the inhabitants of the eastern Baltic traded with Greece, and records of this relationship may be found in the narratives of such notable historians as Herodotus, Polybius, Pliny the Elder, Ptolemy, and, particularly, Tacitus. Moreover, the Lithuanian language, the oldest spoken language in Europe in the sense that it has the oldest grammatical forms, is closely related to ancient Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin. Entirely different from the Slavonic (Russian, Polish) and Germanic tongues, the Lithuanian language, like many aspects of Lithuanian history, is rooted far into the historical past.²

The name of Lithuania was first mentioned in the *Annales Quedlinburgenses* of the year 1009. Since that time the Lithuanians have remained a nation known to history.³ However, Lithuania had been divided into a dozen or more independent principalities, and not until 1219 and 1236 with the conclusion of the Volynian peace pacts did Lithuania become united under the single rule of King Mindaugas.

Threats from abroad were the primary factor in bringing about the union of the small states into a larger one. Grave danger came from the west, when in 1200 the German Knights of the Sword sought to conquer Latvia, and when in 1231 the Teutonic Knights of the Virgin Mary crossed the Vistula River to conquer the Lithuanian tribe of Prussians. The first great victory of united Lithuania over the Knights of the Sword was won in the area of Siauliai in 1236. A sec-

¹ Chase, Thomas G., *The Story of Lithuania*. New York, Stratford House, Inc., 1946, pp. 1-10.

² *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Lithuania; Chicago, *Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc.*, 1952, vol. XIV and vol. XXXI. Also, Senn, Dr. Alfred, *The Lithuanian Language*. Chicago, Lithuanian Cultural Institute, 1942, pp. 5-6.

³ Jurgela, C. R., *History of the Lithuanian Nation*, New York, Lithuanian Cultural Institute, 1948, p. 15.

ond important victory over the Knights of the Sword occurred at Durbe in 1260. Other victories over the Ruthenian princes and the invading hordes of Tatars followed. In 1251, Mindaugas was baptized a Christian, and 2 years later he was crowned King of a united Lithuania by Bishop Henry of Kulm, a delegate of Pope Innocent IV.

After the assassination of King Mindaugas in 1263, instability characterized Lithuanian political life until the ascendancy of Gediminas (1316-41) who succeeded in consolidating the Lithuanian State. The struggle against Teutonic incursions continued, however, to be one of Lithuania's major problems. Gediminas, the first Lithuanian ruler who successfully revealed to the western courts the real hostile character of the Teutonic Order, maintained a defensive policy against the Germanic invaders and at the same time concentrated his attention primarily on expansion into the Slavic lands conquered earlier by the Tatars. Gediminas adopted for himself an appropriate title: *Rex Lithuanorum et multorum Ruthenorum* (King of the Lithuanians and of many Ruthenians); for under his rule Lithuania gradually became a multinational state, extending its influence to distant Kiev, Pskov, and Novgorod. At the confluence of two small rivers, the Neris and Vilnele, Gediminas built his capital, Vilnius, which except for periods of discord, has remained the capital of Lithuania from 1323 to the present day.

After the demise of King Gediminas in 1341, Lithuania was ruled by 2 brothers, Algirdas and Kestutis, for a period of 32 years from 1345 to 1377.⁴ While Kestutis concentrated his effort in the West, Algirdas, like his predecessors, continued to concentrate upon expansion eastward. In 1362, Algirdas defeated a great Tatar army at the Melne Vody River; and as a result Lithuania finally secured its hold on Kiev and Podolia. Thereafter, Lithuania consolidated its influence in Novgorod and Pskov. Three times Algirdas marched against Moscow. In 1368, the Lithuanians besieged the Kremlin and burned down the suburbs of Moscow. In 1370 and 1372, the Lithuanians marched once again against Moscow. Finally, peace terms were negotiated, and the border was fixed at Mozhaisk, not far from Moscow, and along the Ugra River.⁵

Thus, the Lithuanian domain was extended throughout nearly the entire basin of the Dnieper and Dniester, stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

In 1377, King Algirdas named his eldest son, Jogaila (Jagiello), his successor. In 1386, Jogaila, then Grand Duke, was elected to the Polish throne and as a prior condition was married to the Polish Queen Jadwiga. Thus began, by means of royal elections, the Lithuanian dynasty of Jogaila on the Polish throne which lasted from 1386 until 1572. Moreover, the Jagellonian dynasty gave rulers to Bohemia (1471-1525) and Hungary (1440-44). Simultaneously with the personal union with Poland, Lithuania, heretofore a pagan nation, adopted Roman Catholicism. In 1387, Lithuania was officially proclaimed a Christian state.

⁴ Of this relationship Jurgela wrote: "The two rulers lived their lives in closest imaginable harmony. Algirdas (by foreigners called Algard, Olgerd, Olgierd) was the Grand, or Supreme ruler in charge of the Eastern affairs. Kestutis (by foreigners called Kynstut, Kynstott, Kaystut, Klejstut), the Dux de Traken, was in charge of relations with the Order and Poland. In 1342, he signed the first trade treaty with England; nationals of both countries were free to settle in either State, and the port of Palanga was named as the point of embarkation and debarkation." Jurgela, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

After a period of internal discord, Jogaila's cousin, Vytautas the Great, became ruler of Lithuania. From 1392 to 1430 Vytautas ruled Lithuania. He continued Christianization and westernization with remarkable success. At the time of his death in 1430 there were 54 Roman Catholic churches in Lithuania of which he had built 24. Through his efforts, Samogitia, the western province of Lithuania, which had been liberated from the Teutons, following the victory at Tannenberg, was Christianized in 1413. In general, Christianization had greatly improved the spiritual and cultural ties that existed between Lithuania and Western Europe. Within a few generations Lithuania became an integral part of the West European cultural community. Many Lithuanian nobles spoke Latin, Polish, Italian, German, French; and many held academic degrees from various European universities.

At Grunewald-Tannenberg in 1410, the united armies of Lithuania and Poland thoroughly defeated the Teutonic Order. Thus, the Germanic Drang nach Osten (Drive to the East) was stopped for 360 years.

The Empire of Vytautas was extensive. It included the lands of the upper Volga and Oka Rivers with the towns of Smolensk, Vyazma, Mozhaisk, Tula, Kursk, and the Donets Basin. The total extent of his empire comprised the combined area of modern France and Germany. Even the Tatars of the Crimea became the vassals of Lithuania and remained so until 1475. But the population of this Lithuanian domain, geographically large, was not numerous, probably about 5 million people, due to the fact that the Ukrainian steppes and Bialowiez Forest were mostly uninhabited.

Professor Clarence Manning of Columbia University has written this about Lithuania during the Middle Ages:

The Lithuanians had established a powerful and independent state in Europe during the Middle Ages. They were able to check the German drive to the east for centuries. They protected Europe against the Mongols and the Tatars. They furnished a power and a government behind which the Eastern Slavs could live in peace and safety with a freedom that was unknown in Moscovite Russia. They blessed their subjects with more human freedoms than in the neighboring countries. They encouraged education and toleration, and they played their part in the general development of European civilization.⁶

About the reign of Vytautas, the Lithuanian historian C. R. Jurgela, has written:

Vytautas Alexander, to his eternal glory, personified the innate greatness of his people. He was the only ruler of Lithuania whom history honored with a recognized post mortem title of the Great. * * * There was genuine cultural, religious, economic, and linguistic freedom in his country, emerging from the period of darkness and paganism into the civilized world. He permanently removed the menace of the Teutonic Order at Tannenberg. Despite his defeat at the Vorskla, he weakened the Tatar might and befriended the various Kahns and Saurs.

A man of great vision and wisdom, a grand colonizer, industrialist, road builder, promoter of commerce, protector of racial and religious tolerance, the true Apostle of his people and "*propugnator et augmentator Fidei*" according to Pope Martin V, he elevated his nation into a first rate Power, the greatest European Empire of his period.⁷

In the 16th century Lithuania was compelled to reckon with the steadily increasing power and pressure of Muscovy. From 1503 on

⁶ In Jurgela, op. cit., p. 9.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 181-182.

Lithuania lost to Muscovy some of its eastern provinces. The growing threat of Muscovy induced Lithuania to conclude a political union, a confederation, with Poland at Lublin in 1569. For the same reason, the dukes of Livonia had already concluded a union with Lithuania in 1561. In the shadow of the Muscovite menace, Lithuania was not only forced to conclude the Lublin Union but was also compelled to cede its vast Ukrainian provinces to Poland. Moreover, Courland and Latgalia were recognized as a condominium of Lithuania and Poland. However, in the structure of the dual Commonwealth, both states from 1569 retained their separate governments, armed forces, treasuries, and law courts.

Despite some territorial losses in the east, Lithuania achieved during the 16th century greater internal consolidation and cultural development. For instance, in 1529 the Lithuanian Statute, a code of laws, was enacted, and in 1566 and 1588 it was revised. The regulations of Sigismundus II of 1514 and 1529 on taxation accomplished a great deal in raising the living standards and in increasing the prosperity of the people. In 1557, a far-reaching revolutionary agrarian reform, known as the Hide system (in German, *Hufe*), was introduced. During the period 1564–66 judicial and administrative reforms took place. In 1579, the College of Jesuits was elevated to the rank of Academy of Vilnius. In 1547, the first book in the Lithuanian language was published in Lithuania Minor.⁸

To some extent the Pact of Lublin with Poland increased the security of both Poland and Lithuania, but this was short lived. Primarily, the source of weakness lay in the internal system of government. Beginning with the 16th century the nobility of Lithuania, following the pattern of the Polish nobility, acquired more and more rights to the detriment of the central power of the state. Thereafter, the strength of the Commonwealth was dissipated. For this reason, among others, the Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth was unable to stop the Muscovite armies when they invaded Lithuania in 1654. The Russians seized Vilnius in 1655, and by the terms of the Andrusovo Peace Treaty in 1667, Lithuania lost the large province of Smolensk. Because of this situation, many leaders of Lithuania, disappointed with the alliance with Poland, had looked for help from Sweden. In fact, in 1655, Duke Janussius Radvillus, together with others, had broken off relations with Poland and concluded a treaty of alliance with Sweden.

Eighteenth century Lithuanian history was marked by a devastating war, the further diminution of Lithuanian territory, and the exacerbation of internal weakness and disorder. By a series of partitions, which in the end destroyed the Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth, Lithuania was brought under complete Russian domination.

On August 5, 1772, a pact of partition was signed by Russia, Prussia, and Austria by the terms of which Russia seized the eastern possessions of Lithuania: The Palatinates of Vitebsk, Mstislavl, Latgale, parts of the Palatinates of Polotsk and Minsk. Prussia took control of Pomerania and the Bishopric of Varmia; while Austria moved into Galicia.

⁸ Pakstas, K., *Lithuania and World War II*; Chicago, Lithuanian Cultural Institute, 1947, pp. 8, 9.

The first partition seemed to awaken the people of Lithuania and Poland to a sense of common danger. Feverish attempts were made to push through most urgent reforms, the most important of which for Lithuania was the establishment of an educational commission, the first of its kind in Europe, to reform and administer all education in Lithuania and Poland. Elementary schools were established in every parish. The former Jesuit Academy of Vilnius was reorganized into a Supreme School of Lithuania.

However, the second partition, which took place in 1793, interrupted the progress of reform. In this partition Russia took about one-half of Lithuania, including a little section of ethnographic Lithuania near the Daugava River. Lithuania was completely reduced by the third partition, which took place in 1795, after the failure of a revolt led by Gen. Thaddeus Kosciusko. Russia appropriated for itself nearly the whole of ethnographic Lithuania, leaving to Prussia only the Lithuanian territory south of the Nemunas—the Province of Suvalkai. The Treaty of Tilsit of 1807 between Russia and France resulted in the attachment of this Province to the Duchy of Warsaw. A subsequent decision of the Congress of Vienna of 1815 also gave Suvalkai to Russia.

During the 120 years of Russian domination that followed, no less than 5 distinct major revolts took place in Lithuania and Poland; 1794, 1812, 1831, 1863-64, and 1905. After the rebellion of Kosciusko in 1794, another effort to throw off Russian domination took place when in 1812 nine regiments of Lithuanian volunteers (numbering 30,000 men) fought under Napoleon for the restoration of Lithuanian independence. A provisional Lithuanian government was actually set up and functioned, but after the defeat of Napoleon, this scheme came to an end. Likewise, Russian projects to grant Lithuania some form of autonomy never materialized.

For the third time Lithuania revolted in 1831. Consequences of this revolt were severe. The University of Vilnius and many schools, churches, and monasteries were closed. Czar Nicolas I invoked a sweeping policy of Russification. The long-established and carefully codified body of law, which Lithuania had developed since 1529, was replaced in 1840 by the Russian Code. Similar or identical repressive measures were taken against all forms of Lithuanian culture, including the language, schools, the Catholic religion, and the personnel in the nation's administrative offices.

Lithuania's most energetic effort to revolt took place in 1863-64. However, this insurrection failed after a struggle of 18 months. Like its predecessors, this revolt proved to be fruitless and costly, yielding only such consequences as hangings, exile to Siberia, and emigration. But even this harsh treatment failed to end Lithuania's drive for freedom and national independence.

The insurrection of 1905, likewise as unsuccessful as the revolutions that had preceded it, was not wholly without significant results. It brought to light the futility of the attempts to impose upon Lithuania total Russification; thus it brought to an end the heretofore intensive efforts of the Russians to mold Lithuanians into their own image. Nevertheless, the promise to permit Lithuanians the use of their own language in schools and official life was not fulfilled, although partial freedom of the Lithuanian language in the press was granted.

A significant episode in Lithuanian history was the convocation of the Grand Assembly which met at Vilnius on December 4-6, 1905. The Grand Assembly actually included representatives from all groups and classes of the Lithuanian people, about 2,000 delegates. Political leaders of the various parties, such as the Christian Democratic, National Democratic, Liberal, and Social Democratic Parties were also present. The Grand Assembly brought together delegates from all provinces—Kaunas, Vilnius, Gardinas, Suvalkai, and from Lithuania Minor. At this assembly a statement of Lithuanian grievances was passed in the form of resolutions. Exuding the spirit of Lithuanian patriotism and containing constitutional and international features, this document became the instrument of original reference for the more complete program of sovereignty and independence that emerged and was advanced successfully before and during World War I.⁹

A pertinent paragraph of this document stated :

Only self-government will satisfy the aspirations of the Lithuanian people. Lithuania must therefore be resuscitated within her ethnographic boundaries as an autonomous state in the Russian Empire. Her relations with the other Russian states must be established upon a federative basis. Vilnius will be the capital of the country and the seat of Parliament. The latter will be elected by general, secret, and direct ballot, in which women will also participate.¹⁰

Historically, this important declaration was the result of decades of struggle and dedication to higher national motives by the Lithuanian people. Fundamental to this movement toward national self-expression was the emergence of a Lithuanian renaissance which had its conception in the University of Vilnius at the beginning of the 19th century. S. Daukantas, S. Stanevicius, and Bishop M. Valancius had already laid the foundation of the national literary movement in the Lithuanian language. Of the students at the University of Vilnius, Bishop Valancius was probably the most important as a leader. He sponsored clandestine literature, organized the so-called book carriers, and was also an important leader of the temperance movement.

The Lithuanian renaissance acquired broader dimensions when the Lithuanian people as a whole joined the struggle for freedom of religious worship and freedom of the Lithuanian press. Here was a challenge for the continued existence of the Lithuanian religious and cultural spirit. In 1865, Muraviev, the Russian Governor General of Lithuania, and his successor, Constantine von Kauffmann, had banned all printing of the Lithuanian language in Latin characters and ordered the Russian Cyrillic alphabet to be used in the printing of Lithuanian books. In this way the Russian Government sought to promote the cultural Russification of Lithuanians. However, Lithuanians, especially the peasantry, reacted energetically against these measures, at first by a passive boycott of books printed with Cyrillic characters and later by actually printing and circulating Lithuanian books in Latin characters. From the beginning the reaction of the peasantry was influenced to a large extent by the religious inclination of the people and by the leadership of the clergy. Since some of the Catholic clergy had played an active part in the revolutionary

⁹ Jurgela, *op. cit.*, pp. 492-496.

¹⁰ Graham, Malbone Watson, Jr., *New Governments of Eastern Europe*; New York, Henry Holt & Co., 1927, pp. 354-358.

movement of 1863, the Catholic Church was, herself, exposed to a series of repressive measures. So powerful was popular Lithuanian resistance to this form of religious and cultural Russification, however, that the Russian Government was finally compelled to reverse its policies. On May 7, 1904, Czar Nicholas II proclaimed the lifting of the ban which had been imposed for 40 years.

Closely related to the Lithuanian renaissance was the emergence of a movement directed toward broader democratization of the Lithuanian social order. Following the liberation of the Lithuanian peasantry in 1807 in the Suvalkai area and in 1861 and 1863 in the rest of the country, the children of liberated peasants were admitted to colleges and universities. As a result, the first intellectuals from the peasantry appeared on the cultural scene. In 1883 the first political monthly magazine *Ausra* (Dawn), appeared in Tilsit, Lithuania Minor, under the direction of Dr. Jonas Basanavicius. *Ausra* was soon followed by several other periodicals published in Lithuania Minor and smuggled into Lithuania by the so-called book carriers.

Prior to 1865, Lithuanian insurrections had been led by petty noblemen whose primary objective had been the restoration of the historic Lithuanian-Polish Confederation. Since then, however, a new type of intellectual emerged among the peasant population who, commanding the sympathies of the large mass of the people—for Lithuania was largely an agrarian nation—became a force of considerable importance in Lithuanian life. Those new leaders were democratic social reformers. In addition to their professed aspiration for national independence, which embraced only the concept of an ethnographic Lithuania, their program called for radical agrarian reform and democratization of the political and social order. By the end of the 19th century great leaders of this movement appeared, men like Dr. Jonas Basanavicius (1851–1927), Dr. Vincas Kudirka (1858–99), and Rev. Juozas Tumas (1869–1933). Besides being popular leaders these men were editors, writers, and humanitarians.

Finally, the renaissance movement was greatly assisted by Lithuanian emigrés abroad, particularly in America.

Thus, those factors that contributed to the Lithuanian renaissance: the efforts among Lithuanians to sustain the Lithuanian language and literature; the efforts of emigrés within Russia and in the United States to support the Lithuanian cause; and the rise of a new peasant intelligentsia—all contributed to the creation of a national force which found its outlet in the movement that finally brought national independence to Lithuania after World War I.

II. LITHUANIA AND WORLD WAR I

During World War I Lithuania suffered greatly without having contributed either to the creation of the war or its prolongation in any way. In addition to the hardships that over a century of foreign domination and loss of national independence had brought, this war now imposed new demands upon Lithuania, its resources, and its people. For decades Lithuanians had been waging a rear-guard war against forced denationalization, assimilation as a people, and absorption as a nation by Russia. World War I, in the light of all that had gone before, should have been a sort of coup de grace, the blow to end this struggle for statehood, and to erase Lithuania from the face of

the earth. Actually the effect was the reverse; for the dawn of a new age for international democracy had arrived, and the Lithuanian people were destined to share in its bounty.

The German armies overran Lithuania in September 1915 and remained there until the end of the war. For more than 3 years these armies had abused Lithuania and its population. The German advance in the spring of 1915 on the eastern front had been overwhelming. They had taken the fortresses of Ust-Dvinsk, west of Riga, in Latvia. They swallowed up Kaunas and Gardinas (Grodno) in Lithuania. In Poland, they took Osowiec, Lomza, Plock, and Modlin. Warsaw collapsed. Vilnius, Lithuania's capital, became a kind of German military drill field. German might, in the autumn of 1915, settled down on a line reaching from Riga and Dvinsk to Tarnopol, near the Rumanian frontier. There, they held on through the early months of 1918. What happened in that period is the story of the war.¹¹

But the world which the Central Powers had brought down in their defeat in 1918 provided the opportunity for Lithuania to reestablish its national independence. From the ruins of this great war, Lithuanian statehood emerged.

The cost of the war to Lithuania as in the case of other countries was great. The area became a vital military center, a base for operations, a headquarters for communications, a major defense establishment, first for the Russians, who took everything they could seize or requisition, and then for the Germans. As the armies marched against each other, artillery fire destroyed whole towns and villages in the Suvalkai region. With the retreat of the army of the Czar, multitudes of inhabitants vanished into the interior, while the defeated Russians scorched the earth. Anything that could be of value or use to the German enemy was either carried off or destroyed, whether it was an estate, a mill, a forest, a home, a building that could house a headquarters or a hut that might provide shelter for a soldier. In some places remaining inhabitants had nothing left for housing except the trenches the retreating soldiers had just evacuated.

The Germans captured 25,000 Lithuanians serving under the Russian colors. Then, the German armies occupied the exhausted earth the Russians had devastated and seized the pathetic remnants of forest and farm the Russians had missed, making the most of the debris which destruction from artillery fire had failed to reduce to rubble. After the retreat of the Russians, the Germans, whose system was more thorough and whose method was far more comprehensive, confiscated whatever the Lithuanians had rebuilt. In the wake of the alternate devastation and the looting after each occupation, came the inevitable famine. Thousands perished of starvation in 1916 and a great city like Vilnius became the abode of the walking dead.

But throughout the suffering the Germans never lost sight of their goal to make Lithuania a German province. Just as the Russians under the Czar tried to Russify Lithuanians, so the Germans under the Kaiser tried now to Germanize them. Both found the task practically impossible. Lithuanians were conscripted for labor. The German language became compulsory and Lithuanian names were obliterated

¹¹ Chase, Thomas G., *The Story of Lithuania*, op. cit., ch. XXVI.

or modified in the process of Germanization. Lithuanian publications were suppressed, but the German military published a Lithuanian language bulletin called *Dabartis* (The Present), and even went so far in 1917 as to permit the publication of *Lietuvos Aidas* (The Echo of Lithuania). The Echo may have been Lithuanian, but the censorship was strictly Germanic.

III. THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF RELIEF FOR WAR SUFFERERS

Notwithstanding the intensity of its suffering and the apparent hopelessness for relief, Lithuanian leadership came forward and, as the tide of fortune changed, this leadership and the ideals that motivated it, developed and advanced a program for national independence. With the formation by the Lithuanians of a Central Committee of Relief for War Sufferers which had first been organized in 1914 with the consent of the authorities of the Czar, the nucleus was created. For Lithuania, this committee was to make history. It included such men as *Martinas Ycas*, who had been a Lithuanian representative in the Russian Imperial Duma, and *Antanas Smetona*, who was one of the prominent figures in Lithuania's march toward independence.

When the Germans occupied Lithuania, one group in the committee went on to Russia, making their headquarters at Petrograd, later Leningrad, while the other, under *Smetona*, remained under the German occupation in Vilnius. The Petrograd branch of the committee became the focal point for the activities, hopes, and dreams of Lithuanian refugees throughout Russia. Its program included relief of physical distress, the establishment of places of asylum, the organization of Lithuanian schools, assistance for university students, help for Lithuanian prisoners in German hands, and the creation of a network of representatives in Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, and the United States. Although concerned with social activities these committees worked vigorously along political lines. Twice in 1914 *Martinas Ycas* took the lead in issuing a resolution calling for Lithuanian autonomy. The Lithuanian Center, operating secretly, in Vilnius opposed the designs of those Poles who tried to advance their own cause, by having Lithuania identified with them in a manner reminiscent of the former Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth, with Lithuania distinctly in a subordinate role. At this time, however, the Lithuanians wanted independence in a more absolute form.

The Lithuanian leaders were to prove themselves masters of an international dilemma from which their singleness of purpose, integrity, and wisdom alone extricated them: on the one hand, the Poles sought union with Lithuania on terms hardly acceptable to Lithuania; on the other hand, the crumpling empire of the Czar, the pre-Kerensky, and Kerensky regimes, and finally the Bolshevik government, fought and obstructed Lithuanian aspirations but were compelled by the logic of events finally to accept at first Lithuanian autonomy and then Lithuanian national independence. But Russia, under whatever government, always remained a potential threat. And there was Germany, eager on its own, or with assistance from Poland and Austria, to bring Lithuania within the German orbit. In the course of events which increased the complexities for the achievement of Lithuania's goal, the branch of the War Relief Committee in Petrograd was sensi-

tive to the repercussions from all Lithuanians in Russia, while the branch in Vilnius was equally sensitive to the peril of Lithuanians under the iron hand of German military rule.

It seemed, however, that Lithuania could not be deprived of the achievement of its aspirations to establish a free and independent nation-state, although its fate was at that time in the hands of its enemies. The last phases of World War I and the revolution in Russia, however, created conditions favorable to success. The Lithuanian National Council came into being in Russia and soon after gathered delegates in Petrograd for a Seimas or parliament to develop plans for liberating Lithuania from Russian domination.¹² Lithuanian assemblies met in Stockholm, and at Voronezh, in Russia, they organized a Supreme Council of the Lithuanian nation, a Taryba, which, taking a forward position, vigorously declared for Lithuania the principle of self-determination and the ultimate establishment of an independent Lithuanian Republic.

Lithuanian independence was about to become a reality. With the total collapse of the czarist government, the rise and fall of Kerensky, and the usurpation of power by the Bolsheviks, efforts were made to create some kind of a Lithuanian military force out of the disintegrated Russian Army. Although short-lived in spite of prompt Bolshevik suppression which resulted in the execution of Lithuanian officers and soldiers in Siberia, Lithuanian battalions did come into being in Vitebsk, Smolensk, Rovno, in Siberia, and in the Ukraine. In their exertions these battalions failed for a time, but their existence proved that even in the existing state of chaos, Lithuania had a moderate military potential that would prove efficacious in the important moments of its rise to statehood.

The Germans had been given significant evidences of the Lithuanian desire for independence. When the Vilnius branch of the Central Committee for Relief of War Sufferers went into action, its aim was to soften the severe pressure of German demands on the Lithuanian populace. With the war relief committee as a cover, the Lithuanian political parties created an executive committee of five to negotiate with the German Military Administration—*Ober-Ost*—for the alleviation of hardships under German rule.

On June 10, 1916, the committee presented two memoranda to the commander of the German East Army very much to his dismay and displeasure. The first spoke of the dismal general situation in Lithuania for Lithuanians, and the second made clear the political aspirations of the Lithuanian people.¹³ Lithuanians, the second memorandum stated, wanted the reestablishment of an independent State of Lithuania. They wanted independence free of any ties with other nations, they said; and they wanted their independence within ethnographic boundaries. And three members of the committee, meeting later at Lausanne, Switzerland, set forth a series of resolutions and aspirations, in the following language:

Whatever may be the issue of the war, the Lithuanians do not wish to return to political servitude. A free Lithuanian people occupying the entire national territory, and having free political, intellectual and economic development—

¹² Chase, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

¹³ Klimas, P., *Le développement de l'Etat Lithuanien a partir de l'Annee' 1915 jusqu'à la formation du Gouvernement Provisoire au mois de Novembre 1918. D'après des Documents Officiels.* Paris, 1919, Documents Nos. 1 and 3.

such are the demands of all Lithuanian parties, based on the experience of the past.¹⁴

There could be security and freedom for Lithuania, they declared, only under "full and unlimited independence."

When these committee members returned from Lausanne in July 1916, the German military high command in that theater was presented with another memorandum that was in fact a long petition of grievances. The military administration, they charged, was arbitrary, forbidding meetings and restricting freedom of the press. They complained of the suppression of the Lithuanian language which had taken place contrary to official German statements. Ill treatment of the Lithuanian people, ruthless requisitions, and the anti-Lithuanian policy maintained in the schools were also sources of complaint. The German reply to these representations was to ignore them. Another approach was made, this time directly to Bethmann Hollweg, the German Chancellor, through Dr. Gaigalaitis, a Lithuanian-German citizen, who was a member of the Prussian Parliament. In this instance, there was likewise no evidence of any results favorable to Lithuania. The Germans tried to counter Lithuanian independence with efforts at incorporating it into Germany, while Poland whose independence Austria and Germany announced in November 1916, sought also to absorb Lithuania inside its territory. But against these propositions Lithuanian leadership remained adamant.

While the German military sought to prevent any direct liaison between the Lithuanian leaders and such high officials of the German Government as the Chancellor and later the German Secretary of State, Herr Zimmermann, they did announce, in the form of a press release on June 2, 1917, the creation of a *Vertrauensrat* or a Lithuanian Advisory Council presumably to consist of prominent Lithuanians. In this council the German military hoped to create a local Lithuanian representative body made up of pro-German elements, who would petition the German Government for solutions in the interest of Germany. On the other hand, the Germans sought to silence Lithuanian patriots who advanced the cause of Lithuanian independence and national sovereignty. Prominent Lithuanians, however, refused to serve on the German-sponsored council. When the Germans made overtures to Bishop Karevicius, Dr. J. Basanavicius, and A. Smetona asking them to recommend members for the council, the Germans were told to make the council truly representative of the country through universal elections if they really wished Lithuanian cooperation.

Twenty-one Lithuanian leaders met in Vilnius on August 1, 1917, without German authorization; for the only political activity that was tolerated by the German authorities was that which was directed toward an alliance with Germany. Nevertheless, the Germans finally granted official permission to the executive committee of the 21 Lithuanians to convoke the assembly of a Lithuanian National Conference. The subcommittee of organization consisted of: Smetona, Saulys, Stankevicius, Birziska, and Klimas. It proceeded now with the organization of a Lithuanian National Conference by bringing to Vilnius through invitation prominent Lithuanians representing every

¹⁴ Klimas, *op. cit.*, Doc. No. V.

district of the country. The invitation device was decided upon because general elections were prohibited by the German administration.

The Lithuanian National Assembly that met on September 18, 1917, in Vilnius had its ideological origin in the famous Vilnius Grand Assembly of 1905. But the rise of democracy accelerated during the course of the war, broadened its scope and influence, heightened its prestige, and inspired from Lithuanians declarations of even bolder principles and language. The invitations that had gone out resulted in the assembling of 214 members, although efforts had been made by Lithuanians in Russia and other parts of the world to increase that number. Some authorities have estimated the total number of delegates at 220.¹⁵ The Russian Provisional Government had produced a situation that was involved, uncertain, and vacillating, while a clamor for Lithuanian independence under the threat of German arms might very well produce a summary catastrophe.

IV. THE DEMAND FOR INDEPENDENCE

Nevertheless, the Lithuanian National Assembly that remained in session from September 18 to September 23, 1917, struck out for independence without equivocation, giving no evidence of fear that might have acted as a deterrent, because of the danger of Russian retaliation or German suppression. The members of this assembly were representative of the entire Lithuanian population—all parties, classes, and professions—since they had been carefully selected both for their distinguished positions in their respective communities and their devotion to the movement for national independence. The two most decisive actions this assembly had taken were highly significant in the national development of Lithuania. The first was the election of a National Council or Taryba, and the second was its promulgation of what was tantamount to a demarche, if not a declaration of independence, calling for Lithuania's elevation to the status of a sovereign and independent state.

The resolution demanding independence stated :

(1) In order that Lithuania may be able freely to develop, it is absolutely necessary to make the country an independent State, based upon democratic principles and having ethnographical frontiers which shall take into consideration the interests of economic life.

The national minorities of Lithuania shall be given every guarantee for their cultural development.

In order to fix definitively the basis of independent Lithuania and her relations with neighbouring countries, there shall be convoked at Vilna [Vilnius] a Constituent Assembly elected in conformity with democratic principles by all the inhabitants of Lithuania.

(2) If, before negotiations for a general peace are entered into, [the] German Empire should declare herself ready to recognize the Lithuanian State and to support Lithuanian interests at the peace conference, the Lithuanian conference would then admit the possibility for the future Lithuanian State of entering relations with Germany which remain to be determined, but which shall not prejudice the free development of Lithuania. The conference makes this declaration in consideration of the fact that the interests of Lithuania, in normal times, are rather in the direction of the West than the East or South.¹⁶

¹⁵ Harrison, E. J., *Lithuania, Past and Present*. New York, Robert M. McBride & Co., 1922. p. 90. Grahnam, Malbone Watson, Jr., *New Governments of Eastern Europe*; op. cit., p. 364.

¹⁶ Klimas, op. cit., pp. 86-87.

Jonas Basanavicius was chairman of the Lithuanian National Assembly, and the 20 members of the newly created National Council or Taryba elected Antanas Smetona its president. The convocation of a Constituent Assembly, mentioned in the resolution of independence, foreshadowed, of course, the framing of a constitution, and prepared the way for the practical realization of the Lithuanian dream of democratic self-rule.

The election of the National Council provided a clear demonstration of political acumen among the Lithuanian leaders. The Lithuanian National Assembly above all wanted a council that would unite the country and be genuinely representative. Of its 20 members, 4 were ecclesiastics. Several were landed proprietors. It included also lawyers, professors, peasants, and workers; men like: Dr. J. Basanavicius, M. Birziska, S. Banaitis, K. Bizauskas, Pr. Dovydaitis, St. Kairys, P. Klimas, D. Malinauskas, V. Mironas, S. Narutavicius, A. Petrulis, A. Smetona, J. Smilgevicius, J. Staugaitis, A. Stulginskis, Dr. J. Saulys, K. Saulys, J. Vailokaitis, J. Sernas, and J. Vileisis.

V. LITHUANIANS ABROAD HELP PROMOTE LITHUANIAN INDEPENDENCE

To be sure the council won immediate national respect and attention, but it also achieved a certain fame abroad, especially in the United States, Russia, Sweden, and Switzerland. The fame that it won abroad, however, had been carefully nurtured in advance by many activities of Lithuanian exiles, refugees, and emigrants. For example, some 186 representatives of Roman Catholic societies and other individuals gathered at the outset of World War I in Chicago. Meeting from September 21 to September 23, 1914, they declared themselves in favor of Lithuania's autonomy and independence. Moreover, they established a fund, called the Lithuanian National Fund, which was designed to further this political goal and to help the Lithuanian war sufferers. A week later, on October 1, 1914, another convention of Lithuanian-Americans met in Brooklyn, N. Y., attended by 273 delegates representing political and ideological groups and their organizations throughout the country. During its 3-day deliberations this gathering, called the All-American Lithuanian Convention, unanimously adopted a resolution proclaiming the principle of national self-determination for all subjugated nationalities and especially for the Lithuanian nation, the greater part of which was at that time under Russian rule and the smaller part, the so-called Lithuania Minor or Prussian Lithuania, under German rule. The resolution expressed the delegates' conviction that the relations among free nations should be governed by the spirit of equality, liberty, and brotherhood. Calling upon the subjugated Lithuanian nation "to throw off the foreign yoke," the convention pledged the moral and financial support of all Lithuanian-Americans to its liberation, hoping that in a free Lithuania conditions would be established favorable to the economic and cultural development of its people.

Two conferences convened in Berne, Switzerland, the first on August 3 and 4, 1915, and the second March 1-5, 1916, pronounced for Lithuanian independence, and set forth its justification. The delegates to these conferences came together in spite of the perils of wartime travel from various European nations and the United States. The second conference was, in substance, similar to the first. The reasons for Lithuanian independence were itemized in the following manner:

1. Lithuania was for many centuries an independent state.
2. The Lithuanian people had never ceased to demand their lost liberty.
3. Lithuania possesses a very clear ethnographic character, and a national culture, and she forms a distinct political organism.
4. Only an independent Lithuanian Government will be able to repair the immense damage which the war has caused to Lithuania.
5. The creation of a free and independent Lithuania will favor the establishment of a durable peace.
6. At the outbreak of the war the Allies proclaimed the liberation of oppressed nationalities as the object of the war.
7. The German Government also, through the Imperial Chancellor has declared that the German troops had "delivered" Lithuania.¹⁸

Still another Lithuanian conference convened at the Hague in the Netherlands announced that Lithuania, having thrown off Russian domination, did not wish its re-won independence lost to some other conqueror. The resolution of this Hague conference for Lithuanian independence listed the following considerations which seemed to condense in a simple pronouncement the whole of Lithuanian history:

1. Russia oppressed Lithuania for 125 years—since 1795—and has despoiled her, and in lieu of her name calls Lithuania "Northwest Russia."
2. The national administration and the Lithuanian statute have been set aside and in their stead foreign institutions have been imposed upon the country.
3. The Russian Government has suppressed the University of Vilna [Vilnius], closed the schools, and outlawed the Lithuanian language and literature.
4. The Russian Government has done great damage to the Catholic Church and in persecuting Catholics it has not hesitated to spill blood.
5. Under barbarous governors (Muraviev, the hangman, for example) the country has suffered a setback of half a century in the development of its civilization.
6. The 40 years prohibition of printing (1864-1904) grievously injured the country. In spite of this the intellectual level is higher than in Russia, 52 percent of the population of Lithuania being able to read and write, whereas in Russia the proportion of those who can read and write is only 29 percent.
7. In addition to the damage to her culture, Lithuania has also had to endure the robbery of the fruits of her soil which Lithuanian labor over several centuries has made fertile.
8. Since the beginning of the war some hundreds of thousands of Lithuanians have fought in the Russian Army; yet, despite this, Russia has not promised to the Lithuanians the political autonomy which she has accorded the Poles.
9. During their retreat the Russian troops massacred young and old in the country and carried off thousands of Lithuanians.¹⁹

A Lithuanian Supreme National Committee was created in Switzerland. Located here, it was not too far removed from the home theater of operations for Lithuanian independence and at the same time enjoyed freedom from even the threat of persecution. Its purpose was to promote Lithuanian national interests, to represent abroad both the Lithuanian people and their political parties, and to serve as a headquarters in Europe for information on the development of Lithuanian welfare, independence, and national sovereignty.

¹⁸ Harrison. *Op. cit.*, p. 87.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 89.

But all this was hardly the whole story of the international enthusiasm generated by the struggle for and the imminence of Lithuanian independence. A Stockholm Conference assembled on October 18-20, 1918, on the initiative of Lithuanians from Russia, who sent the largest delegation, and were joined by fellow delegates from Switzerland and the United States. The Conference heard a report on the work of the Lithuanian National Assembly in Vilnius, and expressed its adherence to the historic resolution demanding Lithuanian independence. The third Berne Conference which had convened toward the end of 1918, rendered particularly significant service because of the presence of President Antanas Smetona and a delegation from the Lithuanian National Council. A wide range of vital decisions on foreign and domestic policy was arrived at in this conference. The most important decision was the official recognition and approval by the Conference of the resolution of the Vilnius National Assembly creating the Lithuanian National Council. This third Berne Conference recognized the Council or Taryba as the properly constituted organ of the Lithuanian people.

Events moved rapidly in Europe. Russia was in a state of upheaval. The Czar had abdicated in March 1917. The provisional government, headed by Kerensky had risen and fallen. Bolshevik power ruled Russia. The Bolshevik leaders offered immediate negotiations for peace with Germany, and adopted the principle of self-determination to include Russian-dominated countries, of which presumably Lithuania was one. Later the Soviet Government under the ukase of a rising young commissar named Stalin was to invalidate utterly this promise.

Yet the announcement at the time had a complicating effect for Germany which was still vigorously fighting the war in the west. Annexation of Lithuania would hardly be acceptable to the Bolshevik Government, and Germany did not wish increased military hostility in the east. Thus, Germany sought a way out by declaring itself in favor of an agreement that would bring freedom and independence to Lithuania provided it was based on a permanent union between the two countries. Lithuanians had had enough experience with both Russia and Germany through the ages to know that in either case, whether the one or the other held dominion over them, they, the Lithuanians, would without a peradventure of a doubt lose in any arrangement.

The Lithuanians were, however, determined in their efforts to win absolute independence and nothing less. There ensued a diplomatic struggle in which Germany tried to get from the Lithuanian National Council a resolution accepting German domination while granting to Lithuania a certain autonomy. In December of 1917, a Lithuanian delegation came to Berlin and was offered federation with the Reich as endorsed by the military, the Cabinet, and the Reichstag. When all these overtures came to no avail, the Germans declared themselves ready to accept Lithuanian independence provided it included economic and military union with Germany. The Council, however, obstructed any German ties by dilatory tactics, such as withholding certain decisions until the conclusion of a peace treaty, substituting military and economic "conventions" for union, and demanding that Germany plead the Lithuanian cause at the peace conference.

In every way Germany sought to diminish the prestige of the Lithuanian National Council publicly while dealing with it on high levels. Thus, the German administration pretended the Council had merely an advisory status, and even tried to prohibit publication of its decisions. Then the Lithuanian National Council exhibited astonishing diplomatic and political astuteness. It issued two pronouncements on independence, each designed in its way to fit the circumstances of the hour and to frustrate both German and Bolshevik ambitions against Lithuanian sovereignty. The pronouncements at the same time thrust Lithuania again and again into the world limelight as a nation having a just claim for absolute independence before the free world under the widely heralded Wilsonian principle of self-determination.

The first of the pronouncements came on December 11, 1917:

I

The Lithuanian Taryba (the National Council), recognized by Lithuanians at home and abroad as the only authorized representative of the Lithuanian people, proclaims, on the basis of the recognized right of self-determination of peoples and on the basis of the resolutions of the Conference of Vilna [Vilnius] (18-23 September 1917), the reconstitution of an independent Lithuanian State, with Vilna [Vilnius] as its capital, and its liberation from all political ties which heretofore have bound it to other nations.

II

During the reconstruction of the above State and in order to defend its interests during the peace negotiations, the Taryba requests the aid and the protection of the Empire of Germany. In consideration of the vital interests of Lithuania, which demand the prompt establishment of lasting and close relations with [the] German Empire, the Taryba declares itself in favor of a continuous and firm alliance between the Lithuanian State and the Empire of Germany, an alliance which must find its realization principally in a military and economic convention and in a customs and monetary union.²⁰

As a declaration of independence the pronouncement, which was presented in the form of a resolution by the Council, had a dual purpose. It aimed to checkmate German intentions of annexation and at the same time deny Bolshevik claims to Lithuanian territory. The effort to placate German goodwill by offering substitutes for annexation that would not impair Lithuanian sovereignty failed to satisfy Germany. And when Germany was still determined to pursue a course leading to annexation, the Lithuanian National Council decided to drop all attempts at conciliating the German administration. Germany had disclosed its hand at the Brest-Litovsk Treaty negotiations with the Bolsheviks when it declared its opposition to a plebiscite to determine the future status of the German-occupied areas of Livonia, Courland, Lithuania, and Poland.

On January 8, 1918, the Council reaffirmed the decision of the Vilnius Assembly for the convocation of a Lithuanian Constituent Assembly which would determine Lithuania's governmental system and its foreign relations. The Council then addressed to the German Government the proposition that it would notify the Bolshevik Government of the resolution of December 11, 1917, provided the Germans would come to an agreement with the Lithuanians, on such questions as: (a) when and under what conditions the administration of Lithuania would be turned over to the Lithuanian National Council; (b)

²⁰ Klimas, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

when would the German military occupation come to an end so that the German Army could be replaced by the Lithuanian police; (c) when would Germany recognize the independence of Lithuania.

Events were pressing hard on the German Government. On January 27, 1918, the representative of the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs informed the Lithuanian National Council that Germany would soon recognize the independence of Lithuania on the basis of the resolution of December 11, 1917. The Council was wary of German promises but regarded formal recognition nevertheless as of some importance. What made the December 11, 1917, resolution particularly palatable to the Germans at this particular time was the stipulation in it that the Lithuanian National Council favored a "continuous and firm alliance between the Lithuanian State and the Empire of Germany, an alliance which must find its realization principally in a military and economic convention and in a customs and monetary union." The council by a majority vote decided to accept the German proposal but stipulated that Germany, in its act of recognition, acknowledge the competence of the Constituent Assembly to establish Lithuanian foreign relations. But even this stipulation was not adequate, for at least four members of the council resigned from the council in protest. In the efforts to conciliate these four members, however, their position prevailed, and they returned to the Council.

There followed then a unanimous agreement on a declaration of independence that would be wholly and absolutely free of any expressions of servitude to any other power and that would make no commitments of any kind, except to the Lithuanian people, for the complete and unequivocal independence and sovereignty of their country. This was the declaration of February 16, 1918, second of the two pronouncements on independence which stated:

The Lithuanian Taryba, in its session of February 16, 1918, decided unanimously to address the following communication to the Governments of Russia, of Germany, and of other States:

"The Lithuanian Taryba, as a sole representative of the Lithuanian people proclaims, on the basis of the recognized right of self-determination of peoples and of the decision of the Lithuanian Conference held at Vilna [Vilnius] September 18-23, 1917, the reestablishment of an independent Lithuanian State, founded on a democratic base, with Vilna [Vilnius] as capital and the abolition of all political ties which have existed with other peoples."

The Lithuanian Taryba declares at the same time that the basis of this State and its relations with other States shall be definitively fixed by a Constituent Assembly, which must be convoked as soon as possible and which will be elected by all inhabitants by virtue of democratic principles.

In making the preceding known to the government, the Lithuanian Taryba requests favorable consideration of recognition of the independent Lithuanian State.

Signed by Council (Taryba) Members Vilna [Vilnius], February 16, 1918.²¹

In Lithuanian history, this second declaration of February 16, 1918, was Lithuania's official declaration of independence. The Lithuanian Government regarded it as the instrument which determined the legal origin of the reestablished state.²² The significant elements of this declaration were as follows:

²¹ Kilmas, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

²² Graham, Jr., Malbone Watson, *New Governments of Eastern Europe*, *op. cit.*, pp. 368, 710.

Lithuanian independence was proclaimed on the basis of self-determination and in accordance with the Vilnius pronouncement of the Lithuanian National Assembly September 18–23, 1917.

Lithuania was not now a newly established state but a reestablished one.

The declaration of the Lithuanian National Council was the declaration of the nation because it alone represented Lithuania.

Democratic principles were to be the basis of the independent state of Lithuania.

Vilnius was to become again the capital of Lithuania.

The declaration utterly severed all and any ties which previously bound Lithuania to any other state.

The Constituent Assembly of Lithuania was to determine the form the Government of Lithuania was to take and what procedures it was to employ in its relations with foreign nations.

The Constituent Assembly was to be convoked as soon as possible.

Germany's reaction was instantly hostile. Bringing pressure to bear upon the Lithuanian National Council, the German Government reaffirmed its desire to recognize Lithuanian independence on the basis of the resolution of December 11, 1917, complaining that the declaration of independence of February 16, 1918, had destroyed the ground upon which Germany's promise of recognition was based. But if the Lithuanian National Council would now repudiate the February 16 document and return to the terms of the December 11 resolution, all would be well.²³ The Council's reply was to decline to annul the February 16 document, insisting that it did not cancel the Council's attitude concerning "conventions" with Germany. It argued that the final decisions on relations with foreign nations belonged to Lithuania's Constituent Assembly when it would be convoked and when it could act. All of this, said the Council, was contained in the resolution of December 11, and still held.²⁴

VI. KING AND A THRONE PROPOSED FOR LITHUANIA

About a month later the German Imperial Government executed an extraordinary diplomatic maneuver. Kaiser Wilhelm II, the German sovereign, announced *de jure* recognition of Lithuania's independence. A delegation of the Lithuanian National Council had been in conference with the German Chancellor, Count von Hertling, and was persistently pressing its case. But the recognition was granted only within the terms of the December 11 document, and not the declaration of February 16.²⁵ Nevertheless, recognition had its importance for the Council because, among other acute difficulties, Lithuania was still under German occupation. The Council plausibly assumed that recognition now would mean relief from German administration and the beginning of rule by the Council. But the Germans hampered Council activity, even in the matter of refugees from Russia, and permitted it no freedom of action whatever.

But now a new line of approach proved just as startling as the sudden signature of the Kaiser on the imperfect document of imperial recognition. The Kaiser wanted one of his sons established on the

²³ Killmas, *op. cit.*, Doc. No. XXXVII.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, Doc. No. XXXVIII.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, Doc. XLI.

royal throne of Lithuania. The Lithuanian Council turned a cold shoulder to these offers of the Hohenzollern dynasty but on its own part countered with their own proposal. The Lithuanian National Council assumed the title State Council and on July 11, 1918 proclaimed Lithuania a democratic monarchy, offering the crown to William of Urach, Duke of Würtemberg, and proclaiming at the same time a short monarchical constitution.

This bold stroke was another effort to circumvent German designs on Lithuania. However, instead of being a scion of the House of Hohenzollern, the proposed recipient of the crown of Lithuania was presented, at least, by some as a lineal descendant of the ancient Lithuanian nobility whose ancestry went back to the early Lithuanian King Mindaugas I. This allegation was not taken seriously by Lithuanians. Duke William, who was to be given the title of Mindaugas II, King of Lithuania, was agreeable to the plan, but the German Government not only refused to agree to any such procedure, but proceeded to ignore the authority of the Lithuanian National Council, and declined it any right to administer affairs even inside Lithuanian borders.²⁶ In fact, the German military authorities refused the Lithuanian National Council its right to change its name to the Lithuanian State Council and said it had no authority to elect a king to the Lithuanian throne. A Lithuanian newspaper, *Lietuvos Aidas*, edited by Antanas Smetona, was summarily suspended after having refused to publish Germany's explanations of its actions against the Lithuanian National Council.

In October 1918, Prince Max of Baden became the new Chancellor of Germany, a proceeding that encouraged the Lithuanian National Council to petition again for the right to exercise its authority. The Council asked the Chancellor for (a) permission to form the Lithuanian Government and to regulate the financial and frontier problems of the country without delay, (b) permission to establish diplomatic missions, primarily in Germany, (c) the transfer of the administration of the country to the Lithuanian Government and the termination of German occupation, and (d) the right to organize Lithuanian military forces for the defense of the Lithuanian borders and for the maintenance of order.

Although the Chancellor issued a declaration on October 21, 1918, permitting the organization of a Lithuanian administration for the country, there was, in fact, very little change in the situation. The government of Chancellor Max depended on declarations without decision, and delay instead of fulfillment.

It was becoming increasingly clear, however, that Germany had lost the war. The Lithuanian leadership and the German Government continued to dispute with one another up to the hour of the armistice, remaining in radical disagreement on all grounds: diplomatic, constitutional, and administrative.²⁷ But at this fortuitous moment the Lithuanian National Council unanimously moved to withdraw its invitation to Duke William to take the throne of Lithuania. It again put forward its declaration of independence of February 16, 1918, certifying that Lithuania's form of government was to be determined by a Lithuanian Constituent Assembly.

²⁶ Klittas. *Op. cit.*, Doc. No. LVI.

²⁷ Graham, Malbone W., Jr. *New Governments of Eastern Europe.* *Op. cit.*, pp. 370-371.

On November 2, 1918, the Lithuanian National Council promulgated the Provisional Constitution of the Lithuanian State, which placed the executive function in the hands of a triumvirate or a directory of three, namely, A. Smetona, J. Staugaitis, and S. Silingas, who were to act through a Cabinet of Ministers. The Cabinet, in turn, was responsible to the council of state or Taryba. The council of state was to serve as the legislative body. The provisional constitution also contained a bill of rights which formally declared the equality of all citizens under law and abolished class distinctions.

On November 5, 1918, the council designated Augustinas Voldemaras to form the first Cabinet in the history of the reestablished independent State of Lithuania, and, on November 11, 1918, when he set about to form the Cabinet, the armistice was announced, bringing World War I to an end.

The country responded with enthusiasm to the reestablishment of the independent, sovereign State of Lithuania. Two of the more important minorities of Lithuania—the Jews and the Byelorussians—declared their endorsement of the action taken by the Lithuanian National Council, bringing about national independence, and they delegated representatives to the council of state. Only the Poles refused to cooperate with the council of state.

The council of state also provided for the flags and symbols of the reborn State of Lithuania. It adopted a design for the state coat of arms, the national flag, a state banner, and formally accepted the national anthem.

VII. LITHUANIA BUILDS THE NUCLEUS OF AN ARMED FORCE

The young Republic now faced 2 critical years when it lacked both funds and the machinery for governmental administration. The Voldemaras Cabinet, recognizing that its first need was the immediate necessity of creating an armed militia, made an appeal to the people. Town and county governments were urged to organize their own units. In spite of whatever German opposition that remained, Lithuanian farmers brought out the weapons they had collected and carefully concealed from the days of the great battles of 1915 which had taken place on their territory. Units were commanded by Lithuanian officers who had served in the Russian Army which had since been demobilized. Some Prussian Lithuanian officers offered their services to the young Republic. Soon the nucleus of a determined Lithuanian national militia emerged, remarkable more for its spirit than its accoutrements.

The new force was desperately needed, for already Soviet and Polish invasions were threatening the borders, and disbanded German soldiers were looting the country.

VIII. THREE WARS FOR INDEPENDENCE

Three forces, potentially very powerful in comparison with Lithuania's reduced military strength, appeared on the scene to threaten the existence of the new state. Germany's claims to Lithuanian disappeared when it lost the war. But Soviet Russia, the restored Republic of Poland, and a military adventure known as the Bermondts troops filled the vacuum by aggressive efforts to subjugate the country. The

problems of Lithuania were aggravated by the fact that while it had formed a provisional government, a system of administrative machinery was lacking, so that as of November 1918 the Lithuanian State was much more a theoretical matter than it was a matter of fact.

The German military machine proceeded with its slow evacuation during November and December of 1918. But no sooner had the Germans disappeared than the Bolshevik troops appeared on the horizon with a ready-made Soviet Lithuanian Government, prepared to take over and do the bidding of their Bolshevik masters. The Lithuanian Provisional Government published a call to arms, pleading for volunteers to defend Lithuanian independence. In January 1919, there was an officers' mobilization, and in March of the same year the provisional government proclaimed a general mobilization. However spirited the Lithuanian response, there was no time to organize an armed force sufficient to hold off the oncoming Bolshevik forces. When the Red army occupied Vilnius on January 5, 1919, the provisional government left the capital and established itself in Kaunas. At Kaunas, Lithuanian armed strength was organized and integrated under the leadership of the new Premier, Mykolas Slezevicius. An independent Lithuania was now ready to take the field. While its armies were soon to be stopped on Lithuanian soil, the Bolshevik Government in Russia proceeded with its aggression along political lines. On December 8, 1918, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania and Byelorussia, operating within Russia, formed the Provisional Revolutionary Workers Government of Lithuania. The Government of Soviet Russia recognized the independence of Soviet Lithuania by decree on December 22, 1918, and gave its official approbation to the authority of the Provisional Revolutionary Workers Government led by Mickevicius-Kapsukas. The decree called the National Lithuanian Government a government for a "Bourgeois-Lithuania" and directed all military and civil authorities of the Russian Soviet Republic to provide assistance to the Government of Soviet Lithuania.²⁸ But a Soviet Lithuania even in this tentative form was destined to have a short life. Toward the end of February 1919, a union was decided upon for a federative Lithuanian-Byelorussian Republic by the first Congress of the Soviet of Lithuania and the first Congress of the Soviets of the Byelorussian Soviet Government.

But the real difficulty was the invading Soviet Russian Army. This army pretended to be acting for Soviet Lithuania, so that the same tactic employed in other Baltic countries was applied here; that is, making the war on Lithuanian territory have the appearance of a civil conflict, and not an act of infiltration by a Soviet puppet government and aggression by the Soviet Russian Army. The Soviet position was immeasurably weakened, however, by the philosophy of collectivism and atheism which permeated its propaganda because the Lithuanian peasant was deeply religious and strongly attached to the land. Soviet propaganda found only sterile ground when it sought to convert the Lithuanian common soldier to Soviet ideology.

The Bolshevik invaders found themselves losing ground not only in the propaganda war but in the war on the battlefield as well. The newly constituted Lithuanian National Army drove the invaders back

²⁸ See appendix, "Decree of the Council of People's Republic."

beginning in February 1919 so that by August of the same year, the Red army found itself retreating beyond the shores of the Daugava River. The last battle of this war against the Red army was fought at Griva, a suburb of Daugavpils, late in 1919. Significantly, these campaigns emphasized Lithuania's determination to remain an absolutely independent national state, and, moreover, they led to the negotiations for peace between the Government of the R. S. F. S. R. and the Lithuanian National Government, a peace which was signed in Moscow on July 12, 1920.

Peace came between Lithuania and Soviet Russia as Soviet military successes against Poland reached their peak. The treaty that was concluded stipulated that Soviet Russia was to pay war indemnities in the form of 3 million rubles in gold to Lithuania. Lithuania, furthermore, was granted the right to draw materials from some 247,000 acres of Russian forest. In reaching an agreement upon Lithuanian-Russian boundaries, the Soviet Government recognized the Vilnius and Gardinas areas as integral parts of the Lithuanian Republic. The return of Lithuanian exiles living in Russia had already been provided for by a previous arrangement made on June 30, 1920.

A most significant fact about the treaty was the provision in the first article which declared:

In conformity with the right declared by the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic that all peoples have the right to free self-determination, including the right of full secession from the State of which they were a part, Russia recognizes without any reserve the sovereignty and independence of the State of Lithuania with all juridical consequences resulting from such recognition, and voluntarily and forever renounces all sovereign rights possessed by Russia over the Lithuanian people and territory.

The fact that Lithuania was ever under Russian sovereignty does not place the Lithuanian people and their territory under any obligation to Russia.

The treaty also obliterated the Lithuanian-Byelorussian Republic by article 4. Soviet Russia agreed "not to permit on its territory the formation and sojourn of the governments, organizations or groups who have for their object armed warfare against the other contracting party." The Government of the R. S. F. S. R. also agreed "not to permit within its territories the recruiting and mobilization of effectives for the armies of such governments, organizations or groups, and the sojourn of their governments and officials."

The second invasion which the Lithuanian national forces had to contend with was a force created from remnants of a German army under General Count Ruediger von der Goltz and Russian formations known as the Bermond-Avaloff army. They proceeded to invade Lithuania from the north, and soon had other reinforcements. When German troops were ordered to evacuate Lithuania in July 1919, they were suddenly transformed into a White Russian army under Admiral Kolchak. They moved to unite with a newly constituted German-Russian army in Latvia and the western part of Lithuania. About the same time some fragments of the Tenth German Army, to which had been added former Russian prisoners of war liberated from the camps in Germany, joined with the White Russian army of General Yudenitch.

Combined forces of the Germans and White Russians, powerfully equipped, moved through northern Lithuania and Samogitia, which was the western part of Lithuania. Under the command of a group

of nominal former Russian colonels, Bermond, Avalov, and Virgolich, these forces had been driven from Estonia by the newly liberated Estonians fighting with the same courage and lack of accoutrements that now prevailed in the Lithuanian Army. When the northern group of the German-White Russian army made an effort to take Riga, they were defeated by Latvian and Estonian units with the help of a British naval flotilla. Equipped with armored trains, armored cars, aviation, and heavy artillery, 65,000 of these troops fell upon weak Lithuanian garrisons in the outskirts of the country and overran them shouting that they were fighting for the liberation of the Russian Empire.

Lithuania, in deciding to counter this conglomerate army, withdrew desperately needed units from the Soviet Russian front. In a short and decisive campaign in which courage and excellent leadership seemed to outbalance sheer weight of arms and manpower, the Lithuanians inflicted a series of defeats on the Germans and White Russians throughout November 1919. With Latvian detachments aiding in the operation in the north, German communications were disrupted and blocked by the seizure of the strategic railroad junction at Radviliskis. Vast amounts of military equipment were captured from the enemy.

In the end, an Allied military mission under a French General Niessel intervened in December 1919, and demanded that the German-White Russian army be permitted to retire with their equipment to East Prussia. This ended the second invasion of Lithuania.²⁹

The Polish invasion had characteristics as complicated and as unusual as the others. When the Germans evacuated Lithuania, the Lithuanian National Council declared Vilnius the capital of the republic. This was at the end of 1918. But in January 1919 the Bolshevik invaders compelled the retirement of the Lithuanian Government to Kaunas. When the Bolsheviks retreated from Vilnius before the joint onslaught of Lithuanian and Polish forces, the Poles, entering Vilnius, remained in possession until the second Bolshevik offensive in the summer of 1920. On July 12, 1920, Lithuania's treaty with Soviet Russia gave Lithuania the Province of Vilnius. Three days later Soviet troops drove the Poles out of the city, and on August 26, 1920, the Soviet forces turned Vilnius over to Lithuania in accordance with the treaty of July 12, 1920. But the Lithuanian-Russian frontier as established by the treaty, was never drawn to the satisfaction of all parties concerned because of the situation created by Poland in October 1920.

On October 7, 1920, at Suvalkai, Lithuania and Poland signed an armistice convention in the presence of the Military Control Commission of the League of Nations. Both countries agreed to accept the provisional frontier known as the Curzon Line. This gave the city of Suvalkai to the Poles and the city of Vilnius and its district to the Lithuanians. But 2 days later, the Polish Army under the command of General Zeligowski seized the city of Vilnius. Efforts made thereafter to settle the Lithuanian-Polish differences by mutual negotiations were unsuccessful.

²⁹ C. R. Jurgela, *op. cit.*, pp. 513-515.

However, the Lithuanian-Latvian frontier was delineated without difficulty by a mixed commission presided over by Sir James Simpson, a Scottish professor. The Lithuanian-German frontier, after the cession of Klaipeda (Memel) to Lithuania by the Allied Powers in 1923, was finally ratified by Germany by treaty in 1928.

IX. DE JURE RECOGNITION AND ADMISSION TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

With the declaration of independence of February 16, 1918, the Lithuanian National Council asked for recognition in presenting the declaration to Russia, Germany, and other states. Germany with some reservations recognized Lithuania's independence on March 23, 1918. The Government of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic recognized Lithuania de jure by the treaty of peace of July 12, 1920. The other states—Great Britain, France, Norway, Italy, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Finland, Latvia, Poland—all, at first, recognized Lithuania only de facto.

The peace conference at Versailles denied the request of the Lithuanian Government for admission to its deliberations. Similarly, Lithuania was at first denied admission to the League of Nations. Estonia and Latvia received the same response. The Royal Institute of International Affairs gave the following explanation for this action by the League of Nations:

The powers would have liked * * * to preserve a territorially indivisible Russia which could ultimately be handed back intact in the event of some form of constitutional monarchy being established.³⁰

Although the League of Nations denied the Baltic States admission on the grounds, it was said, that they were not stable enough, the majority of the nations in the League favored admission of the Baltic States into its technical organizations. When the Baltic States concluded peace treaties with Soviet Russia and when Allied intervention in Russia definitely came to an end, the League of Nations decided to admit the Baltic States, and this was done on September 22, 1921.

On July 28, 1922, the United States recognized Lithuania de jure, the first of the great western powers to do so. Recognition de jure was granted on December 20, 1922, by Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan.

³⁰ The Baltic States: Prepared by the Information Department of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, Oxford University Press, 1938, p. 27. Hereafter designated as Baltic States.

CHAPTER II

CONSTITUTIONAL HISTORY OF THE BAL TIC STATES

INTRODUCTION

Few instances in the history of constitutional politics and republican government can compare with the experiences of the Baltic States. For years despotic rulers sought without avail to denationalize and to change the individual national character of the Baltic peoples. But they could neither be Germanized nor could they be Russified. This failure of despotism, as demonstrated by the continued existence of the peoples of the Baltic States, is reflected in their quest for constitutional government.

Baltic independence was won at a time when the democratic ideal had achieved worldwide recognition and general acceptance. Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians sought to adapt their institutions to the temper of the times. Moreover, the manner in which they took advantage of the opportunity provided by two decades of respite from tyranny in order to establish self-government accentuated the strength of their unity with the free institutions of the West.

The constitutional histories of the Baltic States during the period of independence between 1918 and 1940 reveal that, like some other nations of the West, they, too, reached for the paternal hand of the strong executive when crisis struck. But, notwithstanding this lapse into authoritarianism, they never lost the essential meaning of democracy. With them, unlike the totalitarian regimes in either Germany or Italy, the pendulum remained mobile, and the trend toward a return to greater democracy was clearly evident at the time of their destruction.

In the constitutional history of the three Baltic States during the period of independence three phases emerge. First was the era in which Baltic statesmen were faced with the problem of selecting and adopting constitutions from the parliamentary forms then existing in Europe and elsewhere. The Baltic constitutions were patterned generally along the lines of these systems.

The second phase occurred in 1926 and early and middle 1930's when constitutional defects began to appear. Thereafter, the three Governments entered into a period of political unrest.

In the third phase there was a certain inclination manifested among the three states toward varying types of authoritarian regimes. Authoritarianism did exist, but not without indications of constitutional inhibitions; for at bottom the peoples of the Baltic States maintained a reverence for democracy that could not be ignored.

Parenthetically, it is noteworthy that the extremes of abuse—the death penalty for fallen political leaders, for example—never prevailed under the regimes in Estonia, Latvia, or Lithuania. Yet, for years these countries had lived under the rule of conquerors for some of whom this kind of political liquidation was as routine and commonplace as felling trees in the timberlands of the Baltic. Even the conspirators in the attempted Communist coup d'état in Estonia in 1924 escaped with only prison sentences. One of the standard tests of civilized parliamentary government is the manner in which political parties, vehemently engaged in controversy, regard or dispose of one another when they alternately achieve or lose power. For this test of civilization the Baltic peoples have proved themselves to be qualified.

More than that, Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians gave ample demonstration during the period of independence of their will to self-government. Fundamentally, this manifested itself in an attachment to Western democracy. Moreover, in spite of political immaturity which was a factor in bringing about a period of constitutional failure—from which they had given evidence of recovery in due course—Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians had shown a native intelligence and the political wit to be ruled competently under the parliamentary system. Above all else, these peoples of the Baltic region proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that they had the character and the competence to rule themselves.

PART I—ESTONIA

I. THE FIRST ESTONIAN CONSTITUTION

A. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Estonia had 6 constitutions during its 21 years of national independence. The first two preliminary constitutions of November 28, 1917, and February 24, 1918, and the provisional constitution of June 4, 1919, have been discussed more fully in the preceding chapter. The other Estonian constitutions have been given greater emphasis, therefore, in this chapter.

On February 24, 1918, Estonia declared its national independence which was recognized by Soviet Russia in the peace treaty of February 2, 1920. After the provisional government had fulfilled its function, the Constituent Assembly of Estonia adopted as its final task a democratic constitution on June 15, 1920, which called into existence a republican form of government.

The constitution placed the power of the state in the hands of the people. Thus it was that Estonia took its place among the democracies of the free world.¹

The constitution of 1920, in its original form, resembled the governmental system of Switzerland. This had been the land of political exile for many Estonian revolutionaries who had exultantly returned to their liberated homeland. It also bore some resemblance to the parliamentary system of German's post World War I Weimar Republic.² The political philosophy of the West with particular emphasis upon popular government penetrated to the center and dominated entirely this historic document of Estonia.

B. THE CHIEF OF STATE

A constitutionally established "strong man" was an idea frowned upon by Estonians. Thus, the new constitution excluded a president altogether in its structure. With the elimination of the head of the state or president, the constitution vested dual functions in the Prime Minister and gave him the title of Chief of State (*Riigivanem*). From the point of view of expenditures for the young nation, this had, to be sure, an obvious budgetary virtue.³

The Chief of State became, in effect, the creature of the Parliament (*Riigikogu*). The process of selection took place in the following manner:

¹ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, vol. 8, 1936; also Jackson, J. Hampden, *Estonia*. London, George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1948, pp. 161, 164-168, 192-194, 197, 201, 204-207, 211.

² *The Constitution of the Est(h)onian Republic*. Chelsea, London, S. W. 3. The Baltic Review, passed by the Constituent Assembly on June 15, 1920; also *Europa Service*. Europa, London, Europa Publications, Limited, 1939, vol. 1, p. 99; *Piip, Ants, Prof. Estlands, Weg zur neuen Verfassung*, *Osteuropa*, vol. 10, July 1935, pp. 605-618.

³ Louis Le Fur, *Democracy and parliamentarism with reference to a new constitution*. Baltic and Scandinavian countries. The Baltic Institute, Gdynia, Poland, January 1939, p. 1.

The Chairman of the Parliament, tantamount to the Speaker of the House or the President of the Senate in the United States, would usually ask a party leader to organize a government. If the ministers he drew to his banner commanded the necessary parliamentary endorsement, the party leader was elevated to the post of chief of state. Later on, in the course of the business of the Parliament, votes of "no confidence" might compel the resignation of the Cabinet for failure to enjoy sufficient continued support, in which case the cycle began again.

Under the direct surveillance of the Parliament which "forms the government and accepts its resignation," the Chief of State and his Cabinet of ministers had all-inclusive duties. It was their duty to direct domestic and foreign policy; to attend to matters of internal and external security, and to see that the laws were executed and observed. Under the Cabinet's direction, the estimates of the expenditures and revenues of the state were prepared for the approval of the Parliament. It appointed military and civil officials to their posts and dismissed them "insofar as this duty (* * * was) not confided by the laws to other institutions." The Cabinet had treaty-making power, but treaties were subject to ratification by the Parliament. It could declare war and conclude peace on the basis of corollary decisions by the Parliament. Subject to the approbation of the Parliament, the Cabinet had the power to provide for national defense and "proclaim" a state of defense which was comparable to the declaration of a state of emergency. And it was empowered to present drafts of bills to the Parliament.

The authority of the Cabinet extended also to the issuance of regulations and orders predicated on law and to decision on petitions of mercy. The constitution specified that the Chief of State "leads and unifies the activities of the republican government. * * *"

Finally, the Chief of State and his Ministers, could "be brought to trial for the usual delinquencies" on determination by the Parliament, but the "examination" belonged to the jurisdiction of the state court of justice.

C. THE LEGISLATURE OR PARLIAMENT (RÜGIKOGU)

The Chief of State could not dissolve the Parliament. Likewise, the Cabinet served at the will of the Parliament. This all-powerful body was composed of a single assembly of 100 members. Women were eligible. Election was "by universal, equal, direct, and secret suffrage on the principle of proportional representation."⁴

The Parliament made the laws for Estonia. Every enfranchised citizen was eligible to vote for members to the Parliament and had the right to be himself a candidate. A member of Parliament, whose term of office was for 3 years, could not be appointed to any other public office during this term.

The Parliament was authorized to act when "at least one-half of the legal number of members" were present. Its meetings were public except in "extraordinary cases" and then only if two-thirds of the members agreed on secrecy.

⁴ The Constitution of the Est(h)onian Republic; op. cit.

There was, moreover, the significant constitutional provision that the members of Parliament had "no responsibility for their political declarations in the Parliament or in its committees—except that foreseen in the standing order." Unless caught "flagrante delicto" a member of Parliament could not be arrested without the consent of the Parliament.

In addition to making the nation's laws, the Parliament fixed the budget, determined revenues for the state and its expenditures, and rendered decisions on loans. The constitution specified that the Parliament "through its corresponding institutions" controlled the "economic life of the state enterprises and institutions" and controlled the implementation of the state budget.

During sessions of Parliament members had the right to question the Government on its conduct of national affairs.

D. THE RIGHT TO VOTE

On the question of the right to vote, the constitution took a strong and definite position. "The supreme executor of the state of power in Est(h)onia", it said, "is the people itself, through the medium of the citizens having the right to vote. Every citizen arrived at the age of 20 and of Est(h)onian citizenship for a consecutive period of at least 1 year has the right to vote."

Exceptions to the right to vote were made for criminals and incompetents.

E. THE "BILL OF RIGHTS"

Guaranties of individual rights were also clearly stated. The Constitution of Estonia provided for freedom of worship, freedom of the press, freedom of speech, the right to public assembly, the right to strike and the right even to choose one's own nationality. Furthermore, it provided for the right to be educated in one's own mother tongue at the expense of the state. Provision was made for an equivalent for what is known in Anglo-Saxon countries as habeas corpus. The right to private property was guaranteed "to every citizen."

The stipulations in the constitution on the people's rights go so much to the heart of the document, are so much the legislative kith and kin of the constitutions, or the basic practices of the great democracies of the Western World, that they are given here verbatim:⁵

All Est(h)onian citizens are equal in the eyes of law. There cannot be any public privileges or prejudices derived from birth, religion, sex, rank, or nationality. In Est(h)onia there are no legal class divisions or titles.

The Est(h)onian Republic confers no decorations or marks of distinction on its citizens, excepting members of the defence forces in time of war. Est(h)onian citizens have likewise no right to accept orders or distinctions from Foreign States.

Personal inviolability is guaranteed in Est(h)onia. No one can be prosecuted except in cases and ways foreseen by the law. Unless caught in the act no person can be arrested or the personal liberty be restricted otherwise than by decision of the judicial authorities, and this decision, with all grounds, must be communicated to the person arrested at the latest three days after arrest. Any citizen has the right to demand the communication of the above decision to the imprisoned, if this has not been done in the period mentioned.

⁵ As printed in the translation "The constitution of the Est(h)onian Republic" (passed by the Constituent Assembly on 15th June 1920) by the Baltic Review, Chelsea, London, S. W. 3.

It is impossible to transfer any citizen against his will for trial by any other court than the one designated by the law.

In Est(h)onia there is freedom of religion and conscience. Nobody is obliged to perform ritualistic acts or to be a member of a religious body or undertake public obligations in the interests of same.

The practice of religious acts is not hindered provided it does not interfere with public order and morals.

Creed and outlook cannot be made the excuse for any offence or for the avoiding of the duties of a citizen.

There is no State religion in Est(h)onia.

Science, art, and the teaching of same are free in Est(h)onia. Education is compulsory for children arrived at the school age, and is gratuitous in elementary schools. The minority nationalities are guaranteed education in their mother tongue. Education is carried out under the control of Government.

Autonomy is guaranteed to higher institutions of learning within the limits foreseen by the statutes of the institutions passed in legislative way. [sic.]

In Est(h)onia there is freedom for the expression of personal ideas in words, print, letters, pictures, and sculpture. This freedom can be restricted only in the defence of the State and morals.

There is no censorship in Est(h)onia.

In Est(h)onia is guaranteed the secrecy of messages and letters transmitted through the post, telegraph, telephone, and any other general means. Exception can only be made by the judicial authorities in cases foreseen by law.

The right to apply or address complaints to public departments is guaranteed in Est(h)onia. The applications or complaints must not be accompanied by coercive measures. The departments in question are bound to give the matter legal motion.

Previous permission need not be obtained for the arraignment of Government officials.

Removal and change of domicile are free in Est(h)onia. In this freedom nobody can be restricted or hindered otherwise than by the judicial authorities.

In the interests of public health such freedom can be restricted also by other authorities in cases and in ways foreseen in the corresponding laws.

All Est(h)onian citizens have the right to hold public meetings unarmed, provided they are not disturbing to the public peace.

The forming of associations and unions is free in Est(h)onia.

Freedom to strike is guaranteed in Est(h)onia.

The law can restrict these rights only in the interest of public safety.

Liberty in the choice of occupation, the opening of business concerns and exploitation of same, as well in agriculture, commerce, and industry, as in other economic branches is guaranteed in Est(h)onia. Nobody can be restricted or hindered in this freedom otherwise than on the basis and within the limits of the laws.

Every Est(h)onian citizen is free to determine his or her nationality. In cases where individual choice is impossible, it will be done in the way foreseen by law.

The members of minority nationalities within the confines of Est(h)onia may form corresponding autonomous institutions for the promotion of the interests of their national culture and welfare insofar as these do not run contrary to the interests of the state.

In those parts where the majority of the inhabitants are not Est(h)onian but local minority nationals, the business language in the local self-government institutions can be in the language of these minority nationals, whilst everybody has the right to use the State language in such institutions. The local self-government institutions in which the language of the minority is used must in their intercourse with State institutions employ the State language, as also with other local self-government institutions where the language of this minority nationality is not used.

Citizens of German, Russian, and Swedish nationality have the right to address themselves to the State Central institutions in the writing of their own language. The use of the language of these nationals in Court, as also in the institution of self-government, will be decided in detail by special law.

The right of private property is guaranteed in Est(h)onia to every citizen. Without the owners' consent it can be expropriated only in the common interest in accordance with the corresponding laws and in the ways foreseen in the laws.

The organization of the economic life in Est(h)onia must correspond with the principles of justice, the object of which is the securing of conditions of living

worthy of human beings by corresponding laws relating to the acquiring of land for cultivation and a home, and the obtaining of employment, as well as the necessary support for the protection of maternity, labour, youth, old age, disability, and in cases of accident.

The rights and freedom of citizens * * * do not exclude other rights emanating from the principles of this constitution or which are in agreement with it.

Extraordinary restrictions of the freedom and fundamental rights of the citizens come into force in the event of the proclamation of a State of Defence during a stated period, announced in the legal way on the basis and within the limits of the corresponding laws.

F. THE PEOPLE'S POWER OF REFERENDUM

The residuary of ultimate power directly in the hands of the people was most concretely expressed in the provision for referendum. This provision made sure that government was tied in with the will of the people. As a device it served to prevent a potentially nettlesome parliamentary majority from seizing all power through its power over the Cabinet.

The constitution itself explicitly stated:

The people exercises the State power (a) by plebiscite; (b) by their initiative in legislation; and (c) by the election of the State Assembly [Parliament].

Every law passed by the State Assembly remains unpromulgated for a period of two months dating from the day of its passing if one-third of the legal number of members of the State Assembly requires it. If during this period 25,000 enfranchised citizens demand that this law be submitted to a plebiscite for acceptance or rejection, the promulgation or nonpromulgation of this particular law will depend on the results of this plebiscite.

The procedure followed in the legislative initiative of the people is that 25,000 of the enfranchised citizens have the right to require that a law shall be passed, changed, or cancelled. The respective request in the form of an elaborated draft will be submitted to the State Assembly. The State Assembly can either pass this draft as a law or reject it. In the latter case the draft will be submitted to the people in the form of a plebiscite for acceptance or rejection. If in the plebiscite the majority decide in the favour of the law in question, it acquires the force of a law.

If the people reject a law passed by the State Assembly or accept a law rejected by the Assembly new elections of the State Assembly will be proclaimed, these elections to take place not later than seventy-five days after the plebiscite.

Plebiscites must be conducted under the control of the Presidium of the State Assembly. The basis and procedure of the plebiscite are ordained by a special law.

The Budget, the raising of loans, tax laws, declarations of war and the making of peace, declaration of a state of defence and termination of same, declaration of mobilisation and demobilisation, as well as treaties with foreign States, are not subject to a plebiscite and cannot be decided by a plebiscite.

The success of the referendum in expressing and reflecting the will of the people was given the clearest and the most dramatic demonstration in a bill to provide religious instruction in state schools at the public expense. For, it was through the referendum, and against the overwhelming opposition of the Parliament, that the Christian Democrats (who had only seven seats in Parliament) put the law on the statute books. The law bore the sponsorship of the Lutheran clergy, who had struggled for the education of the Estonian people since the 16th century.⁸

⁸ 78 percent of the total population were Lutheran, and 89 percent were able to read and write.

G. THE POWER TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION

The constitution provided for its own amendment by initiative of the Parliament, or by initiative of the people, but in either case no change in the constitution could be effected except by plebiscite. In the last analysis the people accepted or rejected any modification or amplification of the basic law of the land. Furthermore, the constitution provided that any change in the constitution itself had to be communicated to the people "at least" 3 months before the day of the plebiscite.

H. UNIVERSAL OBLIGATION IN TIME OF WAR

Among the special features of the constitution was the dictum that "all Est(h)onian citizens are obliged, on the basis and ways laid down in the law, to take part in the defense of the Republic."

In time of war the hand of the executive was strengthened, even in this, the original version of the Estonian Constitution. Thus, the chief of state had the power to issue regulations and instructions concerning the defense forces and could order mobilization "without awaiting the decision" of the parliament—"if a foreign state has declared war, commenced war activities, or ordered mobilization against the Republic."

I. THE JUDICIARY

The constitution established the independence of Estonia's law courts by incorporating the word "independence" in the constitutional language that set forth the principle. The state court of justice was designated the highest court of the land and its members were elected to their posts by the Parliament.

The constitution provided that only the courts could dismiss judges, and judges were forbidden to hold other offices "except in cases foreseen in the law. * * *"

From the point of view of many political scientists, the Estonians, in their initial efforts to establish a self-governing republic, had devised a liberal and practical constitution.⁷

The Estonians had:

(1) resolved their agrarian problem (discussed in another chapter) without which no new government at all was possible. They had done this even before the constitution was established through the passage of the agrarian law on October 11, 1919, by the Constituent Assembly;

(2) established universal citizenship which was fair and equal to all, giving all the vote within elementary limits of age and kindred conditions;

(3) established minority rights in a form and to an extent that represented human enlightenment and tolerance to a remarkable degree;

(4) placed the ultimate power of the state in the hands of the people by the constitutional provision of the referendum;

⁷ Jackson, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

(5) unwisely, as developments were to show, deprived themselves of a president, as a result of which they yielded to the Parliament an unwieldy weight of power that later proved awkward and unmanageable, and made the "chief of state" and the Cabinet creatures under the dictate of the legislature.

Thus, in a technical sense, and much more than just on paper, the establishment of the Estonian Constitution of 1920 was a remarkable achievement especially when one considers the complexity of existing problems.

J. GOLDEN AGE OF ESTONIA'S CONSTITUTION

Under the beneficent canopy of national independence, republicanism, and constitutional government, Estonia emerged as a national state, struggling, but advancing economically, culturally, and technologically. An indication of the emphasis upon cultural attainment is the fact that about 20 percent of Estonia's national budget was devoted to education.⁸ Life was wholesome and prosperous in Estonia during those years of growth in the 1920's.

K. CONSTITUTIONAL DEFECTS AGGRAVATED BY POLITICAL DISCORD

Yet constitutional defects began to manifest themselves on the political front in Parliament as feebly organized coalition governments toppled under the pressure of their inherent conflicts. Individual members of each of the coalitions strove hard to attain their single ends against the interests of the others and the interest of the whole. The Government of Estonia changed 20 times between 1920 and 1934, and as many as 14 parties participated in the elections in some years. The illustration below shows some 16 political parties and their comparative strength from the days of the National Council in 1917 to the Constituent Assembly in 1919, and through the 4 Parliaments up to 1929—a graphic and representative chart that tells its own story.⁹

The Communist Party, a negligible but virulent group, located at the bottom of the minority factions in the Parliament in terms of numerical strength, instigated a coup d'état in 1924. This attempted coup had derived its direction from Moscow, which contributed funds as well as upward of a hundred adept agitators. When about 350 armed revolutionaries, some recruited from the Soviet trading affiliate in Tallinn, descended upon the Government buildings in the capital, the battle that ensued on that December 1, 1924, was a brief encounter, the result of which was the imposition of a limited period of martial law and the passage of an act on February 12, 1925, outlawing front organizations of the Communist Party or any party seeking to destroy the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia by force and violence. The Republic had demonstrated its capacity to deal summarily, and according to law, with a pestilential uprising even though it was Moscow inspired.

In the end, however, what upset the Constitution of 1920 were its structural defects and the force of external factors. A government

⁸ Jackson, *op. cit.* pp. 177-178.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

ESTONIAN POLITICAL PARTIES

1917 1919 1920 1923 1926 1929
 National Council Constituent Assembly First Second Third Fourth
 Riigikogu Riigikogu Riigikogu Riigikogu Riigikogu

RIGHT.

Agrarians	23	8	21	23	23	24
Settlers	~	~	~	4	16	16
Christian Democrats	~	4	7	8	5	4

CENTRE.

Populists	10	25	10	4	8	9
Labour	18	30	22	16	13	18
Radicals	10					
Small Parties	~	~	1	4	2	3

NATIONALITIES.

Russian	6	1	1	4	3	2
German		3	4	3	2	2
Swedish		1	~	~	~	1

LEFT.

Social Democrats	10	41	18	15	24	3
Social Revolutionaries	16	7	11	5	~	~
Communists	4	~	5	10	6	6

deprived of executive leadership; inordinate partisanship and the multiplication of parties with little regard for the common good; and the impact of a great depression—all were factors that entered into the creation of a constitutional crisis in the young Estonian Republic.

II. A NEW CONSTITUTION

A. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTINUITY UNBROKEN

The Estonian Constitution of 1920 remained in effect until January 24, 1934. By a referendum on October 14–16, 1933, the people adopted a constitutional amendment which basically changed the governmental structure and balance. Thus, there was no constitutional break, and constitutional continuity remained unimpaired. Estonian politics had been swept by influences from Italy's fascism and Germany's philosophy of nazism, both far more potentially harmful to Estonia's interests in the thirties than the presumptuous little internal-external Communist threat in 1924–25. The new constitution, without surrendering the essential character of Estonia's republicanism, represented the swing of the pendulum from the one extreme of no strong executive to the other extreme of a near dictatorship. Inherently, the new regime had some of the dictatorial dynamism of Il Duce and the preemptory and summary action of Der Fuehrer.¹⁰

B. STRONG MAN AGAINST DICTATORSHIP

But the irony of Estonia's constitutional history in this period was that the most formidable leader at that time, Konstantin Päts, utilized the situation created by the more radical right wing and Nazi elements in his own country to defeat their own antidemocratic aims when at length their maneuvers had placed the power to do so in his hands.¹¹ Päts was Chief of State under the old constitution of 1920 and possessed extraordinary powers under the transitory clauses of the constitution of 1933. A strong man, yet one to whom dictatorship was obnoxious, he checkmated the extremist activities of the Estonian rightest movement—"The Liberators"—by using their own weapons against them to their great surprise.¹² Päts' prodemocratic aims, through interim dictatorial processes thrust upon him, implemented the will of the Estonian people. This was clearly demonstrated by the facts and by the subsequent referendum which constitutionally returned the conduct of government to more democratic forms.

Päts expressed his devotion to democratic principles in a speech that conveyed to his countrymen his distaste for the provisions of the 1933 constitution which would make him dictator: "We cannot permanently abide by this constitution," he told his people. "If we want to establish national life once more on solid foundations, we must have a new Constituent Assembly. I hope that the reorganization of social forces and the consolidation of national and admin-

¹⁰ Roucek, Joseph S., *Constitutional Changes in Estonia*. American Political Science Review (Menasha, Wis.), vol. 30 (1936), pp. 556–558.

¹¹ Pullerits, Albert, *Estonia*. Tallinn, Tallinna Eesti Kirjastus-Uhisuse trükikoda, Pikk tan 2, 1935, pp. 7–15.

¹² *Estonia, the Constitution*. Europa, London, Europa Publications Ltd., 1939.

istrative life will progress in a way allowing the submission of the question of convoking a Constituent Assembly to popular referendum under perfectly normal conditions."¹³

C. POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT

The constitution of 1933, which Päts so vigorously opposed, provided for a President elected by the direct vote of the people for 5 years. The President headed not only the executive branch but shared with the Parliament legislative powers, and had, moreover, the right of absolute veto. He could refuse to promulgate laws passed by the Parliament and had the right to resubmit them for deliberation. Laws under the constitution, even those touching on taxation and the budget, could be changed by his decree. They could also be modified at his behest, if necessary, by a new Parliament should that be required since he had the power to dissolve the old one.

As a consequence the Chief of State, who under the 1920 constitution was the creature of the Parliament, now disappeared, and the Parliament under the constitution of 1933 became dominated by the President. The reversal was complete. Among his powers were the direction of domestic and foreign policy, the appointment of representatives to foreign countries, preparation of the budget, appointment of civil and military officials, the drafting of legislation, the appointment of judges to the nation's highest court from among candidates submitted by the court, and the nomination of members to the lower courts. He was given complete power over the nation's armed forces. The 1933 constitution did, however, provide that he needed approval of the Parliament for concluding treaties, declaring war, and making peace. But, in the event of emergency, the President could rule by decree with full legal power.

A Prime Minister was created under the constitution, but he was merely an assistant to the President.

However extraordinary the presidential powers might appear, there were nonetheless restrictions on his authoritarian rule. He was forbidden to interfere with the popular referendum and the popular initiative. In addition to these limitations, he was specifically forbidden also to change or annul in any way the election laws as they applied to the Parliament and his own office, the Presidency.

D. REDUCED STRENGTH AND POWERS OF PARLIAMENT

Instead of the 100 members of Parliament which had been provided by Estonia's first constitution, the 1933 constitution reduced the membership to 50, and the term of office was established for 4 years instead of 3. But, it still remained a single chamber. If dissolved by the President, which he could do at will, elections had to be held for a new legislature within 6 months. An extraordinary session could be convoked by the Presidium of the Parliament on the request of the President or by half of the parliamentary body. The President determined how long the extraordinary session lasted. In substance, these were the significant differences and similarities between the Estonian Constitution of 1920 and that of 1933.

¹³ Pullerits, *op. cit.*, p. 9, and Jackson, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

When the new constitution came into force in January 1934, Päts was Acting President.

E. PÄTS GOVERNS BY DECREE

The Estonian rightists, allegedly financed from Berlin via Finland and eager to elect a candidate of their own, dedicated, they insisted, to the *fuehrerprinzip* (leadership principle), had created a potential situation from which a serious civil conflict might well have arisen.¹⁴ They had arms, and they threatened violence. It was at this point that Päts cracked down using precisely the *fuehrerprinzip* to prevent the end of democratic rule in Estonia, one of the extraordinary anomalies of the history of this period in Western Europe. Paradoxically, he introduced a form of dictatorship in order to prevent the introduction of a type far more harmful to Estonia's interests. On March 12, 1934, Acting President Päts declared a state of emergency, named Gen. Johan Laidoner, Estonian liberation hero, commander in chief of the armed forces, and established martial law throughout the entire country. Immediately decrees went forth from under his hand abolishing movements against the Government. He ordered disbanded the "Liberators" organizations, many of whom were war veterans, and ousted their supporters from all Government positions: military, police, municipal, and local self-government institutions.¹⁵ Activities of political parties were suspended; the press put under censorship. Unless the Government granted permission, public meetings and processions were forbidden. Parliament was prorogued only after it gave full constitutional validity to the Päts decrees.

This extraordinary use of dictatorial power, legally invoked, became under Päts the prolog for a return to democratic rule under a third Estonian Constitution. Not as democratically liberal as the first, nor as weighted on the side of authoritarianism as the second, the third Estonian Constitution provided an illustration of a nation groping for stability—and for the means to preserve democracy—in a world where instability had become the dominant theme.¹⁶

III. CONSTITUTION OF 1937

A. STEPS TO ESTABLISHMENT

The trend in Estonia toward authoritarianism had its parallels or near parallels in many countries of the world. Likewise, the remarkable economic recovery of this little Baltic country between 1933 and 1937 was a part of the pattern of world recovery. In the light of this national improvement, Päts presented to the country in January 1936 a program which called for the convocation of a new Constituent Assembly that would lead to the adoption of a reform constitution. As a result of the new Constitution the dictatorial powers of the President were to be sharply reduced and the return to democratic rule was to become more pronounced.

¹⁴ Jackson, *op. cit.*, p. 194, and Pullerits, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

¹⁵ Political Handbook of the World, *Parliaments, Parties, and Press*, January 1, 1940. Walter H. Mallory, editor, Harper & Bros., New York, for Council on Foreign Relations, Inc., pp. 58-60.

¹⁶ Roucek, Joseph S., *Constitutional Changes in Estonia*, *American Political Science Review*, Menasha, Wis., vol. XXX, June 1936, No. 3, pp. 556-568.

The Päts proposal for a Constituent Assembly was a kind of preview of the contemplated new constitution, and in the plebiscite held in February 1936 the vote in favor of the proposal was "almost unanimous."¹⁷

The Constituent Assembly was to consist of two chambers to revise the 1933 constitution. The 80 members of the first chamber were elected in December 1936. In this election Päts held and exercised complete control over the avenues of communication, stifling election campaigning against himself, but employing to the full press and radio on his own behalf. Opposition leaders, however, made their views heard in the Finnish press and among their home constituencies as best they could. In spite of the impediments placed in their way, nevertheless, they were elected. The second chamber consisted of 40 members, half the size of the first, and was made up ex officio of 30 representatives from government, military, educational, and religious institutions, and from occupational and professional organizations of the corporative type; 10 were appointed by the Acting President, who, of course, was Päts.

The Constituent Assembly met in Tallinn on February 18, 1937, and proceeded to write Estonia's new and third constitution. The new constitution upon which they worked was based on a draft prepared by the Päts government. The Constituent Assembly approved it on July 28, 1937, and presented it to Acting President Päts 2 days later. On September 3, 1937, the new constitution was proclaimed by Päts, and on January 1, 1938, it went into force.

B. SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION

The constitution of 1937 in its ideological aspects was a twin of the first, although there were radical structural differences. It declared Estonia a "sovereign and independent" Republic and placed "supreme authority" in the hands of the people. There were no distinctions of class, religion, or nationality, and all citizens were "equal before the law." The only titles were those which were official, professional, or scientific. The liberty of the individual and inviolability of the home were guaranteed. The constitution guaranteed liberty of conscience and religion "subject to restriction, if necessary, in the interests of the security of the state, of public order, and of public decency." There were no limitations on assembly and association "provided public safety and order are not endangered." "The right of property," the constitution declared, "is recognized, and its compulsory expropriation can only be ordered in the interests of public utility and on payment of a reasonable indemnity." Education was compulsory and free in primary schools. The constitution also guaranteed "the cultural integrity and institutions of national minorities. * * *

C. THE RIGHT TO VOTE

The constitution declared universal suffrage "for all citizens of not less than 3 years' standing who are of 22 years of age or over." (The first constitution had required 1 year of citizenship and 20 years of age.)

¹⁷ Political Handbook, 1940, pp. 58-60. See also: Jackson, op. cit., p. 204.

The constitution discarded proportional representation for the majority system.

D. WHERE THE 1937 CONSTITUTION TAKES A NEW PATH

The fundamental difference between the ultra-liberal constitution of 1920 and the somewhat authoritarian constitution of 1937 consisted (1) in the creation of and in the powers of the presidency, and (2) in the creation of a bicameral National Assembly, consisting of the Chamber of Deputies and the National Council. The first was called the Riigivolikogu, the second, Riiginõukogu.

E. THE PRESIDENT

Under the constitution of 1937 Estonia for the first time had a President who was the "Head of the State." Election to this office was for 6 years by "universal, secret, and direct ballot." The people elected him from a list of candidates nominated by the Chamber of Deputies, the National Council, and the assembly of delegates of local autonomous governments. If the three nominating bodies agreed on a single candidate, and if he won three-fifths of the total vote, he automatically took office, obviating a general election.¹⁸

Qualifications for candidacy were possession of full rights of citizenship and a minimum age requirement of 45 years. The President had the power to nominate the Chancellor of Justice. The Chancellor was responsible to the President and had the right to take a consultative part in the Government.

F. THE GOVERNMENT

The Government of the Republic was managed by the executive power (Prime Minister) subject to convocation and dissolution by the President. The Parliament had the power by a vote of "no confidence" to compel the resignation of the Government. Under the Prime Minister were: Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister for Economic Affairs, Minister of Justice, Minister of Ways and Communications, Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Education, Minister of Defense, Minister of Public Welfare, Minister of the Interior, Minister without portfolio.

G. THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Under the new constitution the National Assembly had the legislative authority and was composed of two chambers: the Chamber of Deputies and the National Council. The Chamber of Deputies was made up of 80 members elected by universal, direct, and secret ballot. Candidates were required to possess full civic rights and to have been domiciled in Estonia for at least a year. The age minimum was 25 years. Elections for the Chamber were to take place every 5 years, or earlier if ordered by the President.

The National Council consisted of ex officio members, representatives from professions and local government, and nominees of the

¹⁸ Le Fur, op. cit., p. 2.

President. The *ex officio* members were: the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, the heads of the 2 largest and most important churches, the rectors of 2 autonomous establishments of higher institutions of learnings, and the president of the bank of issue. Representatives of professional organizations were elected in the following proportion: autonomous rural governments (3), autonomous municipal governments (1), agriculture and fisheries (5), industry, handicrafts, commerce, navigation, and cooperative organizations (5), labor (3), city real estate property (1), free professions (1), domestic economy (1); 1 representative each of the home guard, public instruction and culture, cultural bodies of national minorities, and public health. Ten members were nominated by the President. Members had to be domiciled in Estonia for 3 years, and had to be at least 40 years of age. The Council was renewed every 5 years, or earlier by order of the President.

For consideration of certain questions, a joint meeting of both Chambers could be called.

The constitution described the legislative process in this manner :

Bills submitted to the National Council by the Chamber of Deputies, and modified or rejected by them, are returned to the Chamber for rereading; if approved without modification by three-fifths of its members, they are then promulgated. The President may also return a Bill for rereading, but may not veto it if approved by the same majority. *The President may refer important questions to the decision of the people by ordering a referendum.* [Italics furnished.]

H. HOW THE CONSTITUTION OF 1937 WAS TO BE AMENDED

The provision in the new constitution permitting amendments stated:

Legislation for the revision of the Constitution is submitted to the President after approval by the National Assembly, or, in case of rejection by the National Council, by two-thirds of the Chamber of Deputies. The President then orders new elections. If the National Assembly fails to adopt revisional legislation submitted to it by the President himself, he may order a referendum and, if his proposals are approved by a majority, the election of a new Chamber of Deputies and the formation of a new National Council.²⁹

Under the new constitution Päts proclaimed, as provided in law, a general election to the Chamber of Deputies to be held, and announced the formation of the National Council, which was the second chamber of the National Assembly. The election took place on February 24-25, 1938, and the elected representatives convened on April 21 for their first session. The first act of the electoral college of the newly constituted regime was to elect Päts President.

I. CONCLUSION

What Päts, his confreres, and other leaders of Estonia sought to fashion out of their independence was a constitutional order which contained a subtly adjusted balance of power between the executive and the legislative branches of authority. The constitution of 1937 had as its objective the granting of a wide range of freedom to the people as well as power to the government to act. The President had

²⁹ Europa Service Estonia (The Constitution). London, Europa Publications, Ltd., 1939, p. 99.

the power to nominate the Prime Minister and his associates in the Cabinet. But if the National Assembly voted "no confidence," the President had the choice of dismissing the Cabinet or dissolving the National Assembly, and if the National Assembly, then elected, likewise voted "no confidence," the Ministers had to resign. The Government had the right to initiate legislation to which it had to have the consent of the President. His right to call for a referendum excluded such subjects as constitutional amendments, treaties, taxes, or national defense. The President could legislate by decree but only in a constitutionally limited area. Nor could he legislate during the 6 months when Parliament was in session. Although he had the power of veto on legislation, this power was applicable for only a short period, and it was suspensive. Under the constitution of 1933, it was absolute.

Under this constitution the Päts regime undoubtedly employed authoritarian means especially in such vital areas as civil liberties, rights of assembly, and freedom of the press. In such instances, the President used the qualifying phrases of the constitution to exercise restriction.

On the other hand, critics of the government enjoyed the right of expression within limits of analysis, but were enjoined from direct and hostile attack. Also, the old political groups, never really extinct, emerged under new banners, and in somewhat different coalitions without ever having totally lost their influence. To be sure, there was a kind of liberty of conversation, and the Tartu intellectuals indulged themselves with the talk that was so precious to thinking Europeans but which could find no outlet in official government life either in political action or in legislation. This type of Estonian leader gravitated to teaching positions in the university.

The trend toward democracy was clearly discernible, but it was under internal check which some Estonians regarded justified principally because of the menace from abroad. And the menace from abroad in the end was the Soviet Union which finally was responsible for the destruction of the Estonian Republic and Estonian national independence.

PART II—LATVIA

I. LATVIA BECOMES A NATION-STATE

A. PRIOR TO THE PROVISIONAL CONSTITUTION

Latvia's fight for national independence and its struggle for political self-expression and constitutional government in the period 1919–40 is, in most respects, a companion piece to the story of Estonia. This little nation of not quite 2 million people situated in an area of 25,395 square miles emerged from seven centuries of oppression and the immediate destruction of World War I and its own war of liberation as an independent, national, sovereign state. The new Latvian nation-state was conceived in the ideals of democratic republicanism; and thus, in addition to its cultural heritage which was oriented toward Western Christendom, the fundamental basis of Latvian political institutions became a fixed component of the West.¹

When Latvia signed the armistice with the R.S.F.S.R. in 1920, it had experienced a 628-day war of liberation, in which old men and school children and an army reduced to the barest accouterments provided the forces that finally won its national independence. The pressure for action was so great that some 247 laws and decrees touching on every aspect of Latvia's national life were passed by the National Council and the provisional government before the election of a Constituent Assembly. This assembly, which consisted of 150 members who were freely elected on April 17–18, 1920, convened on May 1, 1920, and elected a President, Janis Chakste, and a Premier, Karlis Ulmanis. Under the extreme urgency of national reconstruction, government was carried on by decree. Measures advanced under these extraordinary conditions were validated later by the Constituent Assembly, a process that operated at high tension from May 1, 1920, to the first session of the first Parliament (Saeima) on November 7, 1922.

Meanwhile, Latvia had settled down to the basic business of getting its economy going and organizing the instruments of government. The Constituent Assembly on May 29, 1920, proclaimed Latvia a "sovereign and independent democratic Republic."² Latvian sovereignty, the declaration announced, was inherent in the nation.

B. THE PROVISIONAL CONSTITUTION OF JUNE 1, 1920

A provisional constitution came into being on June 1, 1920, which declared the repository of the sovereign power of the Latvian State to be the Constituent Assembly. This provisional constitution created an interim government whose primary business, the temporary constitution declared, was the preparation of a permanent constitution.

¹ Klive, A. *The Baltic States and Russia*. *The Baltic Review* (New York). Vol. 1, December 1953, pp. 23–34; Bilmanis, Dr. Alfred. *A History of Latvia*. Princeton, N. J., Princeton University Press, 1951, pp. 333–356.

² *Ibid.*, p. 334.

Prefatory to the permanent constitution, the provisional constitution laid down a series of democratic rights for the citizens of Latvia, tantamount to what is commonly understood by a bill of rights. Although this section was twice passed in the early phases of Latvia's independence, it failed to be incorporated in the permanent constitution because of irreconcilable differences between the radical and conservative wings in the Constituent Assembly. But these rights, based on the general terms of the constitution, were afterwards formulated into law, and became part of the life of the nation.³

The provisional constitution empowered the Constituent Assembly to pass a series of pressing measures. Moreover, it established executive power in a ministerial cabinet responsible to the Constituent Assembly; created the office of president; and defined his duties. Thus, Latvia established a transitional government pending the working out of the permanent constitution. During this phase the agrarian reform bill was passed on September 16, 1920, and thereafter Latvia had the experience of trying to reconcile the former Baltic German landed proprietors to the distribution of land to the Latvian people. It was during this period, too, that the interim government, established under the provisional constitution, took over certain other parts of the economy for the development of which private capital was not available. On the other hand, by providing financial help from the government coffers under easy terms, every stimulus was offered to private initiative in farming, building, commerce, industry, fishing, and shipping. Latvia remained a country of free enterprise.

National tension was now eased by the Constituent Assembly's approval of a wealth of legislation, so that the fathers of Latvian independence were free to turn to their main task in the building of their free country—a permanent constitution.

II. THE LATVIAN CONSTITUTION OF 1922

A. GENERAL FEATURES

The Latvian Constitution,⁴ passed on February 15, 1922, was the product of 2 years of study by the Constituent Assembly and centuries of national aspirations. It contained many of the same basic structural defects that made the first Estonian Constitution inefficient and finally inoperative under the pressure of national political divergencies and the adversity of depression. In general, it was of the parliamentary type.

The new constitution did provide for a president, an important post which was deliberately excluded in the governmental structure of the first Estonian Constitution. And the Latvians made provision for a Prime Minister as well. In constricting its Parliament to a single chamber, Latvia imitated or repeated what in practice proved to be an error of the first Estonian Constitution.

Basically, the document proclaimed itself to be the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia and affirmed that "The Latvian people have adopted, through their freely elected Constituent Assembly, the following Constitution." Then under "General Regulations," it laid

³ Dischlers, Prof. K., *Constitution of the Republic of Latvia*, Riga 1925, pp. 3-7. (Introduction.)

⁴ *Constitution of the Republic of Latvia*. Riga, Latvia, Lettland-Bücherei, 1925, pp. 39-48. (English text.)

down the specifications which meant for Latvians the realization of an age-long dream. "Latvia," one of the opening lines of the constitution stated, "shall be an independent democratic Republic." The pronouncement went on to declare that the sovereign power of the Latvian State "shall belong to the Latvian people," and after defining the territorial boundaries in the simplest terms, announced that "the national flag of the Latvian State shall be crimson with a white stripe."

Their independence thus formalized, the Latvians now, perhaps more than ever, came to regard themselves "as a key outpost of Western culture against the westward push of Moscow. * * *"⁶

B. THE PARLIAMENT (SAEIMA)

By the terms of the constitution the Parliament was to consist of "one hundred representatives of the people," elected for 3 years by universal, equal, direct, and secret vote, "on the basis of proportional representation." Any Latvian citizen, over 21 years of age, was declared eligible for Parliament.

In the event of the Parliament's dissolution and the holding of elections during an irregular period, the constitution provided that the new Parliament "shall meet not later than 1 month after the election, and the term of office of that Parliament shall terminate after 2 years on the first Tuesday in November, simultaneously with the meeting of the newly elected Parliament."

A member of Parliament was not subject to recall by the voters:

The Parliament elected its presidium which was a kind of steering committee. The presidium could convoke a sitting of the Parliament at the request of either the President of the State, the Prime Minister, or not less than one-third of the Parliament.

Parliamentary proceedings were required to be public unless 10 members of Parliament, the President of the State, the Prime Minister, or one of the ministers, asked for a secret session and the Parliament agreed "by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members present" to hold the session in camera.

One-half of the Parliament constituted a quorum. Except as otherwise provided by the Constitution, a majority vote of those present determined the passage of any resolution or legislation.

Committees of Parliament were permitted to carry on their work between the sessions and could "invite responsible representatives of the respective Ministries and Local Authorities" to their meetings, "for the purpose of obtaining explanations." If not less than one-third of the members of Parliament demanded it, the Parliament could appoint "parliamentary Enquiry Committees to deal with special cases."

On this point the Constitution also gave the Parliament power to "address the Prime Minister, or * * * any other Minister" with questions to which "they, or responsible officials empowered by them, shall reply." The Parliament or its committees could ask for "relevant papers and documents," and the Prime Minister "or any other Minister" was required to provide them.

Members of Parliament were declared exempt from judicial, administrative, and disciplinary prosecution, "in connection with their vot-

⁶ Thomson, S. Harrison, Foreword to Billmanis, History of Latvia, op. cit.

ing and with ideas expressed in the execution of their duties." On the other hand, members of Parliament were held liable to prosecution, if they willfully spread defamatory information.

Members of Parliament were protected against arrest, search, or the restriction of their liberty "without the sanction" of Parliament, but could be arrested if caught "in the act of committing a crime." Further protection made a member of Parliament subject more to the action of his confreres in the event of his misconduct or presumed misconduct than to the ordinary police authority. In fact, unless the Parliament gave its consent no member was to be held liable to judicial or administrative prosecution for "criminal actions."

Every member of Parliament was endowed with the constitutional right to withhold evidence if it was entrusted to him, "as a Representative of the people" or, if, again as a Representative of the people, he entrusted the information to others. Those persons concerned enjoyed the same protection.

The Constitution forbade ministers or members of Parliament from undertaking Government contracts or receiving Government concessions in their own or anyone else's name.

The Parliament itself judged the qualifications of its members.

Freedom of the press under this Latvian Constitution had some indefinite limitations which, depending on the interpretation, could be quite severe. For instance, in the section under the Parliament the final article made this provision:

No person shall be prosecuted for circulating reports about sittings of the Parliament or its Committees, *if such reports correspond to facts*. Accounts of sittings in camera, of either the Parliament or its Committees, may only be published with the sanction of the Presidium of the Parliament or the respective Committees. [Italics furnished.]⁵

C. THE RIGHT TO VOTE

The right to vote belonged to "any Latvian citizen with full rights," of either sex, who "on the first election day shall have attained the age of twenty-one years."⁶

D. THE PRESIDENT OF THE STATE

The President was elected by the Parliament for a term of 3 years; 51 votes of the 100 were sufficient for election; the ballot was secret. The minimum age was 40 years; the incumbent was forbidden to hold any other office, or to "amalgamate" his office with any other, and he was required to resign from Parliament if he was a member at the time of his election to the Presidency. The office could not be held continuously for more than 6 years. The powers and duties of the President were normally exercised through the ministry and included representing Latvia in international relations, appointing diplomatic representatives, and receiving the representatives of other states; executing decisions of the Parliament in regard to the ratification of international treaties; having the responsibility of being supreme leader of the armed forces; appointing the commander in chief "in time of war"; declaring war in execution of the decision of the Parlia-

⁵ Section 34 of the Latvian constitution of February 15, 1922.

⁶ Section 8 of the Latvian constitution of February 15, 1922.

ment. It was the President's "right" also to "take all necessary steps, from a military point of view, in the event that another state shall declare war upon Latvia, or an enemy shall invade Latvian territory." He was required in such circumstances to "immediately convene the Parliament, which shall decide concerning the declaration of war and the beginning of hostilities." The President had the right of pardon, except where otherwise provided by law, but amnesty was retained as the prerogative of the Parliament. He was empowered to convene and conduct extraordinary Cabinet sessions, and he had the right of legislative initiative.

One of his major powers, also, was "the right of initiative in the dissolution of the Parliament." But, after dissolution, a plebiscite was required; for this provision went on to state:

If more than one-half of the votes shall be registered in favor of dissolution, the Parliament shall be considered dissolved and new elections shall be held, to take place not later than two months after the Parliament has been dissolved.^{6a}

Once the Parliament was dissolved, the authority of its members remained in force until the new Parliament convened, "but the old Parliament can meet only if convoked by the President of State." "The President of State," the provision continued, "shall appoint the order of the day for such sessions of the Parliament."

On the other hand, if more than one-half of the votes registered at the plebiscite were against the dissolution of the Parliament, "then the President of State shall be considered as dismissed from his office, and the Parliament shall elect a new President of State for the remainder of the dismissed President's term of office."

Furthermore, the President could also be dismissed by the Parliament. This action was to take place if not less than one-half of the total membership of Parliament requested a secret session and two-thirds of the total membership decided for dismissal. The Parliament was then required "without delay" to elect a new President of State.

The president of the Parliament was to take over the office of the President of State in the event of the latter's death, his resignation, or his dismissal from office and pending the election of a new President of State. The president of Parliament also substituted for the President of State when the latter was absent from Latvia, or was otherwise prevented from attending to his office.

The constitution ordinarily absolved the President of State from all "political responsibility" for his actions. This responsibility was assumed by the Prime Minister "or the competent Minister," who was to countersign "all acts emanating from the President of State." The President of State was, however, held politically responsible for acts emanating from an extraordinary Cabinet session which he had convened, and for the dissolution of the Parliament which he had initiated.

The President of State could be criminally prosecuted "if this is consented to by the Parliament by a vote of two-thirds of its members."

E. THE CABINET OF MINISTERS

The Cabinet was declared by the constitution to consist of a Prime Minister and subordinate Ministers "invited by him to take office." But the President of State also had a role; it was his function to desig-

^{6a} Ibid. Sec. 48.

nate the persons who were to form the Cabinet. Then came the compelling constitutional provisions which read:

The Prime Minister and the Ministers require in the carrying out of their duties the confidence of the Saeima (Parliament), and for their actions they are responsible to the Saeima. If the Saeima shall pass a vote of nonconfidence in the Prime Minister, the entire Cabinet must resign. If a vote of nonconfidence shall be passed against any one Minister, such Minister shall be required to resign, and the Prime Minister shall invite another person to take his place.^{6b}

The Prime Minister presided at Cabinet meetings, or a Minister designated by him.

Cabinet meetings were to engage in discussions of "all bills" proposed by the separate Ministries, as well as "all questions relating to more than one Ministry," and to "political questions" presented by members of the Cabinet.

In the event of a threat to the state—"or a part of it"—by an outside or an inside enemy, the constitution empowered the Cabinet to declare a "state of exceptional law" (state of emergency), notifying the Presidium of the Parliament of such action within 24 hours. The Presidium was required to inform the Parliament at once. (Sec. 62.)

Cabinet Ministers, who were not members of Parliament, were still accorded the constitutional right to participate in its sessions and the sessions of its commissions, as could other responsible state officials authorized by a Minister. They had also the right to submit additions and amendments to legislation.

F. THE RIGHT OF LEGISLATION

Both the Parliament and the people, within the limits set by the constitution, were "vested" with the right of legislation. Legislation could be placed before the Parliament by the people through constitutional channels by one-tenth of the voters. The Parliament ordinarily received bills from the President of State, the Cabinet of Ministers, or parliamentary commissions, or from "not less than five members" of Parliament.

The Cabinet of Ministers was required to present to the Parliament an estimate of revenues and expenditures which the latter considered before the beginning of each fiscal year. If some "unforeseen expenditures" were adopted by the Parliament it was constitutionally required to specify from what sources the money for them was to be derived.

The Cabinet of Ministers submitted to the Parliament at the end of the fiscal year the accounting of the "execution of the budget" for "confirmation."

The Parliament was required "in time of peace" to fix the strength of the armed forces.

Moreover, it sanctioned all international treaties "bearing upon questions which are to be regulated by legislation."

It was the duty of the President of State to publish the laws passed by the Parliament "not before the seventh day after a law has been passed, and not later than the twenty-first day after it has been passed. The law shall come into force a fortnight after its publication, unless another time is provided in the law."

^{6b} Ibid. Sec. 59

On this point another constitutional provision permitted the President of State to apply to the president of the Parliament within 7 days after passage of a law for its revision. The reasons were to be stated in writing. But if the Parliament did not then alter the law, the President of State could raise no further objections.

The President of State had the power to delay publication of a law for 2 months. It was his duty to suspend publication of a law if so requested "by not less than one-third of the members of the Parliament." This power could be exercised by the President of State or one-third of Parliament in the 7 days after the Parliament passed the law. But a law thus suspended "must be submitted to a plebiscite, if this is requested by one-tenth of the total number of voters." Failing such a request within the prescribed 2 months' period, "the law must be published." The plebiscite could be obviated if the law for which suspension was asked was put before Parliament again and passed by a three-fourths vote.

Not subject to plebiscite were: the budget, laws in regard to loans, taxes, customs duties, railway tariffs, military service, declaration and commencement of war, conclusion of peace, proclamation and termination of the state of "exceptional law", mobilization and demobilization, as well as treaties entered into with foreign governments.

There was also the provision that a law passed by the Parliament and constitutionally suspended could be "cancelled by a plebiscite if not less than one-half of all voters have taken part in such a plebiscite."

On the other hand, the President of State was not permitted to ask for revision of a law nor could it be put to a plebiscite, if the law was pronounced urgent by a two-thirds vote of the Parliament. Such a law was to be promulgated not later than 3 days after it had been passed on to the President.

G. HOW THE CONSTITUTION WAS TO BE AMENDED

The Parliament could amend the constitution if at least two-thirds of the parliamentary membership were present. Three readings were required. The basic articles of the constitution, i. e., sections 1, 2, 3 or 6, were not subject to change by the Parliament alone and required validation by the will of the people through plebiscite in which all citizens with the right of suffrage were qualified to participate. (Sec. 77.) Between sessions of the Parliament the Cabinet of Ministers was empowered to legislate by decree in the event of a "contingency." But the constitution forbade these decrees from altering the Parliamentary Election Law, the law organizing administration of justice and regulating legal procedure, the budget and budget rights. Nor could the Cabinet of Ministers alter by decree any laws passed by the current Parliament. The constitution also prohibited decrees or regulations by the Cabinet of Ministers between sessions of Parliament bearing upon "amnesty, emission of currency, * * * State taxation, custom affairs, railway tariffs, and loans." Moreover, any decrees that were imposed "shall become invalid" if not laid before the Parliament not later than 3 days after the opening of its next session.

II. LATVIA'S JUDICIARY

Perhaps no part of Latvia's Constitution of 1922 so emphatically bore the image of the West as the insistence on the independence of

the judiciary. For instance, the article: "Judges shall be independent and subordinated solely to the law," and: "In the eyes of the law and the eyes of the court all citizens shall be equal," are all but tantamount to a rewriting of the words engraved in marble on the facade of the Supreme Court of the United States: "Equal Justice Under Law." As a matter of fact its Latvian duplicate on the interior wall of the Supreme Court of Latvia, reads: "One law and equal justice for all."⁷

The Parliament confirmed the judges in their posts from which they could not be dismissed. Only the verdict of a court could remove a judge from office against his will. It was left to subsequent law to determine at what age a judge was to be required to resign, which was the word used in place of "retire." The jury system was provided for, but the legislators failed to pass a law implementing this constitutional provision.

III. SUBSEQUENT CONSTITUTIONAL HISTORY

A. CAPACITY FOR STATEHOOD DEMONSTRATED

Latvia's basic success in the years that immediately followed adoption of its constitution of February 15, 1922, and in the brief years that had gone before, vindicated those who had faith in the republican ideal. Latvia demonstrated a measure of realism in its dealings with its all-powerful Soviet neighbor, taking a forward rather than a backward view of history. The West accepted the new democracy on the Baltic into the family of nations. The European Great Powers and most of Latin America granted Latvia *de jure* recognition by January 26, 1921, and recognition of its sovereign independence after admission to the League of Nations on September 22 of that year was universally accepted. With the Holy See Latvia concluded a concordat on May 30, 1922, and on July 22, 1922, the United States accorded full, unrestricted, and unconditional recognition not only to Latvia, but to Estonia and Lithuania as well.⁸ The statement of the Department of State said:

In extending to them recognition on its part, the Government of the United States takes cognizance of the actual existence of these governments during a considerable period of time and of the successful maintenance within their borders of political and economic stability.

The Baltic conferences in 1920, first at Helsinki and later at Riga, indicated clearly the desire among the Baltic States to have closer relations. However, these conferences which called for various forms of common action of a peaceful nature among Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland failed.

Latvia had, with astonishing skill and success, stabilized its currency, put its foreign affairs on a firm foundation, launched its constitution, and advanced its economy progressively forward. Then, precisely as in the case of Estonia, and in Lithuania, and as discussed below, depression coming from abroad and accentuating political cleavages in Parliament, exposed defects in the constitution. The excessive liberalism of the constitution turned out to be one of its foremost deficiencies.

⁷ Bilmanis, Dr. Alfred, *Law and Courts in Latvia*. Washington, D. C., The Latvian Legation, 1946, p. 7.

⁸ U. S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1922, vol. II, pp. 873-874.

B. PARALYSIS BY THE POLITICAL PARTIES

Proportional representation which aimed to give every party and faction a voice in Parliament made the orderly function of government difficult. The law provided that any group of Latvian citizens could set up a list of candidates for Parliament from any of the five electoral districts. The multiplicity of parties paralleled the problem in Estonia where every fragment of political opinion sought representation. The table printed below lists 40 political parties which managed to win seats in the first, second, third, and fourth Parliaments of Latvia under the constitution of 1922.⁹

Political parties in the 1st, 2d, 3d, and 4th Parliaments

	1922-25, 82 per- cent of voters	1925-28, 74 per- cent of voters	1928-31, 79 per- cent of voters	1931-34, 80 per- cent of voters
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Socialist wing:				
Social-Democrats	30	31	25	20
Latgallian Social-Democrats		1	1	
Socialist Jewish Bund	1	1	1	
Independent Social-Democrats			1	1
Right Wing Social-Democrats	7	4	2	
Peasant and Labor Bloc (communistic)			6	7
Total	38	37	36	28
Left center:				
Democratic Center	6	3	3	6
Labor Union				1
Progressive Union				1
Economic Union			1	1
Radical Democrats		1		
Democrats at large			1	
New Settlers	8	5		
Christian Labor			1	
Latgallian Progressives	4	2	3	2
Total	13	11	9	11
Agrarian bloc:				
Farmers' Union	16	16	16	14
Small Landholders		3	4	9
Latgallian Christian Farmers	3	5	6	8
Latgallian Progressive Farmers	4	2	3	3
Devastated areas (by World War I)	1	1		
Latgallian Independent Farmers		1		
Zemgallian Christian Farmers	1			
Total	25	28	29	34
Right wing:				
Christian Union				6
National Union	4	3	2	
Christian Nationalists	4	2	4	
House Owners	1	1	1	1
Latgallian Union	1	2	1	
National Farmers		1		
New Farmer Union				1
Total	9	9	8	8
National minorities:				
Old Believers (Russian)	1	2	2	2
Greek Orthodox Russians		2	2	2
Union of Russian Municipal Employees	1	1	2	1
Russian Farmer Union				1
Russian National Democrats	1			
Germans	6	5	6	6
Agudas Israel	2	2	1	2
Misrahi	2	1	2	2
Cele Zion	1	1	1	1
Poles	1	2	2	2
Total	15	16	18	19

⁹ Bilmanis, Alfred, *A History of Latvia*, op. cit., pp. 342-343.

The net result of this multiplicity of parties was to create an impractical situation where efficient government was rendered virtually impossible. Any five persons could register themselves as a political party.

Economic factors, moreover, stimulated Latvia's constitutional crisis. The people of Latvia had lost confidence, if they ever had any, in the Latvian-Soviet mutual-benefit rapprochement; and the rising tide of world depression, together with Latvia's peculiarly local economic difficulties, added the last full measure of frustration to Latvia's effort at government by a hopelessly divided Parliament.

A moderate proposal for constitutional reform proposed by the Farmer Union Party under Karlis Ulmanis was defeated in 1933. But, Ulmanis was rapidly emerging as the Konstantin Päts of Latvia. After that, Latvia fell victim to the more rigid authoritarian forms which acceptance of the Ulmanis proposals would possibly have made unnecessary.

It must be borne in mind, however, that a wave of authoritarianism had, in the thirties, swept across most of the East and Central European nations from the Baltic to the Black Sea. This was a reaction against the excesses and abuses, with which the party politicians were charged, and against the inability of the elected people's representatives under proportional representation and the multiparty system to establish stable governments in a time of mounting international crisis. Large sections of the population came to look upon the professional politicians as having betrayed their trust and the vital interests of the nation, and they willingly lent their support to the reign of a popular leader, when such arose.

With the worldwide depression hitting hard at Latvia's economic life and foreign trade, the threat of internal disorders and even possible civil conflict worried the public mind. Though the beneficial results of the agrarian reform of 1920 had rendered Communist influence ineffective in Latvia, the small but disciplined Communist Party, taking its orders and receiving support from Moscow, continued nevertheless to be a threat to Latvia's independence. Indeed, a Communist plot had been uncovered in 1933. Defiance by a semimilitary leftwing Socialist organization which called itself "Organization of Labor Sport" was matched, on the extreme right, by subversive activities of the "Thundercross" Nationalists, an offshoot of the Conservative-Nationalists. Still another troublesome group was the German-Balt Hitler Youth, dangerous because of its close ties with the Third Reich.^{9a}

Among the considerations which led Prime Minister Ulmanis to assume authoritarian powers, must also be mentioned the mounting threat to international peace and Latvia's external security on the part of its two big and aggressive neighbors, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. The Prime Minister was much concerned about the threat to the stability of the nation's currency, the Lat, and he was well aware that a runaway inflation would invite internal disaster. This situation, in the minds of many people, apparently, called for a strong government, capable of coping with many complicated problems. Ulmanis conducted the affairs of the state very successfully, and without the excesses of violence which were the characteristics of

^{9a} Bilmanis, *History of Latvia*. Op. cit., p. 358.

totalitarian rule—Fascist, Nazi, or Communist. The Ulmanis government may rather be compared with the former Austrian authoritarian Dollfuss regime, which put up a desperate, though in the long run unsuccessful, struggle against Nazi encroachment, just as Ulmanis finally proved unable to prevent the Soviet conquest of Latvia.

C. THE GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY

On May 15, 1934, Premier Karlis Ulmanis and Minister of War, Gen. Janis Balodis, acting under article 62 of the constitution¹⁰ issued a decree declaring a state of siege in Latvia. Parliament was dissolved.

On May 18, 1934, the Cabinet of Ministers assumed legislative functions, and it was to act as an interim government by decree pending reform of the constitution. The increasing gravity in the international situation, culminating in the outbreak of World War II, made reform of the constitution difficult if not impossible.

What stands out in retrospect and is a fact of some importance in appraising Latvia of 1934 in relation to the problem of 1954, is that the government of Ulmanis was hostile to the core to Communist activities, and, in this hostility it obviously reflected the will of the people of Latvia.¹¹

The Ulmanis government of Latvia, like the Päts government of Estonia, was loath to see the tragedy of a democracy in defeat because an excess of democratic representation rendered the whole mechanism inoperative. Evidence to illustrate this distaste for rigid dictatorship was made manifest on May 16, 1934, in the declaration of the Ulmanis regime which came to be known as the Government of National Unity.

The declaration assured the people of Latvia—

Our action is not aimed against Latvian democracy, but wishes to prevent party strife from suppressing the sound national spirit and will of the nation. The Government desires only to create as soon as possible conditions under which this spirit and this will may be freely expressed, and to permit the rebirth of unanimity and a national consciousness which will * * * again give us a united, strong, and free Latvia.¹²

Moreover, Ulmanis was known to have deep-seated and determined democratic convictions.¹² By giving the Cabinet of National Unity support from the people, he succeeded in reducing to a minimum any substantial opposition to the new regime. In practice the Ulmanis government shed some of the role of the dictator, although it had a full sweep of power. At least, it did not indulge in persecution of dissident elements; it gave free reign to cooperative societies; and it enabled labor to maintain trade unionism. Nevertheless, Alberts Kviesis, the third President of the Republic (1930–36), did not call on the people of Latvia, through referendum, to make their own decision, as constitutionally required, on the dissolution of the Parliament. And on April 11, 1936, Ulmanis, in addition to

¹⁰ Bilmanis, Alfred, *A History of Latvia*, op. cit., pp. 358–359.

¹¹ *Political Handbook, 1940*, pp. 116–117.

¹² English text in Bilmanis, *Latvian-Russian Relations*. Op. cit., appendix IV, pp. 248–249.

¹³ Bilmanis, *History of Latvia*, op. cit., p. 361.

holding on to his office as Premier, succeeded to the Presidency as well, with the expiration of the term of office of Kviēsis, as provided in the law of March 19, 1936.

Yet the constitution of 1922 continued to function so far as the independence of the judiciary, the powers of the Cabinet and the President were concerned.

In January 1936, there came into being a national economic council,¹³ with representative groups from commerce, industry, agriculture, artisans, and labor, which had established their own respective "chambers." Two years later there was created the state cultural council made up of representative groups from a chamber of the professions and a chamber of literature and art.¹⁴ Government departments worked in collaboration with these group representatives, or boards, from the chambers. Together they constituted the Joint Economic and Cultural State Council. The President of the Republic called them into session and their operations were coordinated with the Cabinet of Ministers. Even the national minorities, along with all groups of the nation, were represented in the Joint Council, which passed resolutions on a majority basis. This was a corporative state, with many democratic elements.

Such was the Ulmanis government of Latvia from May 1934 to the outbreak of World War II, a self-restrained partial authoritarian regime which had as its long-range objective a return to an improved constitutional system. It failed to achieve this goal in the time allotted it by historical events beyond its control.

During the course of its independence Latvia had proved to the West and to the world that its homogeneous people had the will and the instinct for freedom. Moreover, Latvia demonstrated its capacity to face economic and political adversity with firmness and to search for solutions of the nation's problems with wisdom and equanimity. Finally, Latvia had proved to the world its historic right to a free, national, sovereign existence as a nation-state.

¹³ Collection of law, 35/219; 38/15.

¹⁴ Collection of laws, 38/128.

PART III—LITHUANIA

I. INTRODUCTION

A. STEPS LEADING TO ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

The early constitutional history of independent Lithuania, southernmost of the triad of nations on the Baltic littoral, resembled to a remarkable degree experiences in Latvia and Estonia. One of the consequences of events in all three states had been the failure of constitutional government. But nothing in the light of historical events during the era between 1918 and 1940 disapproves the essential fact that Lithuania was a nation-state, rich in historical traditions of past national grandeur, capable of statehood and self-rule, and deserving of its rights to national sovereignty and national independence.

The nucleus for the creation of Lithuanian independence was an organization called the Lithuanian National Conference which met on September 18, 1917, in Vilnius and remained in session and at work until September 23. The conference was drawn together by small private meetings. Invitations had gone out to prominent Lithuanians all over the country and to Russia and elsewhere, until the conference attracted 214 members of varied views and activities.¹ Prominent Lithuanians were selected because they had the confidence of the local population. The conference demanded independence for Lithuania, adopted a program, and decided to call a Constituent Assembly to sit at Vilnius for the purpose of drawing up a Lithuanian Constitution. Then, the Lithuanian National Conference created a Lithuanian National Council (*Taryba*) which consisted of 20 members; and Antanas Smetona was elected its president. The council served as a focal point of interest and support from Lithuanians in Russia, Switzerland, the United States, and Sweden, who regarded it as the spokesman for Lithuania. On December 11, 1917, the council declared the independence of Lithuania in a pronouncement that shrewdly sought to checkmate German efforts at annexation and Russian claims to Lithuanian territory. But the formal declaration of Lithuanian independence, uncompromised by efforts to placate or forestall the aggressive intentions of far more powerful neighboring states, came on February 16, 1918, when the council "as the sole representative of the Lithuanian nation" proclaimed the "independent state of Lithuania on a democratic basis" and announced the severance of Lithuania "from all political ties, which previously have linked it with other nations."

This declaration promised the convocation of a Constituent Assembly "elected by the inhabitants in accordance with democratic principles" * * * "as soon as possible" and asked the nations of the world to grant it recognition. After a series of vicissitudes (discussed in

¹ Chase, Thomas G., *The Story of Lithuania*. New York, Stratford House, Inc., 1946, pp. 263-269.

ch. I) involving Germany, then Prussia and Saxony, and even an invitation to a German prince to become the King of Lithuania, so that the complications of Lithuanian ties might be at least partly resolved, the Declaration of Independence was again proclaimed. The clinging German influences were broken, rejected, and abandoned. Allied armies victorious everywhere had simplified the problem. The Council of State on November 2, 1918, adopted a provisional constitution. The decision now was to have the Constituent Assembly determine the form of government. On November 5, 1918, Augustinas Voldemaras was delegated to form the first Cabinet of Lithuania, now an independent state. Six days later, Armistice Day, the first Cabinet met for its first session. The executive powers were vested in a directory of three, as detailed in the provisional constitution, which acted through the Cabinet of Ministers who were accountable to the Council of State, or Taryba, which itself held the power of legislation. The provisional constitution contained a bill of rights which established the absolute equality of all citizens. Furthermore, it provided equal justice under law for all citizens without any discrimination because of sex, national origin, religion, or class. The historical roots of the Lithuanian bill of rights, at least as exemplified in religious tolerance, went back in Lithuania to the 13th century.

On the other hand, Lithuania was plagued by a military and diplomatic struggle for independence that influenced fundamentally its constitutional history. Lithuania fought a series of wars for national survival against the Russian Bolshevik, the Russo-German Kolchakist, and the Polish forces, as well as an assortment of more or less extraneous military units. But even under the impact of this diminution of its manhood and energy, Lithuania, having established its provisional capital at Kaunas, went ahead with its indefatigable effort to create a nation state.

The war with Soviet Russia in 1919 compelled Lithuania to forego universal elections for the Constituent Assembly. Instead, a Provisional National Conference, made up of upward of 200 delegates from communities all over Lithuania, met at Kaunas on January 17, 1919, and validated the decisions of the current Government. In addition, this conference directed the drafting of the documents for a republican form of government, projected a plan for a Constituent Assembly, and, by election, added 8 new members to the decision-making Council of State (Taryba), which now numbered 37 members. Nine members had been named to the council with the organization of the Voldemaras Cabinet, so that as constituted at that time, practically all groups of the Lithuanian state had a voice at the top, not excluding the Byelorussian and Jewish minorities.

It was about this time that the forceful personality of Antanas Smetona began its ascendancy in Lithuanian politics. For on April 4, 1919, the Council of State modified the provisional constitution sufficiently to abolish the directory of three and set up in its place a president, to which post Smetona, an acknowledged leader of the council, was elected. Thus, Smetona became the first President of Lithuania. It was Smetona who had negotiated for the Lithuanian Government in December 1918 a loan of a hundred million German marks with the German Government and sought mutually profitable relationships with Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. Later he

held power from December 1926 to June 1940 when he fled after Soviet Russia had invaded Lithuania.

On April 14-16, 1920, Lithuania elected deputies to the Constituent Assembly, according to a proportional representation system and under the terms of electoral laws enacted on November 20, 1919, calling for universal, direct, equal, and secret suffrage for all citizens. Symptomatic of the extreme difficulties under which its leaders had achieved national independence was the fact that the eastern section of ethnic Lithuania had taken no part in the elections because this area was at the time under Polish control. When this Constituent Assembly, consisting of 112 delegates, met at Kaunas on May 15, 1920, it was regarded in fact and more than any of its predecessors, the government of the people of Lithuania. It was, of course, the first freely elected Parliament (Seimas).

This Constituent Assembly, or Parliament, gave official validation to the acts of the former Government in creating the independence of Lithuania in accordance with democratic principles. It gave the country a new, interim constitution to serve transitionally pending establishment of a permanent constitution. When on June 10, 1920, A. Smetona promulgated the Provisional Constitution, which was enacted by the Constituent Assembly, the provisional government had fulfilled its function.² Authority now passed to the Constituent Assembly, which proceeded to the creation of a regular and permanent government. The resignation of President Smetona, the Cabinet, and the council followed in orderly procedure to make way for a new Cabinet to be headed by Kazys Grinius as Prime Minister, and with Aleksandras Stulginskis, the presiding officer of the Constituent Assembly designated the Acting President of the Republic of Lithuania.

The permanent constitution was adopted on August 1, 1922, and with its promulgation 6 days later became the basic law of the Republic.

II. CONSTITUTION OF 1922

A. GENERAL FEATURES

Into this permanent Constitution of Lithuania, as was the case with the Estonian and Latvian Constitutions, there flowed the political philosophy of the West. The document opened with the words "In the name of Almighty God." The people of the Republic were accorded the constitutional rights of freedom of speech and assembly. It guaranteed freedom of religion. Other rights included that of freedom of communication, autonomy of local government, and autonomy for their rights of national minorities. The Parliament (Seimas) had the power of legislation, and executive authority was vested in the President and Cabinet of Ministers. The people elected the Members of Parliament, and the Parliament elected the President. The Prime Minister was appointed by the President. The Parliament could impeach the President who was responsible to it for his acts. But the President could dissolve Parliament and call for the election of a new Parliament to which he was then subject for reelection.

² *Lietuvos Vyriausybės Žinios* (Provisional Official Gazette), No. 37, 1920.

B. THE PREAMBLE

Because of its resemblance to identical documents that at other times and in other places heralded the birth of a nation-state, the preamble to the first permanent constitution of the state of Lithuania is quoted below in full:

In the name of Almighty God, the Lithuanian people, thankfully recalling the glorious efforts and noble sacrifices of its sons, made to deliver the Motherland, having recreated its State independence and desiring to extend the firm democratic foundations of its independent life, to develop conditions of justice and equity, and to guarantee the equality, freedom, and well-being of all citizens, and suitable State protection for human labor and morality, through its authorized representatives, convened in the Constituent Assembly, August 1, 1922, has adopted the following Constitution of the Lithuanian Republic.*

C. "THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES"

The constitution pronounced Lithuania an "independent democratic republic" with the "sovereign government" of the state "vested in the people." Moreover, it showed the same sensitive regard for minorities that marked the constitutions of Estonia and Latvia. Occasionally, the language differed from the other constitutions sufficiently to suggest Lithuanian individuality. For example, in determining citizenship the language carried the element of rejection as well as acceptance. The specification was explicit that citizenship could also be revoked "in accordance with the citizenship law."

D. LITHUANIAN CITIZENS AND THEIR RIGHTS

The right of citizenship, said the constitution, "may be acquired and revoked in accordance with citizenship laws." Citizenship could be acquired after a residence of 10 years, and "no one can be at the same time a citizen of Lithuania and a citizen of any other State." The constitution declared "All citizens of Lithuania, men and women," equal before the law, denied "special privileges," and guaranteed that no rights should be "restricted because of race, creed, or nationality."

The constitution declared the person of a citizen "inviolable" and subject to arrest or restriction of liberty "only in case he shall be found committing an offense, or by the decision of a judicial organ of the Government." The citizen was to be told the cause of his arrest and was to be furnished with a "copy of the indictment * * * within 48 hours" or be released. Similar inviolability applied to the home, which could not be entered and searched except in the "manner prescribed by law." Along with freedom of worship and conscience, the constitution declared that one's religion or one's convictions "shall not form the basis for justification of an offense or for refusing to perform public duties." The clergy, however, was relieved of military obligations.

Except as specified in law, the citizen was guaranteed "secrecy of correspondence and communications by post, telephone, and telegraph * * *." It is noteworthy that many of the stipulations in the Lithuanian Constitution reflected the recent tyrannical history of the country which had been under oppressive domination and indicated

* Lithuanian Constitution. Washington, Lithuanian Legation, 1922.

the special applicability of constitutional clauses to problems current at that time.

There was, moreover, the guaranty of freedom of "word and press," of assembly "without arms and without disturbances of the public peace," and the freedom to form "societies and associations" if these were not "contrary to the penal laws."

In all probability the bureaucratic abuses in the Russian Empire persuaded the founding fathers of Lithuania to make the following stipulation in the constitution:

Any citizen who shall have been aggrieved by an official in the performance of his duties, shall have the right, in the manner prescribed by law, to have such official brought before a court of justice without first obtaining the permission or consent of his superior, and to seek damages.

Any citizen had the right of petition to the Parliament.

Citizens had the "right of initiative" in legislation, and by specified processes could submit their proposals to the Parliament which was "obliged to consider" them.

Protection of property rights was provided for, but property "may be condemned, in the manner prescribed by law, only in the event of public need."

E. THE LITHUANIAN PARLIAMENT (SEIMAS)

The constitution of 1922 provided that Parliament, in order to be composed of "representatives of the people," was to be elected according to a system of proportional representation for 3 years by a general, equal, direct, and secret ballot. Voters had to be 21 years of age or over; the candidates for Parliament at least 24 years of age. The constitution provided also that the President of the Republic could, in the event of emergency, extend the 3-year life of the Parliament, subject to Parliamentary confirmation. The powers of Parliament included legislation, supervision of the work of the executive government, "propounding questions * * * and conducting investigations," confirmation of the budget "and its administration," and the ratification of treaties.

To the Parliament was reserved the power to declare and end war. In the event of undeclared war against Lithuania, or invasion, the executive could act independently of Parliament.

Subject to confirmation or rejection by Parliament the President of the Republic, acting with the Cabinet of Ministers, could declare a state of emergency, and move to counteract it. Here the constitution provided for the "temporary" suspension of the major civil-rights guaranties, again, subject to parliamentary confirmation.

The Parliament elected its own president and other members of the Presidium. The president of the Parliament was obliged to call Parliament into session at the request of the President of the Republic or one-fourth of the members. "Representatives," said the constitution, "shall be guided only by their consciences, and they shall not be restricted by any mandates whatsoever."

With regard to the matter of parliamentary immunity the constitution provided:

Representatives shall not be punished by courts of justice for speeches made in the course of their duties; nevertheless, they may be made to answer, in the ordinary manner, for injury to the reputation of another.

There followed the customary immunity of members of Parliament from the police power (except by consent of the Parliament) unless caught in the actual commission of an offense.

F. POWERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

The President of the Republic and the Cabinet of Ministers were declared the executive power. The President of the Republic was to be elected by the Parliament, for 3 years, by secret ballot of the "absolute" majority of the representatives. Any Lithuanian citizen could be elected President of the Republic provided he was 34 years of age or over and eligible for election to the Parliament. The President of the Republic was subject to recall by a two-thirds vote of the Parliament, and was not to be elected for more than "two three-year terms in succession." In the absence of the President of the Republic, the president of Parliament functioned for him, and in the event of the death or disability of the President of the Republic the Parliament was to elect a President to serve out the unexpired portion of his term.

The duties of the President of the Republic included representing the Republic, accrediting emissaries, and receiving envoys. The President "invites" the Prime Minister to form a Cabinet of Ministers, confirmed them and accepted their resignations. He held the powers of appointment and dismissal over officials of the Republic assigned by law as subject to his authority.

The President had the right to demand reconsideration of laws passed by the Parliament preparatory to a second vote, but he was required to promulgate such measures if they were passed by a majority of all representatives. A second consideration of any law could be dispensed with if the Parliament, by a two-thirds vote of "all the representatives," declared the law "urgent."

The President of the Republic was accorded the right of pardon but this could not be extended to Ministers "sentenced for abuse of office" except by consent of the Parliament.

The President's right to dissolve Parliament was subject to the requirement which called for his reelection by the new Parliament, and the election of the new Parliament was required to take place within 60 days of the dissolution of the old. The President of the Republic was declared the commander in chief of all the armed forces of the Republic.

G. THE CABINET OF MINISTERS

The Cabinet of Ministers was held responsible jointly and severally to the Parliament. A vote of "no confidence" required the resignation of the Cabinet of Ministers and "each" Minister. The Cabinet of Ministers was empowered to draft laws. An unusual provision permitted a member of the Cabinet of Ministers with a minority view to present his position in writing to the Parliament together with the proposal recommended by the majority of the Cabinet of Ministers. The Cabinet of Ministers was directed to "uphold the Constitution," administer the laws, manage internal and foreign policies, protect the territory of Lithuania, and preserve its internal order.

Only the Parliament—and that by a majority vote of all—had the right to institute criminal action against the President of the Republic.

lic, the Prime Minister or any Minister, "for abuse of office or treason." The supreme court was authorized to take such further action as might be required.

II. THE STATE COMPTROLLER

The position of the state comptroller was somewhat detached from that of the Cabinet of Ministers. He was appointed and dismissed by the President of the Republic, was responsible to the Parliament, and was required to resign upon a Parliamentary vote of "no confidence." He had the right to sit in sessions of the Cabinet of Ministers in an advisory capacity.

I. THE JUDICIARY

The complete independence of the judiciary was fixed and irrevocable. The constitution provided for only "one" supreme court for all Lithuania. No decision of the court was susceptible to modification or reversal "except by judicial authority in the manner prescribed by law." But the courts were required to "pass upon the legality of acts proceeding from the administration."

There was also the article, an important provision in all constitutions of the Baltic States, which provided that: "All citizens are equal before the Courts."

J. SPECIAL FEATURES OF THE CONSTITUTION

The constitution provided that the minorities could "autonomously administer the affairs of their national culture—public education, charity, mutual aid"—and that they had the concomitant right to "elect necessary bodies to conduct these affairs in the manner prescribed by law," and to impose dues upon their members. They could, moreover, call upon the national treasury for their share of the budget set aside for education and charity.

Education of children was declared the "supreme right and natural duty" of the parents, although schools were to be established by the state, and "all" schools were to be placed under state supervision "in the manner prescribed by law." Religious education in schools was made compulsory. But schools, established for children whose parents did not belong to any religious organization, were exempt from this requirement. Religious instruction was to be in the religion of the student.

Furthermore, the constitution directed that the economy of Lithuania "shall be so regulated" as to afford employment for all citizens.

"The principle of private ownership," said the constitution, "shall be made the basis for the management of land."

"The State," said the constitution at another point, "shall protect by separate laws a workman while ill, during old age, in cases of misfortune, and when unemployed."

The constitution guaranteed "equality of right for both sexes" and pronounced motherhood the foundation of family life. Maternity was declared under the "special protection of the State."

The citizens of a community could determine for themselves whether establishments for the sale of liquor were to be permitted in their residential district.

K. AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

The constitution could only be amended by the Parliament. However, Parliament, the Executive, or 50,000 citizens had the right to propose an amendment or a supplement to the constitution. The recommended change then had to be "adopted" by three-fifths of "all the representatives" of the Parliament. When adopted, it then had to be submitted "to the people" for "a general vote," provided that within a specified time the President of the Republic, or one-fourth of the representatives, or 50,000 citizens (having the right to elect to the Parliament), demanded the general vote. If, after adoption by Parliament, the proviso for the demand of the general vote was not utilized, then the recommended change, at the end of 3 months, became effective. A constitutional amendment was to be regarded as rejected by the people if at least half of the voters participated in the referendum, and if no less than half of them voted against the amendment.

Thus, Lithuania, together with its Baltic neighbors, Estonia and Latvia, adopted a constitution, the fundamental ideology of which was democratic and liberal. Closely linked with the political philosophy of the West, the new Lithuanian Constitution exuded much of the democratic idealism which prevailed during the era immediately following World War I.

III. MODIFICATION OF THE CONSTITUTION OF 1922

A. RÉSUMÉ OF SITUATION

The capacity of Lithuania to govern itself was demonstrated in many ways. The land reform law was the most successful of its progressive measures. The establishment of its own system of banking, and the creation of a sound national currency also had their strengthening effects. The cornerstone for the improved financial strength of the new-born Republic was the founding on August 16, 1922, of the Bank of Lithuania, a private institution under government regulation.

Furthermore, toward the end of 1921 Lithuania's position in the world of international affairs was strong enough so that it was granted membership in the League of Nations. The United States gave the Republic its recognition on July 28, 1922. By that time Lithuania had received de facto and de jure recognition from most nations of the world.

Programs for national improvement were advanced in that early decade. The Lithuanian Government changed from the Russian system of weights and measures to the metric system. A program for the modernization of railroads, highways, telephone, telegraph, and radio was launched. Public works flourished, especially in Kaunas. Cooperative societies and other aids, financial and technical, advanced enormously Lithuania's agricultural standards. The Government began and developed a well integrated public school system from primary, technical, and intermediate schools to institutions of higher learning. Lithuania had the elements of success, the leadership, and the people to establish firmly a strong national state.

B. POLITICAL PARTIES

The Parliament of Lithuania developed in its political aspects along the general lines of the splinter party schisms that plagued Estonia and Latvia and for much the same reasons. As a result, efficient and well-ordered government was made very difficult in Lithuania.

The crisis period reached its high point in 1926 when the conflicts of the political parties made the functioning of the Lithuanian Parliament a major problem. The source of a diversity of conflicts centered upon three parliamentary blocs.

The first and the strongest included the Christian Democrats, the Peasant Union, and the Labor Federation, that is the city dweller, the farmer, and the laborer. All were influenced by Christian and Democratic inspiration. The population of Lithuania was 80 percent Catholic, a fact that had some bearing upon the strength of the Christian Democratic group.

The second bloc was made up of the Peasant Populists, the Peasant Party, and the Nationalists. This bloc constituted the liberal element and their primary area of difference with the Christian Democratic bloc was over the issue of the separation of church and state.

The third bloc consisted really of only one party—the Social Democrats. They were devotees of Marxism in what they contended was its pure dialectic form. They believed in majority rule. For a brief period they were harassed by a transitory political irritant called Labor Rally which was an extension of the will of the Kremlin. Violently opposed by the Christian Federation of Labor and by the Social Democrats, Labor Rally was finally outlawed as a political party after a brief existence of several months in the 1922–23 period.

Maneuvering among these political labyrinths were more or less astute political strategists who themselves remained outside party alignments, or switched from one party to another, and frequently held important Cabinet posts.

The following chart presents a compact view of the political party situation in Lithuania during the five parliaments or Seimas from 1920 to 1941.

*Political parties of Lithuania*¹

Parties	Seimas				
	1, 1920–22	2, 1922–23	3, 1923–26	4, 1926–27	5, 1936–41
Christian Democrats.....	25	15	14	15	0
Peasant Union.....	18	12	14	10	0
Labor Federation.....	16	11	12	5	0
Nationalist.....				3	46
Peasant Populist.....	29	17	18	22	0
Social Democrat.....	14	11	8	15	0
Labor Rally.....		5			
Minorities.....	10	5	12	13	3
Peasant Party.....				2	
Total.....	112	76	78	85	49

¹ Committee for a Free Lithuania, New York, N. Y. See also Pakstas, Prof. Kazys, *Lithuania and World War II*, Chicago, Ill., Publications of the Lithuanian Cultural Institute, December 1947, pp. 16–23.

² These 46 representatives were elected on a personal basis but are here identified as Nationalist because this was the party that mostly conformed to the views of the Government under Smetona.

The preparliamentary governments during the 1918–20 period were coalitions representing nearly equally members of the Christian Democratic bloc, the Socialists, the Liberals, and the Nationalists. In the 1920–24 period the governments were dominated mostly by a coalition of the Christian Democratic bloc and Liberals. The Christian Democratic bloc wielded power alone between 1924 and 1926. In the election of that year the Christian Democratic bloc was voted out of office, gaining only 30 seats out of 85. They were defeated by a coalition of the Peasant Populists who received 22 seats, the Social Democrats with 15, the Nationalists 3, the Peasant Party 2, and minority groups who received 13 seats.

No single political party or workable coalition having a majority in the Seimas, Lithuania faced a major political crisis by the end of 1926.

C. THE COUP D'ETAT OF 1926

The third Parliament elected on May 10–12, 1926, voted Kazys Grinius into the presidency to succeed Stulginskis. President Grinius found the situation untenable, and in less than 6 months was out of office. His administration was bedeviled by an irreconcilable contest between the Liberal-Socialist bloc in the Parliament and the Christian Democratic group.

Into the vacuum stepped the minority deputies, seizing the opportunity to win preference from the Liberal-Socialist coalition. In the midst of this impasse all Europe felt the impact of Communist subversion and its consequent international tensions not, of course, excluding Lithuania. Slezevicius, the Prime Minister, in September 1926 obtained what appeared to be a carefully negotiated and satisfactory nonaggression treaty with Moscow, although this treaty had been negotiated in its main features by the Reverend M. Reinyis, Minister of Foreign Affairs in the former Christian Democratic Cabinet, during the spring of 1926.⁴ Its terms were satisfactory to all political parties in the Lithuanian Parliament and appeared to have strengthened Slezevicius' position.

The Prime Minister's internal policy, however, proved to be unsuccessful, and factions formerly opposed to each other united against him. Thus, the downfall of the Slezevicius government was primarily due to (1) the exclusion of the Christian Democratic bloc from the government in June 1926; (2) the dismissal of some high ranking officers from the army; (3) plans for the reorganization of the army and the consequent cut in the military budget; (4) the proposed new procedures for the payment of the clergy out of the government treasury, which produced resentment among the Catholic clergy; (5) increased Communist activities resulting from the suspension of political restrictions.

These measures created an accumulation of hostility which united the Nationalist and Christian Democratic leaders as well as prominent military leaders in a solid bloc of opposition to the Liberal-Socialist Slezevicius regime. When the tension reached its peak, dissatisfaction within the Nationalist and Christian Democratic bloc

⁴ Toynebe, Arnold J., *Survey of International Affairs*. London, Oxford University Press, 1929, p. 225.

became active and violent; and out of their combined effort came the coup d'état of 1926.

While Parliament was in session on the night of December 16-17, 1926, it found itself confronted by a body of officers of the Lithuanian Army. They compelled the adjournment of Parliament and secured the resignations of Slezevicius, the Prime Minister, his entire Cabinet of Ministers, and President Grinius as well. Without the presence of minority and leftist deputies, the Parliament resumed its sessions 2 days later and elected Antanas Smetona President of the Republic.

In April of 1927, President Smetona dissolved the Parliament and instituted a tentative period of government by decree. According to the Royal Institute of International Affairs, "the Christian-Democrats insisted that any scheme for constitutional revision must be preceded by new elections to the Seimas, while the other parties threatened to boycott the scheme altogether."⁵ Since these elections were postponed indefinitely, the Christian-Democrat bloc formed the strongest opposition to Smetona's regime. On May 26, 1928, Smetona decreed a new provisional constitution. Vilnius was designated the capital of Lithuania. The President, according to this constitution, was to be voted into office by an electoral college, and his term was to be 7 years. The proposed constitution changed the electoral system. Parliament was to hold office for 5 years instead of 3, and was to consist of 49 deputies instead of 85. The age minimum for voting was set at 24. The constitution also created a State Council as an advisory body. There was, however, a time limitation, for one provision of the Smetona decree on the new constitution stated that it was to be ratified within a period of 10 years.

What actually happened as a result of the 1926 coup was that President Smetona ruled, but without a Parliament, for a reasonably prosperous period from 1928 to 1938, when the new constitution of 1938 was called into being. The lot of the Lithuanian peasant was appreciably bettered. There were, however, some peasant uprisings and some army uprisings as well, which were suppressed. But the provisional constitution which the President had decreed lost all semblance of implementation so far as any parliamentary system was concerned. The Government of Lithuania for this period became in fact the Government of President Smetona. Opposition had little if any opportunity for expression. Technically, the original constitution of 1922 was amended in 1928, and amended again in 1938, so that a break in the constitutional history of Lithuania could not be easily established.

It is noteworthy that even strong opposition leaders to Smetona's rule found it impossible to label his regime as Fascist or dictatorial in the accepted sense. For example, the noted Christian Democratic leader, Prof. Kazys Pakstas in his previously mentioned book, *Lithuania and World War II*, found the Smetona government to "be a semidemocracy, semidictatorship with a few totalitarian attributes." He wrote:

Though all political parties (except Nationalists) were closed in 1929-30, 6,600 various cultural, professional and economic societies were functioning under mild police supervision; and a vast majority of these societies ~~was not~~

⁵ The Baltic States, p. 59.

dominated by the Nationalists. The opposition press was censored, but not liquidated. For instance, the Catholic daily, *The Twentieth Century*, was the most influential, with the Liberal daily, *The News of Lithuania*, next in importance. Most of the private Lithuanian and Jewish schools were still open and even subsidized by the government. President Smetona was held in great esteem by the orthodox Jews and by a part of the Polish minority interested to preserve their larger landed properties. A. Smetona had been assistant professor of Greek philosophy and was an admirer of Plato. With this background and his conservative humanistic leanings he was not suited to be a really totalitarian dictator.⁶

It should also be borne in mind, however, that the strength of opposition to full fledged totalitarianism was very considerable, especially in the ranks of the Christian Democrats.

In the face of the extraordinary complexities that faced Smetona from Poland over Vilnius and, later from Germany over Klaipeda, to say nothing of internal stresses and strains, the semiauthoritarian rule he directed from 1928 to 1938 might well go down in the history of Europe as more the government of enlightened statesmanship than the government of one-man rule.⁷

IV. THE CONSTITUTION OF 1938

A. CHARACTERISTICS

Lithuania's Constitution of 1938 had, at best, a short and arrested life, for the Soviet Union could not long disguise its aggrandizing intentions; relations with Poland remained unsatisfactory, and the agents of Adolf Hitler were increasing their subversive activities in Klaipeda which was soon forcibly to be ceded to Germany. Nevertheless, the constitution of 1938 is not without significance. That Lithuania's constitutional philosophy was identified with the West was given further emphasis by this constitution. Moreover, in spite of all the uncertainty and the radical change that existed in Lithuania, the desire of Lithuania for self-rule, and the ambition of its leaders for a government functioning according to constitutional forms, remained.

The Parliament that voted the constitution of 1938 was elected in 1936 and remained in office until 1940 when it was dissolved by the Soviets. The presidential powers provided for in this constitution were broader than before, but the structure of government remained republican. The constitution of 1938 reaffirmed the major tenets of the constitution of 1922 and the provisional constitution of 1928: Lithuania was pronounced an independent and a sovereign state. Sovereignty belonged to "the nation." The document declared Lithuania a republic and announced that the President of the Republic directed the state. State authority was described as one and indivisible, shared and exercised by the President of the Republic, Parliament, the government, and the courts. As before, this constitution guaranteed freedom of religious belief and instruction, inviolability of the person and domicile, and secrecy of communication. Elementary education was declared free and compulsory. In matters dealing with social welfare the constitution declared it the duty of the state to provide for the national health and to care for workers and their families in cases of illness, old age, and accident.

⁶ Pakstas, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

⁷ *Encyclopedia of Europe, Europa, London, Europa Publications, Limited, 1939, vol. I, pp. 482-482A.*

B. THE PRESIDENT

The President of the Republic was to be elected by an electoral college through secret ballot for a term of 7 years, and he could be re-elected. The President was required to be at least 40 years of age and eligible for election to Parliament. In the event of illness or absence, the Prime Minister was the President's deputy. The constitution provided that the President was not to be held responsible for his acts of authority. Nor was he to be called to account for other actions while he directed the state. The President of the Republic represented the state, received the representatives of foreign states, and appointed officials of the State of Lithuania. Other duties could be assigned to him by the constitution and the laws. The President ratified "all laws" and the state budget. The Prime Minister was held subject to his appointment and dismissal, and the President had the same power with regard to the Deputy Prime Minister and the other cabinet ministers who were recommended to the President for appointment or dismissal by the Prime Minister. The President was the commander in chief of the armed forces. The President concluded and ratified international treaties, and on the advice of the cabinet decided questions of mobilization, war, and peace. He could ratify draft amendments of the constitution and promulgate them or dissolve the Parliament that recommended them. The President had the power to grant amnesty.

C. THE PARLIAMENT IN THE CONSTITUTION OF 1938

The Parliament was to be elected for 5 years, the number and procedure was to be determined by law. Candidates were required to be not less than 30 years of age; and the voters at parliamentary elections not less than 24. Both sexes were eligible. Candidates were proposed by the councils of the counties and cities, who, in turn, were elected by direct vote of the people. Voting was to be universal, direct, equal, and secret and under the proportional system. The President of the Republic had the authority to dissolve Parliament at the expiration of its term of office or before. The Parliament elected a "Speaker" and other members of the Presidium. There were two annual sessions of Parliament—in spring and in autumn—but extraordinary sessions could be convoked by the President of the Republic. Speeches delivered in Parliament by a member were privileged, but a member whose speech violated state security was subject to prosecution in accordance with prescribed procedure. A proposed law could come to the Parliament for consideration from the Cabinet or from at least a quarter of the members of Parliament. A draft law adopted by the Parliament went to the President of the Republic for ratification. Failing his ratification, it was returned to the Parliament for reconsideration. If Parliament again adopted the law by a majority of at least three-fifths, the President of the Republic either ratified and promulgated it or dissolved Parliament. The President of the Republic proclaimed the draft law in effect if at its first session at least a quarter of the members of the newly elected Parliament proposed the controversial law, and if Parliament by a majority adopted it unamended. In the matter of the passage of the budget the powers of

Parliament were subordinated to those of the President. The constitution provided for the dismissal of the Prime Minister or members of the Cabinet whose replies to question put to them in Parliament failed to satisfy that body.

D. THE GOVERNMENT OR CABINET OF MINISTERS

The Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, and other Ministers were declared to constitute the Government. The Prime Minister held major responsibility as the directing head of the Government which he represented. Dismissal of the Prime Minister by the President involved the dismissal of the entire Cabinet. The State Comptroller, whose office again as in the constitution of 1922 was somewhat detached from that of the Cabinet, had the right to attend sessions of the Cabinet of Ministers; he had a consultative vote. The President presided at Cabinet meetings when he attended them, and he was empowered to call the Cabinet into session. Criminal action against the Prime Minister or other Ministers required the consent of the President, but the judgment was to be made by the Supreme Court with not less than five judges sitting.

The constitution provided for a separate State Council. Its function was to prepare and consider drafts of laws and regulations, and to analyze, criticize, and codify them. The composition of this body and its competence was to be determined by law.

E. THE SWING BACK TO DEMOCRACY—COALITION GOVERNMENT

For more than a year and a half before Soviet Russia's seizure of Lithuania, the Smetona government made another pronounced swing back to the forms of democracy which characterized so much of Lithuania's political action in the days of the establishment of its post World War I independence. The loss of Klaipeda undermined Lithuania's economic strength. With it went about 25 percent of the flourishing industries which had been built there after the liberation. Grave internal and external problems now confronted the government which brought about reorganization based on broader representation. The Cabinet resigned. President Smetona selected Gen. Jonas Cernius, who was nonpartisan, to form a new Cabinet, which was to include the two strongest parties that had opposed him: the Christian Democrats and the Liberals. The government of Cernius, which ended in the summer of 1939, and the government of the moderate Nationalist, A. Merkys, which followed, represented an incomplete, but nevertheless notable, move toward the restoration of liberal democracy.⁸ The trend was definitely along more and more democratic lines, but the time required to effect the necessary reorganization on a broader democratic basis was lacking; for on June 15, 1940, armed forces of Soviet Russia invaded Lithuanian territory, bringing to an end Lithuania's national independence.

Whatever else may be deduced from a review of the constitutional history of Lithuania, it is clear that the people of Lithuania, like

⁸ Pakstas, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23.

their Baltic neighbors, Estonia and Latvia, have an historical tradition of democratic, constitutional government; that they have a high regard for democracy and for the constitutional instruments of democratic republicanism; that they had progressed well along the road toward greater democratic government after a brief interlude of authoritarian rule; and, finally, that they, as a nation free and independent, demonstrated to the world their ability to govern themselves.

CHAPTER III

THE BALTIC STATES IN 1939

PART I—ESTONIA

I. POLITICAL SCENE, 1938–39

A. HIGHLIGHTS

Domestic and foreign affairs of any nation are, in an absolute sense, virtually inseparable. More often one is the handmaid of the other; almost always both are interdependent. The internal situation in Estonia during the period 1938–39 bears out this interrelationship, for Estonian political history was at this time determined largely by the crises that prevailed in Europe late in the 1930's.

Three principal trends appear to dominate the Estonian political scene from 1938 to the crisis of 1939. With restless zeal and undiminished energy Estonians continued their efforts to seek and find a formula that would insure for the young Republic constitutional stability and political equilibrium. To strike the midpoint between the extremes of the right and the left seemed to be the main preoccupation of Estonia's leading statesmen, men, for example, like Konstantin Päts. Secondly, the state of national emergency, extended as the Munich crisis and subsequent events increased the tempo of worsening international relations, seemed to place new impediments along the way to a more unrestricted political life. Restrictions previously imposed upon political activity and individual freedom were continued. Greater emphasis was now placed upon national security and national preparedness. Finally, the critical events of September and October 1939, which resulted in the first breach in Estonian sovereignty and independence by the Soviet Union, had far-reaching effects, bringing about in Estonian domestic politics a Cabinet reorganization.

B. ELECTIONS OF 1938: DEMOCRACY IN TRANSITION

The Estonian Government, described as being perhaps "the most democratic" of the three Baltic States, had passed through a protracted constitutional conflict between democracy and fascism, leading finally to the establishment of a more balanced governmental structure under the constitution of 1937.¹ At this time Estonia had been making great strides toward achieving a type of constitutional democracy known in western countries. Commenting editorially upon the democratic character of the Estonian Republic, the *New York Times* wrote in February 1938:

¹ Tollaschus, Otto D., *Old Order Facing Test in Baltic Under Domination of Bolshevism*. *The New York Times*, October 26, 1939, p. 8: 5–6.

The most significant fact in the independent life of this nation is that it has passed through a period of fascism and has emerged as a democratic republic by the decision of the people, with whom the supreme power now rests. * * * Small as this nation is, it has played a brave part in the struggle for freedom. These sturdy people * * * have maintained their cultural integrity. They cling to their remoter past while keeping the banner of democracy flying in the face of dictator States.²

The national elections held on February 24 and 25, 1938, under the new constitution demonstrated, however, that Estonian democracy, far from being advanced, was at that moment only at best in a "transitory stage."³ In preparation for the forthcoming election, the Päts government had taken "strong measures" to obtain an "overwhelming parliamentary majority."⁴ Having consolidated its supporters in a so-called "patriotic front," the Government, which controlled the main avenues to power, had the means to carry out public propaganda, thus placing the opposition in a position far weaker and far less effective in combating the sallies of the administration. Restrictions handicapped press participation in the campaign, and the activities of the opposition, whether Centrist, Laborite, or Fascist, had been so curtailed that they were "unable freely to criticize the government."⁵

Preelection forecasts, therefore, quite intelligibly indicated that the Government would receive a "strong majority." Nonetheless, notwithstanding the obstructive measures taken by the administration, there existed among Estonians the feeling that the prospect of a new Parliament would do much "to revive stagnant political life and stimulate democratic aspirations."⁶

The results of the election were not entirely unexpected. To the Estonian first chamber, the Government elected 63 candidates, while the opposition succeeded in placing 17. The latter group, which consisted of Liberals and Laborites, was not discouraged by the results, however, especially in view of the great efforts by the Government to advance its own candidates. In the university town of Tartu, the administration suffered a "remarkable defeat" when two prominent opposition leaders, the former Chief Executives, Jaan Tõnisson, and A. Piip, were elected.⁷

Two months later the newly elected Parliament held its first session, described by contemporary observers as being "a new chapter in [the] political life [of the Estonian Republic] designed to reintroduce constitutional government along democratic lines."⁸ Konstantin Päts accepted the nomination for the Presidency, an office to which all parties were entitled to nominate a candidate. In the Parliament, Päts, who according to one observer of Estonian politics, "gave a striking example of integrity and lack of personal ambition" while working out the new constitution, expressed the hope that the new parliamentary system would function so satisfactorily that he would not be required to make use of the far-reaching powers of his office.⁹

On April 24, 1938, Konstantin Päts was elected first President of the Estonian Republic under the new constitution by the vote of 219 to 19. That Päts had strong support in the electoral college was well

² New York Times, February 26, 1938, p. 14.

³ New York Times, February 24, 1938, p. 14: 5.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ New York Times, February 27, 1938, p. 27: 5.

⁸ New York Times, April 23, 1938, p. 4: 4.

⁹ New York Times, April 23, 1938, p. 4: 4. See also, Times (London), November 19, 1938, p. 17a.

demonstrated by the overwhelming vote cast in his favor. Above all else, the election of Päts showed with even greater clarity and forcefulness that he had obtained "a mandate" to continue the governmental system initiated in 1934.¹⁰

C. STATE OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY PROLONGED, 1938-39

If the opposition had hoped to succeed, as they had professed, in strengthening and broadening the growing tendency toward greater democracy in Estonia, they were to be disillusioned very quickly when the Government, interpreting the unhappy turn of events in European affairs as imminently dangerous to Estonian security, decided to prolong the state of national emergency.¹¹

In September 1938, Europe was fast approaching a new high point in war tension, and the events of the moment that crowded the international stage—events to be related in greater detail in the next chapter—had serious repercussions upon Estonian domestic politics. At the height of the German-Czech crisis in mid-September, President Päts solemnly decreed a "prolongation for twelve months of the military 'state of emergency'." At the same time greater emphasis was placed upon the need for stepping up Estonia's preparedness program. Estonians must be prepared to protect the integrity and independence of their country against aggressors, warned Premier K. Eenpalu, and the nation, he said, must, therefore, "continue arming incessantly." The whole nation, the Premier declared, must be mobilized.

Continuing events, real or fancied, struck an alarming note for Estonian statesmen, and in the nation itself agitated considerably already aroused anxieties. Rumors that the Soviet Union intended to demand the right to send troops through the Baltic countries and rumors of "extensive" naval maneuvers in the Baltic lent greater support to the mounting apprehension of the Estonian Government.¹² Furthermore, rumors of intended German action in the Baltic area, even though unconfirmed, increased the tempo of concern. A German map, published in *Das Schwarze Korps*, the organ of the SS, showing the major part of the Baltic region as German soil, an alleged claim dating back to medieval times, received widespread attention in Estonia; while late in April 1939 a report that the Soviet Union would regard any German action in the Baltic as an "indirect declaration of war" did not go unnoticed.¹³

More than professing the need for greater national defense, the Estonian Government took positive action. As early as April 1938 the President issued a decree calling for the creation of a special fund to strengthen national defense. Twelve million Estonian kronas was the estimated figure to be raised partly by taxation and by loans.¹⁴ A year later it was reported in the press that the Estonian Government was "to devote for defense the additional revenue, estimated at 3,500,000 Estonian crowns, obtained by * * * [an increase] of 10 percent on all taxes."¹⁵ On April 21, 1939, Parliament adopted a bill, proposing an

¹⁰ *New York Times*, April 25, 1938, p. 6:6. A new amnesty law, drawn up for this occasion, was believed to have aided 1,200 persons, including 73 Fascists and 106 Communists, who had committed offenses against the state.

¹¹ *New York Times*, February 27, 1938, p. 27:5; September 14, 1938, p. 2:5-6.

¹² *New York Times*, September 14, 1938, p. 2:5-6.

¹³ *New York Times*, April 22, 1939, p. 8:7.

¹⁴ *New York Times*, April 25, 1938, p. 6:6.

¹⁵ *New York Times*, April 6, 1939, p. 2:6.

"extraordinary defense tax." At the same time, Gen. Johan Laidoner, the Estonian Army chief, was in Warsaw, at the invitation of Poland's Marshal Edward Smigly-Rydz, where he was engaged in conversations with Foreign Minister Josef Beck.¹⁶

The price of national security is often paid with many sacrifices and not least among them is the restriction of personal freedom. To this generalization, Estonia was no exception; for the continuation of the state of emergency had serious effects upon the development of Estonian democracy. The new Estonian Parliament, which convened on October 15, 1938, was told forthwith that the condition of affairs had compelled the Government to continue various restrictions adopted by the previous authoritarian regime. The formal ban on political parties was to remain, while the freedom of the press was further curtailed. Henceforth, according to reports of the newspapers at that time, the press was forbidden even to report speeches in the Parliament "containing the slightest criticism of the administration."¹⁷

The opposition reacted vigorously to what they alleged to be the failure of the Government to restore the constitutional rights of Estonians. At the first session of Parliament Jaan Tõnisson, leader of the Liberals, delivered what has been described as being the "most violent" attack on the Government, "accusing the Cabinet of having broken its promises to reestablish democratic liberties." Asserting that "intelligent citizens" were unable "to trust the Government," Tõnisson declared that the "Fuehrer principle was inconsistent with the Estonian outlook and might endanger the country's political independence." This speech, which had attracted "unusual attention" in Estonia, was distributed throughout the country.¹⁸

The deepening crisis in international relations served to increase domestic political irritation in Estonia. Late in April 1939, the opposition had demanded participation in the conduct of national affairs, but the Cabinet took no action. In this matter, moreover, the opposition even conferred directly with President Päts, apparently, without much success.¹⁹

During the closing days of June the Government finally made a gesture intended to win the support of the opposition. The Estonian Victory Day celebration, commemorating Estonia's freedom from foreign domination, provided a suitable occasion for a gesture of conciliation. Not unmindful of the grave international situation, the Government, accordingly, restored to their former position of prominence leaders of the Veterans League who had been stripped of their military decorations after their attempted coup d'état some years ago. Among the men affected by this order of restoration were 14 prominent opposition leaders, including Gen. Anders Larka.²⁰

Foreign affairs was a major preoccupation of the Estonian Government in the months to follow. After the conclusion of the ill-fated, but unavoidable, pact of mutual assistance with the Soviet Union, the

¹⁶ New York Times, April 6, 1939, p. 2: 6; April 22, 1939, p. 8: 7.

¹⁷ New York Times, October 16, 1938, p. 36: 2. Internal conditions had improved "considerably recently," according to Premier Eenpalu, who remarked that there were no persons detained for political reasons while not long in the past there were several hundred. See, New York Times, September 14, 1938, p. 2: 5-6.

¹⁸ New York Times, October 26, 1938, p. 19.

¹⁹ New York Times, April 22, 1939, p. 8: 7.

²⁰ The celebration of Victory Day was highlighted by a message from President Päts who declared, "Whoever dares to violate our ancient country will meet our firm resistance." New York Times, June 24, 1939, p. 4: 6.

Cabinet was reorganized mainly because of the desire to effect a change of leadership in response to Soviet criticism and to broaden responsibility by the inclusion of opposition members. Accordingly, on October 12, 1939, Prof. Jueri Uluots (Agrarian Party), President of the Estonian Parliament and a member delegate at Moscow during the Soviet-Estonian negotiations just concluded, became Premier. Other new members in the Cabinet were Prof. Ants Piip (National Center), former Minister to Washington, who was named Minister of Foreign Affairs; Nikolai Reek (no party), Defense Minister; Ants Oidermaa, (Patriotic Front), Propaganda Minister; M. Juerima (Agrarian), Home Minister; and Dr. Paul Kogerman (National Center), Minister of Education. Other posts in the Cabinet remained unchanged.²¹

One result of far-reaching importance stemming directly from the Nazi-Soviet agreements, which had preceded the imposition of the mutual assistance pact, was the departure of the German Balts from Estonia and Latvia. By the close of 1939 the exodus of this "troublesome minority" was well underway.

II. THE ESTONIAN ECONOMY

A. INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

The economic problems that bore so heavily upon the Estonian Republic during its early years of independence stemmed largely from the adjustment required in the changing status of Estonia from being a province in the Russian Empire to that of an independent nation. Formerly, the economic apparatus of Estonia had been adapted to suit the broader requirements of Petrograd. Estonian savings were, for example, largely in Russian securities and what industrial development existed in Estonia was geared to satisfy Russian needs. When independence came, Estonians were, therefore, faced with "unprecedented" difficulties of economic adaptation as well as economic improvements.²²

Foremost among the basic problems facing the young Republic during its period of independence were rebuilding the areas devastated by war and foreign occupation; agrarian reform to be carried out along broader lines of economic democracy; reorganization and development of Estonian industrial enterprises; development of foreign trade adapted to Western markets rather than exclusively Russian markets as heretofore had been the case; fiscal reform in order to assist in financing economic development; and economic reconstruction after the great depression of 1929-32.

By 1939 Estonia had, apparently, advanced far along the road toward the solution of these momentous problems. Villibald Raud concluded that during the years immediately preceding World War II Estonia made "uninterrupted progress" in its economic life as well as its political and cultural life.²³

²¹ New York Times, October 13, 1939, p. 8:2.

²² Raud, Villibald. Estonia. New York, Nordic Press, 1953, pp. 46-47.

²³ Ibid., p. 3. For a survey of the Estonian economy, see Estonia, Economic and Financial Progress. The Banker (London), v. 45, March 1938, pp. 319-350. Also, Pullerits, Albert, ed. Estland. 20 Jahre Selbständigkeit. Tallinn, 1938, p. 206.

B. AGRICULTURE

1. Effects of agrarian reform

In 1939, Estonia was largely an agrarian nation where 60 percent of the population were engaged in agriculture.²⁴ During the period 1936–38 agriculture alone contributed an average of 55 percent to the entire national production. Before the depression the average was placed at 70 percent; the decline was caused by increased industrialization.

Agrarian reform, described as being a “great success,” and subsequent adjustments in land tenure had the effect of making the Estonian people “an independent landowning class.” “No other economic or social reform,” wrote Raud, “has been more sweeping, and this,” he added, “is freely admitted by western experts.”²⁵ In 1919, Estonia had an estimated 52,000 independent farms. By 1939 there were 139,984 farms, averaging 56 acres owned by the tillers of the soil as a result of land reform. Approximately two-thirds of the entire national territory was owned by Estonian farmers; the remaining one-third belonged to the national domain.²⁶

2. Developments in agriculture

The improvement of land by programs of reclamation increased considerably the agricultural capacity of Estonia. This factor along with others contributed largely to the great achievements in Estonian agriculture by 1939. In 1934, Estonia became an exporter of food grain for the first time since the 1880's. In 1919, there were 290,000 hectares under fodder crops; by 1939 the figure increased to 355,000.²⁷ Potato production also increased considerably, and exports from Estonia, described as being “an excellent potato-growing country,” were substantial.²⁸

Another area in Estonian agricultural enterprise of major importance had been in livestock, the biggest consumer of the yields from the fields and meadows. The dairy industry was not only the primary source of income for the Estonian farmer, but provided also the largest Estonian export product, butter. In Estonia there were 519,000 head of cattle in 1916; in 1939 the figure increased to 706,000. All along the line Estonian dairy production had been increased, while at the same time great strides had been made in the general improvement of the industry.²⁹ Other types of livestock production—horses, sheep, pigs, and poultry—showed comparable progress.

C. INDUSTRY

Uncertainty prevailed during the first years of independence with regard to the aims of industrial development, but as the nation's requirements became clarified and the potential capacity for domestic production evaluated, industrial planning for the future was initiated.

In the late 1920's emphasis in industrial production, heretofore “fairly modest,” shifted from the production of consumer goods to the production of producer goods. The Great Depression seriously

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 49–50.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 52–54.

impaired Estonian industrial progress, but in the following years—and with the guidance of a “well-planned industrial policy”—these losses were recouped and progress resumed. Illustrative of Estonian industrial progress are the indexes of industrial activity (1927–31 equals 100) which showed an increase in producer goods from 93 in 1933 to 184 in 1938; in consumer goods from 77 in 1933 to 120 in 1938; and, finally, in the general index, an increase from 85 in 1933 to 150 in 1938.³⁰

Without a doubt oil shale was the “most valuable” natural resource of Estonia. Total oil shale deposits were placed at 5,500 million tons, that is to say, 1,000 million tons of crude oil when distilled. The oil shale industry was, therefore, an enterprise of great importance in the Estonian industrial economy. From 1936 to 1938 oil-shale output doubled, rising from 765,000 tons to 1.5 million tons.³¹

Other large Estonian industries were peat production, the phosphate industry, building-materials industries, timber, woodpulp and paper, the power industry, and among others, the textile industry. Estonia's larger industries, that is to say those having 20 or more workers, employed 35,141 workmen in 1929. By the end of the next decade, this figure increased to 54,830.³² In the medium-sized industries, that is to say those with 5 to 19 workers, the number employed increased from 5,279 in 1929 to 11,137 in 1939. Combining both categories, the grand total represents an increase from 40,420 in 1929 to 65,967 in 1939.³³ Unemployment had declined substantially by the close of the 1930's. On December 1, 1938, the estimated figure for those unemployed was placed at 1,900.³⁴

D. TRADE, DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN

The depression of the 1930's reduced considerably Estonia's many and varied trading enterprises, so that in the middle and late 1930's the commercial apparatus of the nation achieved a somewhat stabilized form. In 1936, Estonia had 12,920 trading enterprises: 1,533 wholesale and 11,387 retail. For the most part, these enterprises were engaged almost entirely in domestic trade.³⁵

In the opening years of independence the structure and development of the Estonian economy depended largely on the development of an export trade. Agricultural products, of which Estonia had a surplus, became the principal export. Timber also exceeded home requirements and along with other industrial products were exported. Estonia had an unfavorable balance of trade during these early years. By the mid-1920's, however, the balance became favorable. But the depression and its consequences dealt a severe blow to Estonian export trade, bringing about Government intervention to permit the nation to keep its international payments balanced and currency stable. After 1933, however, there was a marked and steady improvement in foreign trade. By 1939 the estimated value (in thousand krone)—that is to say, in terms of the monetary value of Estonian currency—was 101,351 for imports and 118,217 in exports; for 1932, the figures were

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 66–67.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*, p. 150.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Jackson, John Hampden. *Estonia*. London, George Allen & Unwin, 1948, p. 199.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 76–77.

36,860 for imports, and in exports 42,571.³⁶ In volume, the imports of 1939 were estimated at 353,869 tons and exports at 575,194 tons. In 1920, Estonia imported an estimated 88,699 tons, while exporting 139,791.³⁷

The United Kingdom, Germany, and the United States were Estonia's principal sources of trade. Of the total Estonian imports in 1938, the United Kingdom shared 17.9 percent; Germany, 31.1 percent; the United States, 6.6 percent; and Soviet Russia, 4.9 percent. For the same period the export percentages of Estonian trade were 34 percent for the United Kingdom, 31.4 percent for Germany, 4.4 percent for the United States, and 4.2 percent for Soviet Russia.³⁸ In the past Estonia had benefited to some extent from the transit facilities offered to the Soviet Union for trade via Baltic sea routes. For the period 1929-31 this transit trade amounted to a million tons annually, but in 1938 it was reduced to some 160,000 tons, from which the Estonian share was less than 2,000-tons.³⁹

E. ESTONIAN TRANSPORT

The transport system of Estonia, while modest compared with larger nations, was, nonetheless, not unimpressive. In 1940, the Estonian merchant marine numbered 304 vessels, estimated at 214,000 gross registered tons. The navigable length of interior waterways in Estonia totaled about 600 kilometers. The railroad system, extended and improved substantially, was estimated in 1939 to have 1,702 kilometers of broad and narrow gage track; 195 steam, 22 electric and motor locomotives; 529 passenger and 5,633 freight cars. Estonia's aviation and highway development completed the favorable picture of progress in transport during the years of independence.⁴⁰

III. SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

A. POPULATION

On January 1, 1939, Estonia had an estimated population of 1,133,917, residing in an area of 18,370 square miles, of which 67.2 percent lived in rural areas; the remainder lived in urban areas. Of this total prewar population, 88.2 percent were Estonian, 8.2 percent Russian, 1.5 percent German, 0.7 percent Swedish, 0.5 percent Latvian, and others constituted 0.9 percent of the total. The Estonian language was spoken by 93.4 percent of the population, Russian by 25.6 percent, German 11.7 percent, and English 0.2 percent. Notwithstanding the

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

In this report the estimated value of imports, exports, production, etc., is based upon the monetary value of the particular Baltic State being examined. In terms of American currency, one Estonian krone was equivalent to \$0.27 during the years 1928, 1935, and 1938. One Latvian lat was equivalent to \$0.19 in American currency in 1928, \$0.33 in 1935, and \$0.19 in 1938. One Lithuanian litas was equivalent to \$0.10 in American currency in 1928 and \$0.17 in 1935 and 1938. See *The Network of World Trade*, Geneva, League of Nations, 1942, p. 172.

With the index number 100 in 1929, the following figures indicate the fluctuation of wholesale prices in Estonia: 1930, 87.2; 1931, 77.8; 1932, 70.9; 1933, 72.6; 1934, 72.6; 1935, 71.8; 1936, 77.8; 1937, 86.3; 1938, 85.3 and 1939, 87.7.

With the base number 100 in 1929, the following figures indicate the fluctuation in the cost of living in Estonia: 1930, 88.9; 1931, 85.5; 1932, 80.3; 1933, 75.2; 1934, 74.4; 1935, 75.2; 1936, 83.8; 1937, 89.0; 1938, 93.6; 1939, 95.4. See *Statistical Yearbook of the League of Nations*, Geneva, League of Nations, 1940, pp. 206, 209.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 74-76.

existence of this minority group, which had been given generous and liberal treatment by the Government, the national structure of the nation, unaffected in any fundamental way by these minorities, was essentially Estonian in origin.⁴¹

B. OTHER SOCIAL FACTORS

Primarily an agricultural nation, Estonia had offered a wide and productive field of agrarian pursuits for its citizens. In 1934, 60.2 percent of the population was engaged in agriculture, while only 17.8 percent were in industry, 5.1 percent in commerce, 3.5 percent in transport and communication, and among other classifications, 6.7 percent in civil service, including the military.⁴²

Public health was organized and controlled by the Public Health and Welfare Department of the Ministry of Social Affairs, although the actual work was carried on by a system of local self-government in the towns and counties. The University of Tartu, described as being "the oldest and best-known center of the medical profession in the Baltic," supplied Estonian medical requirements. In 1938, Estonia had 963 doctors, almost threefold the number in 1920; 206 dentists and 595 nurses, both substantially more than the figure for 1920, 87 and 176, respectively.⁴³

At the outset the Estonian Government was deeply interested in putting into effect democratic social reforms in the new Republic. Laws were adopted providing pensions for disabled war veterans and their families and at a later date for civil servants, military personnel, and others. A system of public relief was instituted to care for those in need, such as crippled children, the blind, deaf and dumb, and the aged.

Nor were Estonian workmen forgotten in the measures adopted for the social betterment of the community. Estonia had a law introducing the 8-hour day. Devices for protection of the worker and improvement of his conditions were in effect. Compulsory insurance, a safeguard against illness and accidents, protected industrial workers, while special laws, seemingly very liberal, protected persons employed in other categories such as agriculture.⁴⁴

IV. CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS

A. EDUCATION

Achievements in culture compare favorably with progress made in other areas of Estonian life. Altogether these accomplishments created in 1939 an imposing picture of a young republic which had made great, and relatively rapid, strides as an independent, sovereign state.

Since 1919, Estonia had had compulsory education. The census of 1934 revealed that 78.1 percent of the entire population from the age of 10 years and over had attended primary school from which 52.8 percent had been graduated; 12.6 percent had attended secondary

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 34-41.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 43. See also, Kaelas, A., What Did Estonian Social Policy Achieve in Twenty [sic] Odd Years? *The Baltic Review* (Stockholm, Sweden) vol. 1, 1946:94-99.

schools, 4.3 percent graduated; and of the 1.9 percent which had matriculated in the nation's universities, 0.8 percent graduated.⁴⁵ In 1934, the national average of illiteracy, augmented by the large number of illiterate Russians residing in Estonia, was estimated to be 3.9 percent.

To fulfill the needs of elementary education, which extended over a 6-year period, Estonia had in 1938-39, 1,217 primary schools with 106,955 students and 3,846 teachers.⁴⁶ The middle schools, which had a 5-year curriculum, were numbered at 89 with 347 classes and 13,299 students. For the same period 1938-39 there were 48 high schools, having a 3-year curriculum preparatory for entry into the university, with 97 classes and 2,709 pupils. Vocational education played a role of increasing importance in Estonia. With an enrollment of 13,032 students there were in 1939, 177 vocational schools of which 55 were schools of technology and engineering, 43 schools for agriculture, 33 schools for domestic arts, and 21 commercial schools.⁴⁷

The University of Tartu, founded in 1632 by Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, was the leading university in Estonia. With 10 faculties covering all major fields of learning, Tartu University had, on December 1, 1939, a teaching staff of 403 and an enrollment of 2,689 students. Besides Tartu, there were Tallinn Technical University, two Teachers Institutes, the Conservatoire of Tallinn, and the Pallas School of Arts.⁴⁸

B. OTHER CULTURAL AREAS

In addition to schools of education, Estonia had a number of other cultural treasures. Libraries and archives supplemented educational facilities. Tartu University had the largest library in the Baltic States with an estimated 660,000 volumes. The library of the Estonian National Museum, the state library, and the Estonian Literary Society also had notable collections. In 1938, Estonia had 735 public libraries with a combined total of 861,000 volumes.⁴⁹ Furthermore, the central state archives in Tartu, the state archives in Tallinn, and the various municipal archives provided abundant material for the serious scholar.

Finally, Estonia drew further sustenance for its cultural life from achievements in poetry and literature, the legitimate theater, works of serious composers, presentation of traditional song festivals, achievements in architecture, painting, and sculpture, and the numerous publications of newspapers, periodicals, and books, many of considerable merit.⁵⁰

C. RELIGION

Estonia was in 1939 predominantly a Lutheran nation, an historical legacy dating back to the days of Swedish rule. The census of 1934 estimated the Lutheran adherents to constitute 78.2 percent of the population. Under Russian domination, the Orthodox Church

⁴⁵ Raud, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-110.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 112-113.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 113-115.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 113-114. See also, Veller, Rein, *The Cultural Standard of the Baltic States*. *The Baltic Review* (Stockholm, Sweden), vol. 1, No. 6, 1946: 282-287; Rank, Gustav, *The Baltic Cultural Area*, *ibid.*, pp. 161-170. Tallgren, Prof. A., *The University of Tartu*, *ibid.*, pp. 87-89. Martinoff, G., *The Fate of the University of Tartu*, *ibid.*, pp. 90-93.

had made many converts among Estonians. Consequently, this denomination, augmented by large numbers of Russian refugees, represented Estonia's largest minority religious group, estimated at 19 percent of the 1934 population. According to the same census, other denominations were Baptist 0.8 percent; Adventists, Methodist, Evangelist, 0.7 percent; Jewish, 0.4 percent; Roman Catholic, 0.2 percent; and nondenominational, 0.7 percent.⁵¹

The church law of 1934 brought the churches under a certain degree of state regulation. Church statutes, for example, were subject to state confirmation. Decisions of the church councils and rules of the church were also subject to veto by the Minister of the Interior. Moreover, members of the church committees and the clergy were required to have Estonian citizenship.⁵²

⁵¹ Raud, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 106-108.

PART II—LATVIA

I. POLITICAL SCENE

A. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The political history of Latvia during the period from the establishment of the "moderate authoritarian regime" in 1934 to the outbreak of World War II was notably characterized by Dr. Alfred Bilmanis as being "undramatic."¹ In a very adept and comprehensive description of the Latvian corporate state, Dr. Bilmanis wrote:

The character of the Latvian "dictatorship" was determined by the personality and experience of the chief of state, and by the ancient national qualities of the Latvian people. The tested democratic convictions of Karlis Ulmanis, his commitment to the increasing welfare and continued independence of the nation to which he had long devoted his best energies, furnished the Latvians with a sense of security against any greed for personal power on the part to their leadership. Although certain "old soldiers" had for a time concerned themselves with politics, bringing with them the tincture of fascism, the absence of sustained political persecution and the government's persistent appeal to youth to participate freely and without regimentation in the new order suggested that liberalism had not suffered a total eclipse. Particularly reassuring was the continued encouragement of cooperative societies, where Latvian self-reliance and nonpolitical action had long had its most satisfactory outlet. Labor found itself strengthened against the grumblings of the Social-Democrats by the steady development of the trade-union movement. While there were those who openly deplored the introduction of the corporate state, and many who could justifiably hope for the return to a rational parliamentarianism based on a modified constitution, there was little organized opposition to either the temper or the tactics of the hard-working Cabinet of National Unity. The Latvians as a whole had confidence in the men, a number of them fighters and leaders in the early days of the Republic, who conducted the authoritarian regime, as well as in their own capacity to forge a sound nation, given the proper realization of their common interests by their governors. For the time being, unity of effort and aims seemed more essential than a centrifugal degree of freedom.²

Hopes for broadening democracy in Latvia foundered on the rocks of the impending international crisis. Dr. Karlis Ulmanis, a graduate of America's University of Nebraska, was still President of Latvia in 1939. Described as being a man of "heroic mold," Ulmanis viewed the national needs of Latvia in terms more restricted than others of more liberal proclivities.³ In February 1938, martial law lapsed, but a new "law for the defense of the state" was promulgated in its place. Extraordinary powers were granted to the Minister of the Interior in those areas especially concerned with individual freedom, the rights of assembly and association, and freedom of the press.⁴

Notwithstanding the increasing world tensions in 1939, an impressive amount of legislation was put into effect on subjects particularly dealing with economic recovery and stability. Work on a new con-

¹ Bilmanis, Dr. Alfred. *A History of Latvia*, Princeton, N. J., Princeton University Press, 1951, p. 360.

² *Ibid.*, p. 361.

³ *New York Times*, Apr. 9, 1938, p. 16:2-3, editorial.

⁴ Bilmanis, *op. cit.*, p. 361.

stitution continued, but before any progressive measures could be promulgated war and Soviet occupation intervened.⁵

II. THE LATVIAN ECONOMY

A. INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

In 1939, the Latvian economy was to a great extent under the control of the Government. Diversions from laissez-faire capitalism and unfettered competition in trade, and a tendency toward state capitalism and a controlled economy had been the most predominant economic trends. No substantial organized opposition, however, emerged from the farmers, workers, or business classes, whose personal interests were not, apparently, in any great measure so disturbed as to arouse discontent. In fact, by 1939 Latvia had made "a rapid swing away from depression into an [era] of unparalleled prosperity."⁶ In 1938, the national income had passed the 2 billion lat mark, after a drop to 754 million lats in 1932. At the close of 1939, the total national wealth had reached 9 billion lats, that is to say 3,000 lats per capita, with 40 per cent of the national wealth owned by the state.⁷

According to Dr. Bilmanis, Latvia was by 1939—

essentially self-supporting, and * * * the limits of her industrial, commercial and agricultural expansion had not yet been attained. Complete self-sufficiency would be neither practicable nor desirable since she did not possess the raw materials requisite for heavy industry or mechanized farming. By a canny use of what resources were hers, an all-out effort to secure stable foreign markets together with a proper respect for the domestic market, she appeared to have established a resistant economy, with industry and agriculture responsive to each other's demands, and both prepared to meet the requirements of foreign trade. The farmer, still the representative Latvian, found his purchasing power underwritten by price guaranties, subsidies, and cheap credit; while his consumer potential and his standard of living were raised by every encouragement to increase and improve his yields. With the financial situation firm, employment at a maximum, foreign trade and shipping expanding, prices and real income both rising, Latvia, together with the other Baltic States, had good reason to consider herself a socially and economically stable nation, fully able to contribute her share to the European community.⁸

B. AGRICULTURE

Like its sister Baltic States, Latvia was essentially an agrarian nation in which its people were engaged in a variety of agricultural pursuits such as: grain cultivation, stockraising, dairy farming, poultry breeding, horticulture, and fruit growing. Even the greater portion of the Latvian manufacturing industries was directly or indirectly dependent upon the agricultural economy. From the total population of Latvia estimated in 1935 to be 1,950,502, 65.4 percent or 1,275,220

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 362.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 366.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 366-367. An American dollar was equal to 5.18 lats, approximately at the rate of exchange determined in 1938. See Andersons, Edgars, Ed., *Crossroad country: Latvia*. Waverly, Iowa, Latvju Gramata, 1953, p. 113. With a base index number of 100 in 1929 the following figures indicate wholesale prices in Latvia during the 1930's: 1930, 85; 1931, 70.7; 1932, 71; 1933, 69.8; 1934, 69.2; 1935, 72.6; 1936, 75.6; 1937, 94.2; 1938, 94.2; and 1939, 98.4. With an index number of 100 in 1930 the following figures indicate the fluctuations in the Latvian cost of living, 1931, 94.1; 1932, 85.6; 1933, 79.3; 1934, 76.8; 1935, 76; 1936, 77.4; 1937, 83.5; 1938, 90.2; 1939, 93.8. See League of Nations Statistical Yearbook, 1940, op. cit., pp. 206, 210.

For a survey of the Latvian economy, see: *Latvia, Economic and Financial Progress*. The Banker (London), vol. 46, May 1938; 201-234.

⁸ Bilmanis, op. cit., p. 368.

persons resided in rural areas. Moreover, according to the same census, 801,563 persons were employed in agricultural occupations.⁹ By 1939, approximately 60 percent of the entire land area of the nation was under cultivation. Agriculture contributed 40 percent of the national income, furnished about 35 percent of the raw materials for local industries, and constituted the nation's most important export product.¹⁰

Great advances were made in agrarian reform during the period of independence, advances of fundamental significance for any nation largely agrarian. Vast landed estates of the aristocracy had been completely broken up so that by 1939 Latvia was in a very real sense "a country of small and medium farmers."¹¹ In 1935, there were only 1,071 rural enterprises in excess of 100 hectares in area, while the average area of the large estates of former years exceeded 2,000 hectares.¹² The census of 1935 reported 275,698 farms in Latvia.¹³ That Latvians were highly pleased with their record in agrarian reform was well demonstrated by the statement of L. Ekis, Minister of Finance, who wrote:

Now the flattering news has reached us that the scientists of Western Europe consider the Latvian Agrarian Reform to be the most radical and successful in Europe, that it is successful not only from an economic viewpoint but in respect of increasing national and social tranquillity, and of setting us up as an example to other countries. This is happening even in those particular countries from whom, at one time, we had to accept the sharpest of reproaches. Still more strange is the fact that these countries now send their representatives here in order to become better acquainted with the achievements of this great undertaking, so as to try to introduce it in one way or another with certain modifications into their own country. * * *¹⁴

The extent to which Latvian agriculture had prospered by 1939 was indicated by production figures published in recent Latvian economic publications. Latvia occupied a total area of 6,529,000 hectares. In 1913, the area of arable land was 1,730,000 hectares. By 1939 the area of arable land showed an increase of 30 percent, or 2,261,900 hectares.¹⁵ Crop increases were equally impressive. In 1920, the area in hectares for rye cultivation was estimated to be 196,700; by 1939 this figure increased to 298,700. Wheat production increased from 15,700 in 1920 to 153,500 by 1939. The area of potato cultivation increased from 49,200 hectares in 1920 to 145,200 hectares in 1939. Fruit trees increased in number from 2,397,800 in 1923 to 6,484,900 by 1935.¹⁶

No less important to the Latvian agrarian economy was the livestock and dairy industry. As in other areas of the economic life of Latvia, progress in this type of production was marked by "steady development." In 1920, the number of cattle was placed at 769,000, a figure increased to 1,271,800 by 1939. Milk cows, numbering 426,000 in 1920, increased to 890,000 in 1939. Accordingly, milk production increased remarkably from an estimated 618,000 tons in 1920 to 1,668,000 tons in 1937-38.¹⁷

⁹ Andersons, op. cit., pp. 359-361.

¹⁰ Bilmanis, op. cit., p. 364.

¹¹ Ekis, Ludvigs, *Latvia: Economic Resources and Capacities*. Washington, Latvian Legation, 1943, p. 20.

¹² *Ibid.*, 1 hectare is the equivalent of 2.471 acres.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Ekis, L., *The Constructive Idea of Economical Policy*, *the Latvian Economist* (Riga), 1937: 7.

¹⁵ Andersons, op. cit., p. 99.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

Dairy products constituted a major export in independent Latvia. During the decade from 1928 to 1938 the total value of Latvian exports was 2,694,000,000 lats. Of this total estimate, butter constituted 549 million lats, or 20.4 percent of total export.¹⁸ Immediately prior to the world crisis in September 1939, Latvian dairy production had been so extensive that Latvia took third place among European countries in the export of butter.¹⁹ Development in other areas of Latvian agriculture was marked with almost equivalent distinction.²⁰

C. INDUSTRY

While it is true that Latvia was principally an agrarian nation, it does in no way mean that no emphasis was placed upon industrial production. To the contrary, Latvia, like its northern neighbor, Estonia, had made substantial gains in industrial development by 1939.

Foremost among Latvian industries were: metalworks, engineering, timber, and wood manufacturing, textiles, and foodstuffs industries. The total value of Latvian industrial production was estimated in 1937 to be 936,829,000 lats, a substantial increase over the 1934 figure of 373,145,000 lats. In 1938, 117,199 persons were employed in industrial pursuits.²¹

Latvian industries operated mainly for home consumption, but certain goods were exported. In 1937, Latvia exported goods valued at 260 million lats.²²

An indication of the amount of industrial production related to the agricultural and fishing industries has been well demonstrated by the production statistics of 1938. According to the value of production, the Latvian foodstuffs industry, which employed 18,305 persons, was estimated at 194,152,000 lats, a figure far and above all other industrial enterprises. Textile production, employing 17,650 workers, placed second with a value of production estimated at 93,471,000 lats; and metal and machine production, employing 19,760, third with 88,509,000 lats. Other enterprises were substantially lower.²³

Latvians had engaged extensively in the development of power, a necessary concomitant for any expanding economy. Water, peat, and timber had been the chief sources of power development. During the late 1930's a huge hydroelectric power station was under construction at Kegums on the River Daugava. Together with other river sources, the Daugava had an estimated capacity of 373,310 kilowatts of which 3,260 million kilowatt-hours could be generated annually. In addition to this source, the potential capacity in the extensive peat bogs of Latvia, estimated to be 830 billion kilowatt-hours, made brighter the prospects of Latvian electrification.²⁴

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Ekis, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-30. See also, Andersons, *op. cit.*, pp. 362-363. For other articles dealing with the Latvian economy see the *Latvian Economist*, 1937, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-44; Birznieks, J., *Latvian Agriculture in the Past 20 Years*. The *Latvian Economist* (Riga), 1938: 40-71. League of Nations. *European Conference on Rural Life, 1939*. Latvia. Geneva, Jan. 7, 1939, 92 pp.

²¹ Ekis, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 35.

²³ Ekis, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40. See also, Bilmanis, M., *Exploitation of Mechanical Power; the Latvian Economist* (Riga), 1938: 127-141. For another analysis of the Latvian economy see, Bokalders, J., *The Industry and Home Trade of Latvia; the Latvian Economist* (Riga), 1937: 73-88.

D. TRADE, DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN

Far from being an insignificant facet of the Latvian economy, trading, both domestic and foreign, enjoyed a place of some importance in independent Latvia. An examination of the commercial census of 1935 revealed that there were almost 32,000 wholesale, retail, and auxiliary enterprises, employing nearly 59,000 workers. Individual merchants numbered 28,899; partnerships, 462; cooperative enterprises, an economic device of widespread popularity in Latvia as well as in Lithuania and Estonia, numbered 489; joint stock companies, 390; and State enterprises, 121.²⁵

Foreign trade, rigidly controlled by the Government since 1932, reached a favorable balance in Latvia during 1936 and 1937, showing surpluses of 16,480,000 lats and 29,535,000 lats, respectively.²⁶ For the year 1938 the total turnover was 454,540,000 lats, an increase above the total for 1931, 340,840,000 lats, but a reduction from the 1929 total of 636,013,000 lats.²⁷

Statistics for Soviet transit trade, from which Latvia, like its neighbor Estonia, had enjoyed some benefits, showed a marked decline by 1939. In 1931, a peak year, Soviet transit trade reached 637,938 metric tons. By 1938, this figure, steadily decreasing, was reduced to 78,356 metric tons.²⁸

In terms of the total world trade in 1938 the share of Latvia, in percentage, amounted to 0.19 percent. The total value of its foreign trade was \$88 million.²⁹ Agricultural and some industrial products provided the chief exports. Timber, peat, textiles, and foodstuffs were, among others, the most important export commodities.³⁰

Statistics for 1939 show that Latvian trade was oriented almost entirely toward the West. From the United Kingdom, the largest trading source, Latvia imported 20.8 percent of its total trade and exported to the United Kingdom 41.9 percent.³¹ From Germany, the second largest source of trade, Latvia imported 38.9 percent and exported to Germany 29.5 percent. Substantially below the United Kingdom and Germany was the United States trade which represented in terms of the total for 1939 only 6.3 percent of Latvian imports and 1.4 percent of its exports. Trade with the Soviet Union was even more reduced than the figures for the United States. From the Soviet Union, Latvia imported only 3.5 percent and exported 3 percent of its total value of trade.³²

²⁵ Andersons, *op. cit.*, p. 365.

²⁶ Ekis, *op. cit.*, p. 44. Billmanis, *op. cit.*, p. 367.

²⁷ Ekis, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

²⁹ Andersons, *op. cit.*, p. 367. For other analyses of Latvian foreign trade see Volmars, Janis, *The Structure and Means of Foreign Trade*; the *Latvian Economist* (Riga) 1937: 59-72. *Economic Treaties and Foreign Trade*; the *Latvian Economist* (Riga) 1938: 20-39. Sakenfelds, A., *Latvian Export Industry*. *Ibid.*, pp. 92-102.

³⁰ For a comparative table of imports and exports, see Ekis, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

³¹ Trade discussions were reported in the press to be the chief item on the agenda when Latvian Foreign Minister Vilhelms Munters visited England in December 1938. Latvia was anxious to buy arms, and Great Britain was ready to supply them so far as its own needs and those of its allies permitted. From its own point of view, the British Government was anxious to find ways and means to remedy their bad balance of trade with Latvia. "We buy much, Latvia little," the *Times* of London commented, and went on to say: "The Latvians point to three reasons for the disequilibrium, which threatens to be chronic. First, they say, as an almost wholly agricultural country Latvia has a ready market for her produce in Great Britain, but has little need of what Great Britain can most readily offer—namely, industrial goods. Secondly, they say that British trade representatives are seen in Latvia much less than those of other countries. Thirdly, they point out that their imports are largely earmarked in advance because of the clearing agreement with Germany. * * *"
Times (London), December 5, 1938, p. 11d.

³² Billmanis, *op. cit.*, p. 368.

E. LATVIAN TRANSPORT

A very important part of the national wealth of Latvia was its transport system which by the close of the 1930's had shown substantial progress.

All through the period of independence the Latvian merchant marine had made steady growth. By 1939, the merchant fleet, which carried a considerable portion of Latvian exports, was composed of 103 ships with a total tonnage of about 200,000 registered tons.³³ In terms of world shipping, however, Latvia played a modest role; for the Latvian tonnage in 1939 represented only 0.29 percent, that is to say 200,000 registered tons, of the world tonnage of 69.44 million tons.³⁴

Progress in other areas of Latvian transport has been graphically demonstrated by statistics of the late 1930's. Latvian railroads made substantial progress, having in 1940 a combined length of over 2,000 miles of track. In 1920, Latvia had 1,300 miles of track with 206 engines, 333 passenger coaches, and 4,289 freight cars, carrying 6,300,000 passengers and 903,000 tons of freight. In 1938, there were 2,081 miles of track, 312 engines, 731 coaches, and 6,282 freight cars, carrying 16,671,000 passengers, and 5,134,000 tons of freight.³⁵

The Latvian road system also advanced markedly. Roads maintained by state and private sources totaled 34,513 kilometers in 1938, a steady improvement over the 22,183 kilometers existing in 1920. Motor vehicles also increased in number. In 1925, Latvia had only 1,256 vehicles. This figure increased to 5,829 by 1937.³⁶

III. SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

A. POPULATION

Within its territorial boundaries of 25,390 square miles Latvia had an estimated total population in 1939 of 2,001,900, an increase since the 1935 estimate of 1,950,502. On the basis of the 1935 figure, 34.6 percent of the population lived in urban areas, while the remaining 65.4 percent lived in rural areas. Over 67 percent of the population was engaged in agriculture; 14.8 percent in industry; 5.8 percent in commerce; 5.5 percent in transport and communication; 1.8 percent in professions and education; 1.5 percent in medicine and 2.8 percent in employment as domestic servants.³⁷ Unemployment had not been a serious problem in the late 1930's. While in 1932 a peak of 26,335 persons unemployed had been reached, this figure declined substantially so that by 1938 there were only 887 registered unemployed persons throughout the nation.³⁸

Although Latvia was largely inhabited by native Latvians in ethnic origin, there were a variety of nationality groups. In terms of nationality, the census of 1935 indicated that 75.5 percent of the population, or 1,472,612, was Latvian; 10.5 percent, or 206,499, Russian;

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Ekis, *op. cit.*, p. 53. For other comments on Latvian shipping, see Andersons, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-128.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Einbergs, B. Past and present communications of Latvia. *The Latvian Economist* (Riga), 1938: 81. For other analyses of Latvian transport, see Einbergs, B. Actual problems of communication policy. *The Latvian Economist* (Riga), 1937: 43-53. Andersons, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-134.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 360-361.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

4.7 percent, or 93,479, Jewish; 3.2 percent, or 62,144, German; and 2.5 percent, or 48,949, Polish. Within the remaining group there were 26,867 White Ruthenians, 22,913 Lithuanians, 7,014 Estonians, and 10,025 representing other nationalities.³⁹ While Latvia had a substantial minority group, liberal policies instituted by the Government afforded all of them considerable cultural autonomy.

B. OTHER SOCIAL FACTORS

The Latvian Government gave the "fullest attention" to progressive legislation initiated in the fields of labor relations, social security, and public health during the first decade of independence. The "Government of National Unity" continued protection of trade unions, and, moreover, promoted favorable working conditions.⁴⁰ Legislation and the creation of the Accident Insurance Board in 1939 extended further the benefits derived from accidents and occupational diseases. Pensions, working hours and conditions, medical care, vacations, wages, and child labor—all fell under the regulation of the Government which, according to Dr. Bilmanis, was guided by "progressive standards."⁴¹

In many other areas of social enterprise provisions were made by state, municipal, and private organizations to insure a healthful social atmosphere for Latvian citizens. "Numerous private organizations cooperated with the Ministry of Public Welfare and the public health departments of the municipalities," Dr. Bilmanis wrote, "in an extensive cradle-to-the-grave service, with medical, therapeutic, pharmaceutical, and dental assistance reaching every section of the population."⁴² In 1938, there were 1,589 physicians, 837 dentists, and 884 midwives in Latvia. Numbering 141, the hospitals and sanatoriums had a combined total of 13,218 beds. Fifteen hospitals with 3,754 beds were state owned; 48 with 5,841 beds were owned by the various municipalities. In 1938, 140,754 patients were admitted to these institutions.⁴³

IV. CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS

A. EDUCATION

Education on a broad, democratic basis was one of the main sources of strength in the young Latvian Republic. So great was the concern of the Government for the education of its citizens that one-eighth of the national budget was devoted entirely to education.⁴⁴

Expansion of educational facilities in Latvia was nothing short of phenomenal. According to the census of 1937, there were 2,100 schools below the university level with an enrollment of almost 264,000 students and a teaching staff of almost 12,000. At the university level, there were 3 major institutions with a total attendance numbering almost 7,300 with a faculty of 575.⁴⁵ In 1920, when the population was

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 360.

⁴⁰ Bilmanis, *op. cit.*, p. 369.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 370.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Andersons, *op. cit.*, p. 167. For an analysis of Latvian social legislation, see Muciniek, P., *Latvia's Social Legislation*. The Latvian Economist (Riga), 1937; 123-137.

⁴⁴ Andersons, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 361.

estimated to be 1,596,131, there were in Latvia 80 schoolchildren for every 1,000 inhabitants. This estimate reached 110 in 1925, 130 in 1935, and 137 in 1937. By the year 1937, illiteracy was reduced from 22 percent, the estimate in 1920, to 10.15 percent. Because of the large number of illiterate Russians residing in Latvia, the figure of 7 percent has been cited as being more representative of the percentage of Latvian illiteracy.⁴⁶

The University of Latvia was the leading school of higher learning in Latvia. Nearly 10,000 students had been graduated from this university during the two decades of independence.⁴⁷

B. OTHER CULTURAL AREAS

So widespread were the many areas of Latvian cultural development—as indeed, the same generalization applies to the other Baltic States—suffice it to touch upon only a few. In publishing alone Latvia enjoyed an “international reputation.” During the period of independence almost 26,800 books were published. The census of 1937 revealed that 1,333 books were published in addition to 154 monthlies, 34 weeklies, and 13 daily newspapers. By 1939, there were 1,911 school and 912 public libraries. The state library at Riga had 549,517 volumes, while the University of Latvia maintained a collection of some 320,000 volumes.⁴⁸

In Latvia, there were two grand opera houses, 14 legitimate theaters, and an imposing number of institutes for the arts and sciences. In science, art, drama, architecture, poetry, and literature Latvia made substantial progress leading any serious observer to conclude that during its period of independence Latvia had created a unique and impressive national culture which by the close of 1939 had made significant achievements in its own right.⁴⁹

C. RELIGION

In the realm of religion Latvia devised a system well suited to the religious needs of its citizens. By law the church was separated from the state. Full religious freedom was granted throughout the land. Any religious group of 50 citizens could register as a denomination, while 10 of such denominations was sufficient to constitute a national religious association. Supervision of religion came under the Department of Religious Affairs of the Ministry of the Interior. All public rights—the right to levy voluntary dues, to possess property, to open seminaries and schools—were granted to religious groups. No individual group received special privileges or protection. By the Criminal Code of 1933 religious groups were protected legally against profane acts.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Bilmanis, *op. cit.*, p. 371.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 371-372.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 372-373.

⁴⁹ For further comments on Latvian cultural life see Andersons. *Op. cit.*, pp. 183-268, Ziverts, Martin, *Tragedy of the Latvian Theater. The Baltic Review* (Stockholm), vol. 1, No. 2-3, 1946; 82-86. Rānk, Gustav, *The Baltic Cultural Area. Ibid.*, pp. 161-170. Veller, Rein, *The Cultural Standard of the Baltic States. Ibid.*, pp. 282-287. For a traveler's account, see Davies, Ellen C. A. *Wayfarer in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania*, New York, Robert M. McBride & Co., 1937, pp. 93-174.

⁵⁰ Bilmanis, *op. cit.*, pp. 376-377.

Latvia was predominantly a Protestant nation. In 1935, there were 1,075,641 Evangelical Lutherans, or 55.1 percent of the total population; 476,963 Roman Catholics, or 24.4 percent; 174,389 Greek Orthodox, or 8.9 percent; Old Believers, a dissident Russian Orthodox group, numbered 107,195, or 5.5 percent; Hebrew, 93,406, or 4.8 percent; other Protestants 19,146, or 1 percent; and among other religious groups 3,762, or 0.2 percent of the total population.⁵¹

Religious instruction was carried on in the schools under special conditions determined by the size of the various denominations represented. Churches were, moreover, paid subsidies from the state treasury.⁵²

⁵¹ Andersons, *op. cit.*, p. 380.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 279.

PART III—LITHUANIA

I. POLITICAL SCENE

A. TRENDS IN POLITICS

External pressures bore heavily upon Lithuania in 1939. Estonian and Latvian territorial integrity had remained unimpaired until autumn, but Lithuania, compelled to submit to the German ultimatum of March, lost its prize industrial and commercial center, Klaipeda (Memel). To a great extent, therefore, events abroad were major governing factors in Lithuanian internal politics.

Foremost among the political events of 1939 was the reorganization of the Government in March and November. Underlying this and other internal events was the desire of Lithuanian leaders, in response to mounting pressure, to strengthen the national structure by broadening the base of government in order to permit fuller participation of political groups heretofore restricted in political activity.

B. CABINET REORGANIZATION IN MARCH

1. *Smetona reelected*

In the closing months of 1938, Antanas Smetona was reelected President of Lithuania. Regarded by some foreign observers as being a leader "perhaps more responsible than any other living individual for the birth of Lithuanian nationalism and the establishment of that country as an independent republic," Smetona was the only candidate considered by the largely Nationalist College of Electors.¹ In the new Cabinet—called the Nationalist Union Cabinet—Vladas Mironas was named Prime Minister; Juozas Urbys, General Secretary of the Foreign Ministry, was appointed Foreign Minister; and Gen. Stasys Rastikis retained the post of commander in chief of the Army.²

Not all Lithuanians were, however, enthusiastic for the continuation of the Smetona regime. Vigorous opposition forces began to unite, and with great determination resolved to resist the government in power.³

2. *The cabinet of "national concentration"*

If internal agitation against the new government was not enough to change the course of political events in Lithuania, seizure of Klaipeda by Germany was sufficient to bring about a decided departure from the lines already laid down by the Mironas government. The impend-

¹ New York Times, November 15, 1938, p. 11: 5. See also, The Times (London), November 15, 1938, 13f.

² Colonel Leonas was named Minister of Interior; General Mustelkis, Minister of Defense; M. Indrisunas, Minister of Finance; M. Skaisgris, Minister of Agriculture; M. Gudauskas, Minister of Justice; Professor Tonkunas, Minister of Education, and M. Germanas, Minister of Communications. The Times (London), December 8, 1938, p. 15d. Also, New York Times, December 5, 1938, p. 10: 3.

³ The Times (London), December 12, 1938, p. 14b; December 13, 1938, p. 16e; December 22, 1938, p. 11d.

ing crisis in international affairs aggravated by the Klaipeda incident, brought into sharper focus the desirability of a government established on a broader national basis. Accordingly, on March 25, 1939, Prime Minister Mironas invited representatives of several opposition groups—opposition parties had been dissolved—for a conference with a view to enlisting their support for a new representative national government.⁴

This conference had, apparently, far-reaching results, for a new government was formed by a new man on a new basis. On March 27, the Mironas government resigned, and President Smetona entrusted Gen. Jonas Cernius, chief of the general staff, with the task of forming a new Cabinet.⁵

The Cernius Cabinet, suitably designated as a "Cabinet of national concentration," represented diverse political shadings. Although great emphasis was placed upon the military, the Cabinet was, nonetheless, composed of an equal number of representatives from the three principal parties, including two hitherto forbidden. Contemporary observers commented favorably upon this change as indicative of a repudiation of the authoritarian principle which had dominated Lithuanian political life since 1926 and a return to political practices more liberal and more democratic. The Tautininkai Party, headed by Smetona, the formerly suppressed Christian Democratic and the Peasant Populists parties were each allotted two representatives. The remainder of the Cabinet of 10 consisted of two army men and one diplomat, Juozas Urbsys, who had retained his post as Foreign Minister.⁶

Admission of other groups into the new Government, a prudent maneuver, increased immeasurably the political stability of Lithuania. As the Times of London commented, the new ministry could thus "count on national support, since by including leaders hitherto in opposition it has become a National Government."⁷

3. Objectives of the Cernius Cabinet

To strengthen the defenses of Lithuania was, according to Prime Minister Cernius, the first and most important task of the Government. Lithuania would defend its sovereignty and independence with all its power, Cernius told the Seimas.⁸ In foreign affairs the new Government intended to pursue a course of strict neutrality between the formidable ideological blocs that divided Europe, a course closely adhered to by all three Baltic States. In domestic affairs the most pressing problem was the necessity of making the proper economic adjustment caused by the dislocation brought about by the loss of Klaipeda. Another problem was the task of absorbing 12,000 refugees from the former autonomous District of Klaipeda (Memelland).

⁴ The Times (London), March 25, 1939, p. 11b.

⁵ The Times (London), March 28, 1939, p. 13d.

⁶ Other members of the Cabinet were Gen. Kazys Mustelkis, War Minister; Kazys Bizauskas (Christian Democrat), Vice Premier; Leonas Bistras (Christian Democrat), Minister of Education; Gen. Jonas Sutkus, Minister of Finance; Gen. Kazys Skucas, Minister of Interior; Jurgis Kriksciunas (Populist), Minister of Agriculture; Antanas Tamosaitis (Populist), Minister of Justice; and Kazys Germanas (Nationalist). General Rastikis retained his post as commander in chief of the Army. New York Times, March 28, 1939, p. 15: 1.

⁷ The Times (London), March 29, 1939, p. 15d.

⁸ In a patriotic celebration on May 21, 1939, President Smetona declared that Lithuanians "are resolved to defend their independence at all costs," and he went on to say that "if a new danger arises to imperil Lithuanian freedom the people would sacrifice their lives as they did in the war of independence of 1918 to 1920." New York Times, May 22, 1939, p. 5: 2.

Agriculture, the main occupation of Lithuanians, was in a healthy state, however, and this factor together with others tended to give every confidence in Government quarters that the nation would survive.⁹

In a radio broadcast in March General Rastikis seemed to spell out in simple, clear terms the objectives, and requirements, of the new Government. Recent events had abundantly demonstrated that Lithuania urgently needed "a practical and elastic foreign policy," the Lithuanian general declared. "At home, discipline, order, and unity must be maintained by all sections of the people," he warned, and concluded "the economic, moral, and cultural forces of the nation must be strengthened."¹⁰

C. SUBSEQUENT POLITICAL EVENTS

In accordance with the professed desire of Prime Minister Cernius to work within the limits of the constitution and to establish a close relationship with Parliament, the Seimas, constituting almost entirely members of the Nationalist Party, gave the new Government "unconditional support." No disposition was prevalent to permit the emergence of any controversies between the opposition and the Government party on the future course of the new Government. Formation of a united patriotic front was not, therefore, attempted as a procedural device for the Government—at least during the first weeks of the new administration.¹¹ Moreover, reports had circulated in April that a Cabinet crisis had developed in the Government because of the alleged "military character" of the Cernius Cabinet, but these reports were denied forthwith by "authoritative sources."¹²

The loss of Klaipeda had imposed upon the Government the task of readjusting the national budget. The budget for 1939, passed by the Seimas in February showing an expenditure and revenue at 367,90,000 litas,¹³ was amended to provide for the loss of 35 million litas in revenue and for increased expenditures of 8 million litas.¹⁴ At an extraordinary session of the Seimas held in June, the amended budget was passed. Representing a reduction of 7.1 percent, the budget balanced at 342 million litas.¹⁵

Budgetary problems were diminished to insignificance by the events of September and October. The main thrust of the Nazi invaders, and later the Soviet invaders, had been centered upon Northeastern Europe. Lithuania could not avoid the consequences. The pact of mutual assistance imposed upon Kaunas by Moscow precipitated new problems, requiring reorganization of the Government. On November 10, a crisis in the Government came to the surface by the resignation of the Finance Minister, General Jonas Sutkus. Five days later the press reported that General Cernius and his Government had planned to resign to be succeeded by a new Cabinet under the leader-

⁹ New York Times, March 28, 1939, p. 15:1.

¹⁰ The Times (London), March 28, 1939, p. 13d.

¹¹ The Times (London), April 6, 1939, p. 12g.

¹² New York Times, April 15, 1939, p. 34:4. Early in April General Skucas, Minister of the Interior had issued a statement in an attempt to correct the impression that the new Lithuanian Government was a military one. According to Skucas it was a "national government" and its main purpose was "to bring about and to maintain the unity of all sections of the country." See the Times (London), April 3, 1939, p. 13b.

¹³ In 1935, the rate of exchange was 5.99 litas for \$1.

¹⁴ The Times (London), May 30, 1939, p. 16g.

¹⁵ The Times (London), July 3, 1939, p. 13g.

ship of Antanas Merkys, former mayor of Kaunas and administrator of the Vilnius territory.¹⁶ Not until November 21 was the crisis finally resolved when a new coalition Cabinet of Nationalist, Christian Democrats, and Peasant Populists was constructed essentially upon the same basis as the previous Government.¹⁷

II. THE LITHUANIAN ECONOMY

A. INTRODUCTION

Lithuanian economic development paralleled in a striking way the economic development of Estonia and Latvia. Agriculture was the primary occupation of Lithuanians. Industrialization, once having taken root, had made, however, considerable strides during the period of independence. Foreign trade, carried on energetically, contributed an important part to Lithuanian economic life. Moreover, currency stability, a mark of Lithuanian financial responsibility, was never disturbed in any substantial way by the vicissitudes of the economic world.

Anicetas Simutis well summarized the extent of economic progress in Lithuania when he wrote :

From the facts and figures * * * we see that in the short period of 22 years of independence since the World War [1] little Lithuania has lacked neither initiative nor industry. Surveying the devastation left behind by the three neighboring armies which had overrun the country at various periods of the war, Lithuania gathered her tiny forces and resolutely set about the gigantic task of reconstruction. Perhaps it was this grim determination and buoyant enthusiasm in their regained freedom that gave this new republic the necessary momentum. * * *

That an objective résumé of her efforts and accomplishments does not find the country wanting in creditable results may be seen by even a cursory glance at almost any one of the tables in this book. To compare the Lithuania of 1939 with the Lithuania of the early postwar years is to acknowledge that great strides were made in her agriculture through the well-planned land reform, the development of cooperatives, and the improvement of livestock husbandry, and dairying. Furthermore, her war-torn industry has been reconstructed to suit her own particular needs.

Her foreign trade has been showing almost continuous expansion. Her increased production, as well as consuming power, bespeak an attendant higher standard of living. All these facts certainly justify Lithuania's participation in the family of nations and her existence as a separate independent economic entity.¹⁸

B. AGRICULTURE

Great emphasis had been placed upon the improvement of farming methods during the decades of independence. The attention of the Government, as well as the people, was fixed largely upon the introduction of scientific methods in farming and the development of industries closely related to agriculture.

¹⁶ New York Times, November 15, 1939, p. 3: 7.

¹⁷ The new Government, headed by Prime Minister Antanas Merkys, consisted of: Kazys Blauskas, Vice Premier; Juozas Urbys, Foreign Minister; Gen. Kazys Mustelkis, Minister of Defense; Gen. Kazys Skucas, Minister of Interior; Antanas Tamosaitis, Minister of Justice; Ernestas Galvanaukas, Minister of Finance; K. Jokantas, Minister of Education; Juozas Audieckas, Minister of Agriculture; and Jonas Masilunas, Minister of Communications. New York Times, November 22, 1939, p. 2: 7.

¹⁸ Simutis, Anicetas. *The Economic Reconstruction of Lithuania After 1918*. New York, Columbia University Press 1942, pp. 112-13. An indication of the cost of living during the 1930's in Lithuania is the cost of living index which shows the following fluctuations (base 1929 equals 100): 1930, 86.0; 1931, 78.3; 1932 65.8; 1933, 56.3; 1934, 52.6; 1935, 45.3; 1936, 46.6; 1937, 52.2; 1938, 52.4; 1939, 53.8. See League of Nations Statistical Yearbook, 1940, p. 210.

Before these long-range objectives could be realized, however, land reform had to be instituted. Inequities in ownership were no less marked in Lithuania than in the other Baltic States. Subsequent land reform had, therefore, far-reaching effects upon the reconstitution of the internal economic and social structure of the nation. Prior to World War I, approximately 450 families owned 3.5 million acres, or 22 percent of all the land, each with an estimated minimum ownership of 2,000 acres." As the result of land reform laws, land was so widely and equitably distributed that Lithuania, like its sister Baltic States, became a nation of small farmers. Over 45,000 new farms had been established, and over 200,000 persons had been provided with regular occupations and permanent homes through agrarian reform." According to the agricultural census of 1930, there was a total of 287,380 farms, ranging in area from 2.5 to 250 acres and comprising a combined area of 10,671,048 acres of land.²¹ By 1939, there were in Lithuania 335,720 farming units distributed throughout the nation. Largely agrarian in occupation, 76 percent of the Lithuanian population were engaged in agriculture.

Prominent among those who carried out land reform was Msgr. M. Krupavicius. During his administration of the Ministry of Agriculture from 1923 to 1926, Krupavicius laid down and executed plans of land reform which reduced to a minimum the influence of Communist propaganda in Lithuania.

For centuries grain culture had been the chief product of Lithuanian agriculture. In 1938, 48 percent of the arable land alone was used for grain production. Together with other crops such as potatoes, sugar beets and vegetables, grain production showed a marked increase in 1938 over and above prewar estimates.²² In some instances the yield of crops increased more than 100 percent. Moreover, among the Baltic States, Lithuania had taken the lead in 1939 in the production of rye, wheat, barley, and the various "root crops."²³

Another important agricultural enterprise among Lithuanians was the dairy industry. During the 10-year period preceding World War II, butter production increased in 1,000 metric tons from 1.6 to 19.9.²⁴ Moreover, the export of butter increased as the dairy industry expanded. Butter export figures in metric tons for 1939 were 16,386, a substantial increase over the 1927 figure of 2,051.²⁵

In all categories of livestock breeding Lithuanian production increased considerably. In 1920, there were an estimated 335,000 horses; in 1939, 521,000. Cattle increased from 604,000 in 1920 to 1,004,000 in 1939.²⁶ Moreover, livestock contributed to Lithuanian export trade. In 1932, 8,215 horses valued at 2,200,000 litas were exported, while in 1938, 12,230 were exported, representing a value of 3,300,000 litas.²⁷ Latvia, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Finland had been the principal importers of Lithuanian horses.

Finally, poultry played a role not unimportant in Lithuanian agricultural production and export trade, although poultry farming was

¹⁹ *Stmutis*, op cit., p. 25.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*, p. 44.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 45-47.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

still in an undeveloped state as compared with Belgium, Holland, and Denmark.²⁸

C. INDUSTRY

Lithuanian industrial enterprises increased at a remarkable rate during the period of independence. While only 6.43 percent of the population was engaged in industrial production, industrial enterprises numbering five or more employees increased from 2,474 in 1920 to 16,131 by 1939. Equally impressive are the statistics which show that in 1913 Lithuania had only 151 industrial establishments with an aggregate number of 6,603 employees, while in 1939 there were, as stated above, 16,131 enterprises employing 33,000 workers. The total value of production for 1939 was 405,749,000 litas, a substantial increase over the 311,084,000 litas in 1935.²⁹

Among the principal industries of Lithuania were textile and food processing. In 1939, the value of foodstuff and luxury goods production was 223,424,000 litas. Textile production was second with an estimated value of 40,331,000 litas. Metals and machinery production was third with an estimated value of 23,378,000 litas.³⁰

The great depression had no appreciable effect upon the industrial growth of Lithuania. World production in 1931 had declined to its lowest point, 74.8 (1929 equals 100) while in Lithuania industrial expansion continued, showing an increase to 140.7. Unimpaired by the depression, Lithuanian industrial growth reached 354.2 in 1939, while the figure for world production was only 128.7.³¹

By 1939, the cooperative movement in the Lithuanian economy was well advanced, as it had been in Estonia and Latvia. Moreover, there were 137 corporations with total assets of 205,442,000 litas. Banking, the food industry, and electric supply were enterprises among the leading corporations of the nation.³²

D. FOREIGN TRADE

The industrial growth of Lithuania had been rapid and, in general, widespread, but it was far from being so great that Lithuania could rely entirely upon its own resources. Agricultural products had a ready market, especially in England. It was hardly unlikely, therefore, that Lithuania would ignore the advantages afforded by its expanding food production as a factor in trade for finished industrial products of Great Britain.

The value of Lithuanian foreign trade during the decade of independence had been impressive. In 1923, Lithuanian exports amounted to 146,795,000 litas, while its imports were valued at 156,627,000 litas or an unfavorable trade balance of 9,832,000 litas. The year 1930 showed an alltime high in foreign trade with a total value of exports estimated at 333,739,000 litas, imports at 312,415,000 litas, and a balance of 21,324,000 litas in favor of Lithuania. Only in 1931 and 1937 was there an unfavorable trade balance; and by 1939 statistics indi-

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 70-71.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 72.

cate that Lithuanian exports were valued at 203,194,000 litas; imports at 169,362,000 litas with a favorable balance of 39,832,000 litas.³³

Foremost among the export commodities of Lithuania was food products which amounted to 53.04 percent of exports in 1939, a substantial increase from the figure of 17.12 percent in 1925. Raw and semifinished products constituted 29.80 percent of the total exports; livestock export, 16.13 percent; and finished goods, 1.02 percent.³⁴ Among the imports to Lithuania, finished goods constituted in 1939 the highest item estimated in percentage at 59.82 percent of total imports. Second was raw and semifinished products with 35.91 percent.³⁵

The United Kingdom and Germany were the chief sources of trade for Lithuania. Over 66 percent of Lithuanian exports went to Germany and Great Britain, while over 53 percent of its imports came from these countries. Trade with the Soviet Union, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Holland, France, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, Latvia, and the United States, together with the United Kingdom and Germany, accounted for 95.19 percent of the total value of Lithuanian exports and 89.09 percent of its imports.³⁶ From the total value of Lithuanian foreign trade in 1938 exports to Great Britain amounted to 91,800,000 litas, imports, 69,200,000 litas; exports to Germany were valued at 62,500,000 litas, imports at 54,700,000; exports to the Soviet Union were placed at 13,300,000 litas, imports 15,000,000 litas, while exports to the United States were estimated at 5,600,000 litas, and imports at 8,200,000 litas.³⁷

E. LITHUANIAN TRANSPORT

From the Russian Empire the Lithuanian Republic inherited 965 kilometers of neglected railroads and 750 kilometers of wholly inadequate narrow-gage railroads. Rolling stock was virtually nonexistent. By the year 1928 Lithuania had 161 locomotives, 336 passenger cars, and 3,911 freight cars. In 1937, there were 1,838 kilometers of standard-gage railroad track which carried a total of 3,379,700 passengers and 2,075,200 tons of freight. Owned and operated exclusively by the Government, Lithuanian railroads earned for the Government a revenue of 29,377,000 litas, while expending a total of 28,708,000 litas. To augment the standard gage there were some 599 kilometers of narrow-gage railroads which carried 292,500 passengers and 277,000 tons of freight. A deficit of 2,088,200 litas resulted from the operational cost of the narrow-gage system. The Government had expended in 1937 3,968,400 litas, while it received only a revenue of 1,880,200 litas.³⁸

Efforts were also made to improve the Lithuanian highway system. By 1938, there were 2,000 kilometers of first-class highways in Lithuania, augmented by 30,536 kilometers of fine graded local roads. A 10-year building program had as its objective 700 kilometers of new highways costing an estimated 50 million litas.³⁹

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 83-85. In terms of dollar exchange the Lithuanian trade picture is made even clearer. The rate of exchange of the litas in January 1932 was 10.02 litas for \$1; in January 1934, 6.42 litas for \$1; and in 1935, 5.99 litas for \$1.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 91-92.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Norem, Owens, J. C., *Timeless Lithuania*. Chicago, Amerlith Press, 1943, p. 244.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

Large investments were also made in the improvement of inland waterways and the construction of new installations for the port of Klaipeda. Once a small fishing and timber port, Klaipeda rose to a place of great importance as a Lithuanian seaport, assuming about 80 percent of Lithuanian exports and imports. About 35 million litas had been invested for the improvement of the port and its installations.⁴⁰

After the seizure of Klaipeda by Germany, the Lithuanian Government took immediate measures to insure the commercial future of the nation by developing harbor facilities in the fishing village of Sventoji. In June 1939, preliminary work had begun to extend a railroad from the main line at Darbenai to Sventoji where work had already been progressing rapidly on the conversion of the harbor into a port for oversea traffic.⁴¹

III. SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

A. POPULATION

According to the census of 1923, Lithuania had a population, excluding the Klaipeda District, numbering 2,028,971. From this total figure, 1,701,863 were Lithuanian or 83.88 percent of the total population; 153,743 Jewish, or 7.58 percent; 54,881 Russian, or 2.70 percent; 29,231 German, or 1.44 percent; 65,599 Polish, or 3.23 percent; 14,883 Latvian, or 0.73 percent; and among other groups, 8,771, or 0.44 percent.⁴² At the end of 1939 Lithuania was believed to have had a population of 2,879,070, excluding Klaipeda, which accounted for a loss of about 153,793, and including Vilnius, which added to the population 457,500 persons.⁴³

That Lithuania was an agrarian nation is readily demonstrated by the occupational statistics. In 1923, approximately 1,129,870 persons, or 76.71 percent of the total population, were engaged in agriculture; 94,731, or 6.43 percent, were engaged in industry and handicraft; 15,585, or 1.06 percent, in transportation and communication; 37,268, or 2.53 percent, in commerce and credit; 47,408, or 3.22 percent, in civil service and the professions; and, finally, in other occupations, 148,083, or 10.05 percent of the total population.⁴⁴

B. OTHER SOCIAL FACTORS

Lithuania had made marked progress in social legislation during the decades of independence. The labor control law, first established in 1919, brought Lithuanian workers in industrial plants, commercial, agricultural, and timber occupations as well as the crafts under Government surveillance in order to insure their protection and social wel-

⁴⁰ Valnauskas, Pranas, *Expropriation of Lithuania's Industry, Commerce, Trade, and Credit, and Its Effect Upon the National Economy and Culture*, Committee for a Free Europe, 1954 (unpublished), pp. 7-9.

⁴¹ *The Times* (London), June 22, 1939, p. 18a.

⁴² *Baltic States*, p. 30.

⁴³ Simutis, *op. cit.*, p. 12. Official Lithuanian statistics indicate that on January 1, 1937, the population of Lithuania, including Klaipeda, was 2,526,000. *Valstybes Statistikos Kalendorius, 1937*, Centralinis Statistikos Biuras (Kaunas, 1937), p. 74.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

fare. Other laws, such as the law introducing the 8-hour day, were enacted for the benefit of the worker.⁴⁵

Provisions were also made for medical care of the rural population. On January 14, 1938, a new law had been passed requiring 6 percent of the land taxes to be used by local district and municipal authorities for the general improvement of medical conditions.⁴⁶

Laws providing for insurance against losses resulting from sickness had been passed in the 1920's, establishing a system of security for Lithuanian workmen. Benefits including, among other things, free medical care and free hospitalization were granted to the insured employee. Financial assistance up to 50 percent of the wages of the insured was provided for his family. In 1939, there were functioning throughout Lithuania 14 regional offices of the sickness insurance administration, which constituted the Sickness Insurance Association, caring for 133,400 workmen or members of their families. The annual budget reached 9 million litas or about \$1,500,000.⁴⁷

In addition to these social measures, provisions were made for other forms of workmen's compensation and benefit insurance. Pension laws were in force, as well as plans for general social security.⁴⁸

IV. CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS

A. EDUCATION

In education, Lithuania had made great progress. There were in 1920 only 1,173 grammar schools, with 1,483 teachers and 71,648 students. By the year 1939 these figures increased to 2,328 schools, 5,228 teachers, and 292,545 students.⁴⁹ Before the advent of World War II 11.92 percent of the Lithuanian population had attended grammar school. Schools for secondary education made similar progress. In 1920, there were 40 secondary schools, with 9,076 pupils. After increasing in number to 123 in 1927, with an enrollment of 22,506 students, this figure declined so that by 1937 there were 89 secondary schools, with 18,838 students.⁵⁰

Not until 1927 was there a determined effort to expand vocational education. In that year there were 7 schools, with 50 teachers and 297 students. By 1938, this figure increased to 25 schools, 310 teachers, and 2,764 students.⁵¹

Among the schools of higher learning were the University of Vytautas the Great, the Veterinary Academy, State Conservatory of Music, and the State Art School, all located at Kaunas; the Agricultural Academy at Dotnuva; and, at Klaipeda, the Commercial Institute, Pedagogical Institute, and the Music School.⁵² The University of Vytautas the Great had in 1938 a student body numbering 3,041 and 292 professors. After the crisis of September 1939 the centuries-old University of Vilnius was reopened and the Academy of Fine Arts was established at Vilnius.

⁴⁵ Bielnis, K., *The Labor Problem in Lithuania*, Committee for a Free Europe, 1954 (unpublished), pp. 1-6.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

⁴⁹ Vaitiekunas, Vytautas, *Culture and Religion in Occupied Lithuania*. Committee for Free Europe, 1954 (unpublished), p. 8.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁵² Masilionas, K., *Education in Lithuania. School Life, the Office of Education*, U. S. Department of the Interior (Washington), vol. 24, March 1939, p. 173.

Indicative of the great emphasis placed upon education in Lithuania was the amount allocated for education in the national budget. In 1938, the budget of the Ministry of Education called for 56,656,891 litas, or 16.34 percent of the total national budget.⁵³

B. OTHER CULTURAL AREAS

Other cultural areas flowered abundantly in independent Lithuania. Advancement in the sciences was very marked since the spirit of free Lithuania aided in creating favorable conditions for men of science. Works by leading Lithuanian scholars, such as Professors Avizonis and Vladas Jurgutis, Vincas Cepinskas, a physicist, Monsignor Aleksandras Dambrauskas, a mathematician, S. Salkauskis, a philosopher, and Z. Ivinskis, a historian, had received favorable acknowledgment even from abroad. Lithuania had, moreover, a number of scientific periodicals; and in 1939 it is not without significance that the Institute of Lithuanian Studies was established, emphasizing especially Lithuanian history, philology, and folklore. Among Catholic scientists there was organized the Lithuanian Catholic Academy of Sciences.⁵⁴

Lithuanian literature flourished in the decades of independence. Endowed with a rich treasury of national folklore, Lithuanian writers found there great sources of inspiration for creative works. By far the most influential Lithuanian poet was Maironis, who, as the prophetic poet of Lithuanian liberation, had been a force of considerable magnitude in reviving the spirit of Lithuania. Among his works were the epic poems *The Young Lithuania* and *The Great King Vytautas*.⁵⁵ New literary names emerged in independent Lithuania, and in all areas of literary achievement—poetry, the novel, and drama—they advanced immeasurably Lithuanian cultural development. In opera and in music, heretofore cultural resources largely untapped, achievements were not unimpressive.⁵⁶

C. RELIGION

Unlike Estonia and Latvia, nations largely Protestant, Lithuania was predominantly Roman Catholic. In 1937, 80.5 percent of the population was Roman Catholic, while the Lutheran faith was second with 9.5 percent, Jewish third with 7.3 percent, Greek Orthodox fourth with 2.5 percent and other religious groups 0.2 percent.⁵⁷

In independent Lithuania freedom of religion was guaranteed by the constitution. Moreover, according to the constitution, the state recognized all churches and other similar religious organizations existing in Lithuania so long as they were not opposed to morality and public order. Freedom to propagate religion, conduct religious services, maintain places of worship, administer theological schools were all given constitutional sanction. The activities of religious orders, congregations, and fraternities were also recognized. Churches were

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

⁵⁴ Vaitiekunas, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-19.

⁵⁷ Valstybes Etatistikos Kabendorius, 1937, Centralinis Statistikos Biuzas Kaunas, 1937; p. 74.

held to possess rights as a legal person, the limits of which were established by law. Clergymen were exempt from military service. Generally, church-state relationship was determined by law or agreement. The concordat of 1927 had established the relationship between Lithuania and the Holy See. By the terms of this agreement, diplomatic representatives were exchanged. Lithuanians were granted a large measure of independence in the selection of their clergy.

Churches were permitted to conduct educational institutions in accordance with the established law; and, finally, religious instruction was permitted in primary and secondary schools, both public and private.⁵⁸ The University of Vytautas the Great, in addition to four Catholic theological seminaries, offered studies in advanced theology and philosophy for aspiring Catholic clergymen. Moreover, the university also maintained a Protestant theological faculty.

Houses of religious worship, together with related ecclesiastical establishments of all denominations, were tax exempt, and in the national budget provisions were made for assistance to the institutions of the churches and religious organizations.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 68-69.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 70.

PART IV—CONCLUSIONS

That the Baltic States had achieved a relatively high degree of stability, and that they had likewise made marked advances in every area of their individual national lives are facts clearly indisputable.

Economically, all three Baltic States were strong and vigorous in 1939. No landless agrarian proletariat existed in any strength. Land reform had already gone far in broadening the area of economic and social democracy. Poverty by American standards existed in some sections of the Baltic States, but compared with life in former years under Russian domination, conditions in 1939 looked like affluence. Agricultural productivity had vastly increased, and in all areas of the agrarian economy, the Baltic peoples, aided by public and private devices for improvement, had marched far along the road of agricultural progress.

Equally advanced was the industrialization of the Baltic States. Organized, rationalized, and developed largely under State patronage and supervision, Baltic industries expanded to an impressive degree by 1939, contributing a considerable share to the steady economic growth of the three nations.

Nor were the governments of the Baltic States unmindful of the vast social obligation incumbent upon the leaders of any nation to maintain a strong social order. Laws, regulations, plans of social security, both public and private—all were deeply imbedded in the social fabric of the three States. The continued social well-being of their peoples was an enduring and wholesome occupation of the Governments at Tallinn, Riga, and Kaunas.

Culturally, the Baltic States were fast winning their places in the kaleidoscopic pattern of European cultural life. Emphasis placed upon education in the early days of independence had borne the fruits of achievement. All three states had made notable progress in education, an area of intellectual activity which might well be regarded as the wellspring of all cultural achievement and appreciation. Richly endowed with an independent and native culture, the Baltic peoples were not reluctant, however, to draw from the cultural treasuries of the world beyond them in order to enhance their own way of life.

Closely related to Baltic culture was the spirit of religion which flourished freely and generously during the period of independence. Deeply rooted in the national structure of all three Baltic States was a solid and enduring religious ethic. Guided by the principles derived from this ethic, which permeated the national spirit of all three nations, the Baltic peoples sought in their own way the City of God.

Finally, by 1939 the Baltic States had achieved a measure of political and constitutional stability. To be sure their governments were not ideal models of democracy. On the credit side, however, progress had been made, and the trend toward greater democracy had been definite and clear in 1939. What would have been the final result had not

war and conquest intervened is a matter for earnest speculation. Be that as it may, the fact remains that the governments of the three Baltic States had been firmly established; they had been endowed with the sanction of constitutionality; they had been accepted by the people; and, they had functioned in a manner prescribed by the law of the land. Radical Communist elements did exist, but it is not without significance that both the Communist and pro-Soviet elements in all three states constituted only a small fraction of the whole population. So clear was this situation to one contemporary American observer—that is to say, the stability of the Baltic governments and the existence of a diminutive, ineffectual pro-Soviet minority—that he concluded with full confidence and conviction that a Communist revolution and Communist seizure of the Baltic States could never be an indigenous product, rather should such an event come to pass it would have to be a contrivance from abroad, as indeed it was.¹

¹Tollschus, Otto D. Old order facing test in Baltic under domination of Bolshevism. *New York Times*, October 26, 1939, p. 8: 4-5.

CHAPTER IV

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF THE BALTIC STATES, 1920-39

I. DIPLOMACY OF INDEPENDENCE, 1920-30

A. EUROPE IN THE 1920'S

More than anything else the decade of the 1920's was for Europe a period of settlement and fulfillment. These were the golden days of Geneva when collective security and international equity seemed to be building a new Europe; when universal respect for the rule of law was generally in the ascendancy. Within the League of Nations and beyond its formal jurisdiction, men made determined and continuing efforts to bring peace on earth through systems and formulas of universal disarmament, collective security, and international co-operation.

The aftermath of World War I, however, left Europe divided into two predominant psychological attitudes. Powerful undercurrents of international disharmony prevailed through the entire interwar period whose roots were deeply embedded in these attitudes. On the one hand, there were the satisfied nations, the victors who reaped the spoils of war, such as they were, and others, like Italy, which at a later date set out on a course of national aggrandizement. To maintain the status quo was their prime objective. Then, there were the defeated powers who with lingering hopes and injured pride longed for a rectification of the alleged injustices of the peace settlement. They were the revisionists. Among the Great Powers, Soviet Russia and Germany belonged to this latter group, but Soviet and German revisionism, exceeding the bounds of revision per se, took on a revolutionary and imperialistic form entirely unconnected with these alleged injustices.¹

For a brief moment in history, the ideological bases of the Soviet state, which were deeply rooted in concepts advocating above all else Communist world dominion, found in German revisionism a suitable partner in working out the ultimate destiny of communism.² In this attitude of mind, therefore, there had been sown the seeds of discord which, nourished by a real or self-induced sense of injury, and by far-reaching ideological objectives bore the bitter fruits of 1939.

The continuing system established at Versailles, altered in no substantial way by the Great Powers, was a prevailing theme during the 1920's, and French efforts to maintain this system by asserting con-

¹ Toynbee, Arnold and Frank T. Ashton-Gwatkin, ed. *Survey of International Affairs, 1939-46*. London, Oxford University, 1952, pp. 227-228. Hereafter references to *Surveys of International Affairs* will be cited as "Survey for" with the year following.

² See footnote on p. 200.

tinental hegemony was another theme no less dominant. Soviet Russia, an outcast in international society, petulant and intriguing in its state of semieclipse, nursed the wounds of 7 years of war, famine, and desolation. Germany, defeated and disarmed, set about hopefully to undo the harm resulting from its past misadventures. Great Britain pursued a policy of engagement in continental affairs, although the British Dominions were unwilling to assume responsibilities beyond their respective spheres. Nor was the United States any more responsive to the problems of Europe. After a brief encounter upon the Continent, the American people in 1921 repudiated the Wilsonian doctrines of idealism that proclaimed a new world under law. Withdrawing into themselves, they went back to normalcy with Harding, reluctant to concern themselves with the League or European affairs, engaging only in an indirect, oblique way the momentous problems of the era.

B. GUIDELINES OF BAL TIC DIPLOMACY

1. *Strategic importance of the Baltic region*

Unlike America, the Baltic States could not afford the luxury of detachment in world affairs. Geographically situated in the northern sector of the borderlands dividing the East and the West, the Baltic States were compelled by Nature to take an active part in international affairs. For centuries, the Baltic region had been a central arena for the interplay of great power politics, an historic highway of invasion from East to West and West to East, an avenue of countless marches and countermarches, and the focal point of the great powers in their restless urge to win naval domination over the Baltic Sea. So important has been the Baltic Sea from a strategic point of view that one German admiral wrote in the *Preussische Zeitung* during the 1930's that the power which controls the Baltic will become the determining factor in the whole of Eastern Europe.³ For Soviet Russia, the Baltic Sea was to become "*the Sea of the Social Revolution.*" As early as December 1918 the Soviet Government proclaimed: "*Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are directly on the road from Russia to Western Europe and are therefore a hindrance to our revolution. * * * This separating wall has to be destroyed. * * * The conquest of the Baltic Sea would make it possible for Soviet Russia to agitate in favor of the social revolution so that the Baltic Sea would be transferred into the Sea of the Social Revolution.*" [Italics furnished.]^{3a} Even today Soviet Russia, ever conscious of the strategic importance of the Baltic Sea, has virtually made it *mare clausum*,⁴ although for propaganda purposes it has denied such an interpretation.^{4a}

2. *Foundations of Baltic foreign policy*

In the opening years of independence the Baltic states did not have the physical power commensurate with the heavy obligation that secu-

³ Gottlieb, Wolfram, *The Baltic States Without Germans. The 19th Century* (London), vol. 127, April 1940, p. 438. See also, Gottlieb, Wolfram, *Russia and Strategy in Baltic Sea. The 19th Century* (London), vol. 126, September 1939, p. 309.

^{3a} *Izvestia*, December 25, 1918 (editorial), No. 238, p. 1.

⁴ Grzybowski, Kazimierz, Dr., *The Soviet Doctrine of Mare Clausum and Policies in the Black and Baltic Seas*. Library of Congress, Foreign Law Division, 1954 (unpublished).

^{4a} Schapiro, L. B., *The Limits of Russian Territorial Waters in the Baltic*. In the *British Year Book of International Law*, 1950. London, Oxford University Press, 1951, pp. 439-448. See also; Kulski, W. W., *Present Trends in Soviet International Law*. *American Journal of International Law* (Washington), Proceedings, April 23-25, 1953, p. 66.

rity requirements imposed upon them by virtue of their important strategic position. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, according to the Royal Institute of International Affairs, "stood in a class by themselves as the weakest representatives of the sovereign independent species of polity with the sole exception of Albania."⁵ To be sure, a power vacuum had settled upon the Baltic region. For a brief interval of time the Baltic Sea had become a sea without a great power on its shores. Russia had been in semieclipse, while German predominance had been diminished temporarily by the arrangements at Versailles. Fear of the recrudescence of German and Russian power remained a factor foremost and enduring in Baltic thought, and this, combined with the realization of their own physical weakness as nation-states, poised like an elm in a forest of oaks between two potentially great powers, largely governed the conduct of their diplomacy.⁶

In the early 1920's the Baltic states, Estonia and Latvia especially, held a deep-seated fear of Soviet Russia and for the first decade of their history regarded the Soviets as a common menace. That this fear was justified had already been demonstrated by their struggle for independence which was primarily directed against Russia. Moreover, from the war and the peace settlements that followed, Russia lost hundreds of miles of valuable coastline along the Baltic. Add to this the loss of important outlets of Russian trade to the West, and it is not inconceivable that Soviet Russia would harbor irredentist ambitions.⁷ Soviet territorial contiguity with Estonia and Latvia, together with the proclaimed revolutionary intentions of the Bolsheviks, provided constant sources for anxiety among the Baltic peoples.

In a theoretical sense the Baltic States, all independent republics, acted as a buffer during this early period to checkmate Communist expansion and the resurgence of German power. The interests of both France and England demanded the creation of a bloc of consolidated buffer states equally alien to Germany and Russia. One scholar of international law observed that:

Latvia and Estonia appeared to have been, as it were, especially created for this purpose, since Latvia and Estonia lie close to the lifelines of the traffic centers of their big neighbors.⁸

Some Balts, however, interpreted their strategic position as a "bridge rather than a barrier between Western Europe and Russia."⁹

Not until the early 1930's was there any substantial diminution in the common fears of the Russian menace. Up to that time Germany had been defeated and disarmed, but with the rise of the Nazi move-

⁵ Survey for 1934, p. 404.

⁶ Dr. Bilmanis described the Balts as being "incurably nervous by reason of their exposed and strategic position * * *." Bilmanis, Alfred, *A History of Latvia*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1951, p. 381.

⁷ H. E. Ronimois advances the thesis that the Baltic ports had not played the great part in Russian trade as generally believed. See, Ronimois, H. E., *Russia's Foreign Trade and the Baltic Sea: A Study on the Economic Policy of the Soviet Union*. London, Boreas Publishing Co., 1946, 52 pp.

⁸ Laserson, Max M., *The Recognition of Latvia*. *The American Journal of International Law* (Washington), vol. 37, April 1943, p. 244.

⁹ Pusta, Kaarel R., *Estonia and Her Right to Freedom*. *Journal of Central European Affairs* (Boulder, Colo.), vol. 3, October 1943, p. 288. For other comments on the Baltic States as "buffer" states see: The Baltic States, p. 62. Salkauskis, Stasys, *Sur le Confins de Deux Mondes*. Geneva, edition Atar, 1919, 271 p. Bilmanis, Dr. Alfred, *The Legend of the Baltic Barrier States*. *Journal of Central European Affairs* (Boulder, Colo.), vol. 6, July 1946, pp. 126-146.

ment and the ascendancy of Adolf Hitler to power in 1933, Baltic statesmen began to entertain greater fears from that quarter.¹⁰

Lithuanians, however, did not share entirely a common attitude with Estonians and Latvians in their relations with Soviet Russia. In the first place, Lithuania, unlike Estonia and Latvia, had no common frontier with Soviet Russia, and hence had less immediate cause for anxiety in that quarter. No less important, however, was the preoccupation of Lithuania with the prolonged disputes with Poland over Vilnius (Vilna) and later with Germany over Klaipeda (Memel).¹¹ For reasons regarded as consistent with and essential to its own national interest, Lithuania tended to assume a posture not disinclined toward closer diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia, for the latter could serve well as a useful and effective counterweight against both Poland and Germany.¹²

Briefly, the broad policy objectives of Baltic diplomacy might be summed up in the following manner: (1) to acquire recognition of statehood; (2) to maintain the status quo of the peace settlement; (3) to take their proper places in the family of nations as independent states; (4) to foster community of interests in the Baltic area based on the concepts of neutrality and friendship with all nations as the best assurance for national security which might conceivably be placed in jeopardy as a consequence of the recrudescence of German and Soviet power.

C. FRUITS OF THE PEACE SETTLEMENT

1. *Peace with Soviet Russia*

To come to terms with Soviet Russia and to gain recognition of their independence and national sovereignty from the nations of the world were the first major problems to be solved by the Baltic States. Once resolved, the status of the Baltic States as independent, sovereign states might then completely bear the marks of legitimacy.

Soviet recognition of the Succession States by treaties of peace in 1920 added immeasurably to the Baltic quest for international de jure recognition. Expediency, however, dictated Soviet policy and not any deep affection for Baltic sovereignty. By concluding a peace treaty with Estonia, the Bolsheviks hoped, in the first place, to break the Allied blockade and thus open up a gateway between Soviet Russia and Western Europe; and in the second place to put an end to the threat posed by the White Army forces which had operated in that area. Moreover, the Bolsheviks needed peace with the Baltic States so that they might have greater freedom of action against Poland in a war that had already broken out between the two powers.¹³ From Lithuanians particularly the Bolsheviks had, apparently, hoped to gain support in the Polish War. Significantly, the Soviet Peace Treaty with Lithuania signed on July 12, 1920, provided for, among other things, recognition of Lithuania's title to Vilnius, a move apparently calculated to exploit to the fullest measure Lithuanian-Polish differences.¹⁴

¹⁰ Survey for 1934, pp. 408-409.

¹¹ Other spellings for Vilnius are "Vilna" and "Wilno." Among Balts, Poles, and Russians, Memel is referred to as "Klaipeda."

¹² Baltic States, pp. 63, 89-102.

¹³ Pusta, op. cit., p. 278.

¹⁴ Survey for 1920-23, p. 251.

The treaties of peace which the Government of the R. S. F. S. R. (Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic) had negotiated with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in 1920 resolved a common solution to a number of outstanding questions.¹⁵ The new states received *de jure* recognition in identic clauses in which Soviet Russia unreservedly recognized their independence, renounced all rights of sovereignty formerly held over their peoples and territories, and released these states from all obligations incurred resulting from their previous attachment to the Russian Empire. Other clauses in the treaties dealt with, among other matters, frontier demarcations and the obligation of the Russian Soviet Republic to recognize the "perpetual" neutrality of Estonia, Lithuania, and Finland in the event that it should receive international recognition. In article 4 of the Latvian and Lithuanian and article 7 of the Estonian Treaties, the contracting parties undertook a highly important obligation when they agreed :

To forbid any army to remain on either territory except their own army or that of friendly States with which one of the Contracting Parties has concluded a military Convention, but which are not in a *de facto* state of war with either Contracting Party; and also to forbid, within the limits of their respective territory the mobilisation and recruiting of any personnel intended for the armies of States, organizations, or groups for purposes of armed conflict against the other Contracting Party * * *.

(2) Not to permit the formation or residence in their territory of organisations or groups of any kind claiming to represent the Government of all or part of the territory of the other Contracting Party; or of representatives or officials of organisations or groups having as their object the overthrow of the Government of the other Contracting Party.

(3) To forbid Governments in a *de facto* state of war with the other Party, and organisations and groups having as their object military action against the other Contracting Party, to transport through their ports or their territory, anything which might be used for military purposes against the other Contracting Party, in particular, military forces belonging to these States, organisations or groups; material of war; technical military stores belonging to artillery, supply services, engineers, or air services.

(4) To forbid, except in cases provided for by International Law, passage through or navigation in their territorial waters of all warships, gunboats, torpedo-boats, etc., belonging either to organisations and groups whose object is military action against the other Contracting Party, or to Governments which are in state of war with the other Contracting Party and which aim at military action against the other Contracting Party. This provision shall come into force as soon as such intentions are known to the Contracting Party to whom the said territorial waters and ports belong.¹⁶

In March 1922, representatives from Poland, Latvia, Estonia, and Finland convened at Warsaw and there concluded a convention in which they confirmed the recognition of their treaties of peace with Soviet Russia. At a subsequent meeting held at Riga in the same month, the sanctity of the peace treaties was reaffirmed by the governments represented at the Warsaw Conference and the Soviet Government.¹⁷

¹⁵ Baltic States, p. 65. For texts of treaties, see U. S. Congress, House, Select Committee To Investigate the Incorporation of the Baltic States Into the U. S. S. R. Hearings of the Baltic States Investigation, 83d Congress, 1st session, Washington, D. C., U. S. Government Printing Office, 1954, pp. 510-19 (Estonia), pp. 473-481 (Lithuania), and pp. 490-499 (Latvia). Hereafter noted as, Hearings.

¹⁶ Billmanis, Alfred, Dr., ed., *Latvian-Russian Relations*, Washington, Latvian Legation, 1944, pp. 71-72. See also, *Baltic States*, pp. 65-66; Rutenberg, Gregory, Dr., *The Baltic States and the Soviet Union*, *American Journal of International Law* (Washington), vol. 29.2, October 1935, pp. 598-602.

¹⁷ Survey for 1920-23, p. 28. For reaffirmation of the Lithuanian Peace Treaty by Soviet Russia, see p. 181.

2. *Striving for recognition*

Peace with Soviet Russia once restored and recognition of their national independence having been obtained from the Government of the R. S. F. S. R., the Succession States in the Baltic region set out to win international *de jure* approbation. For a newly born state diplomatic recognition by other nation-states is one of the most important prerequisites of statehood.¹⁸ In a very real sense, *de jure* recognition by other members of the family of nations places upon the new state the imprimatur of legality. One of the major tasks of the Baltic peoples after winning independence was, therefore, to gain this recognition.

Formidable obstacles were, however, placed along the road to formal international *de jure* recognition. European public opinion, in the first place, was not prepared to consider seriously the claims of the Baltic people to a separate national existence. In prewar Europe, except for a small number, their existence as ethnic entities was not widely known.¹⁹ Furthermore, the attention of the Great Powers was at that time primarily focused upon the forthcoming peace treaties with the Central Powers.²⁰ More considerable was the indecisive character of the Russian civil war. Many powers had extended *de facto* recognition to some of the anti-Bolshevist Russian Governments,²¹ and the United States was among those which were very reluctant to see the dismemberment of the Russian Empire. The implications of American recognition of Baltic independence were far more complex than apparent on the surface, for the policy of President Wilson assumed much broader dimensions than the narrow limits prescribed by Baltic recognition. The future destiny of Russia had not yet been settled. The United States had already recognized the provisional government—the first Great Power to do so. Later on, Japan had intervened with substantial military forces in the Russian far eastern maritime provinces, and President Wilson's desire to check Japanese aggressive designs in that quarter led to direct American intervention in the Far East.²² The classic exposition of the Wilsonian policy of nonrecognition of the Baltic States was the note of Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby to the Italian Ambassador, Baron d'Avezana, on August 10, 1920, in which the Secretary wrote:

The United States maintains unimpaired its faith in the Russian people, in their high character and their future. That they will overcome the existing anarchy, suffering, and destitution we do not entertain the slightest doubt. The distressing character of Russia's transition has many historical parallels, and the United States is confident that restored, free and united Russia will again take a leading place in the world, joining with the other free nations in upholding peace and orderly justice.

Until that time shall arrive the United States feels that friendship and honor require that Russia's interests must be generously protected, and that, as far as possible, all decisions of vital importance to it, and especially those concerning its sovereignty over the territory of the former Russian Empire, be held in abeyance. By this feeling of friendship and honorable obligation to the great nation whose brave and heroic self-sacrifice contributed so much to the successful ter-

¹⁸ Laserson, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

¹⁹ Graham, Malbone W., *The Diplomatic Recognition of the Border States*, pt. II: Estonia. Berkeley, Calif., University of California Press, 1939, p. v.

²⁰ Laserson, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

²¹ Some of the Anti-Bolshevist Russian governments were the Russian provisional government, Kolchak government, Northwestern government, and the south Russian government.

²² For a review of this question see: Griswold, A. Whitney, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*. New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1938. Ch. VI. Wilson Challenges Japan, pp. 223-239.

mination of the war, the Government of the United States was guided in its reply to the Lithuanian National Council, on October 15, 1919, and in its persistent refusal to recognize the Baltic States as separate nations independent of Russia. The same spirit was manifested in the note of this Government, of March 24, 1920, in which it was stated, with reference to certain proposed settlements in the Near East, that "no final decision should or can be made without the consent of Russia."²³

Notwithstanding the formidable obstacles in the way of recognition, the Baltic governments pressed energetically their individual national objectives. In its campaign to convert the European powers to acceptance of Estonian independence as an accomplished fact, the Estonian Government turned toward Geneva where in April 1920 it made application for admission to the League of Nations. Even though Estonia had received *de jure* recognition from Soviet Russia and Finland, and *de facto* recognition from 10 states, including France, Great Britain, and Germany, the application was rejected on December 16, 1920.²⁴ Likewise, the application of Latvia was rejected.²⁵

In the meantime the strength of the anti-Bolshevist forces had dissipated; Soviet Russia was thrown back in its attempt to expand westward at the expense of Poland, and the general political condition along eastern Europe tended toward stabilization. Again, on January 24, 1921, the question of recognition of the Baltic States was brought to the attention of the Council of the League of Nations. Finally, recognition was extended to Latvia and Estonia. It was, however, withheld from Lithuania pending settlement of the Vilnius dispute. After the League recognized Latvia and Estonia, *de jure* recognition by individual powers followed as a matter of course.²⁶ On September 22, 1921, Lithuania was accepted in the League of Nations, and on July 28 of the following year, the United States Government recognized the new Lithuanian democratic republic, simultaneously extending full recognition to Estonia and Latvia.²⁷ On December 20, 1922, England, France, and Italy granted recognition to Lithuania.

By 1922, the Baltic States had been invested full and complete with the raiment of legitimacy. Their status as sovereign, independent states, already an accomplished fact, was affirmed by treaty arrangements with Soviet Russia, formally sanctified by international *de jure* recognition, and reaffirmed by a formal protocol with Soviet Russia. Admission to the League was a final act of investiture. Such was the juridical basis of the new Baltic republics. Significantly, this juridical basis did not have its roots in the Treaty of Versailles, as German propagandists later alleged to the contrary; rather the foundation of Baltic legitimacy was firmly established by international arrangements negotiated and fulfilled by the exercise of the free will of nations.²⁸

²³ U. S. Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: 1920. Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1936, vol. III, p. 465.

²⁴ Graham, *op. cit.*, pp. 287-288.

²⁵ Laserson, *op. cit.*, pp. 242-243.

²⁶ Laserson, *op. cit.*, pp. 243-246. See also, Graham, Malbone W., *The Diplomatic Recognition of the Border States*, pt. III: Latvia, Berkeley, Calif., University of California Press, 1941, pp. 441-448; and Graham, pt. II, Estonia, *op. cit.*, pp. 289-291.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 297.

²⁸ Billmanis, *Latvian-Russian Relations*, *op. cit.*, p. 13. See also, Pusta, *op. cit.*, pp. 278-279.

D. INTER-BALTIC RELATIONS

1. Objectives in foreign policy

Of primary concern among the new Baltic republics was the creation of a firm foundation for the preservation of their own independence and security. Broadly speaking, their efforts to accomplish this objective were directed along the following lines: the establishment of a Baltic union; reliance upon the instrumentality of the League of Nations; and the advocacy of friendship with all nations as a cardinal principle in foreign policy, and as a proper basis for the conduct of international relations.

2. Baltic union attempted

Reducing to its simplest form the very complex diplomacy of those nations directly interested in the creation of a Baltic system, the tendency during the period under examination indicates a shift of emphasis from the creation of a Greater Baltic Union to a smaller one consisting only of the Baltic States proper. Latvia and Estonia formed the hard core of Baltic unity. They were the "strongest advocates" of a Baltic bloc even including the Scandinavian countries.²⁹ Territorial contiguity with Soviet Russia and the past economic importance of their principal ports as channels for Soviet trade, added considerably to Estonian and Latvian fears of Soviet Russia which alternatively made for them a Baltic union more advantageous.³⁰ Because of the Vilnius dispute and the resulting tense condition of Lithuanian-Polish relations, Lithuanian acceptance of the Baltic ideal by formal treaty arrangement did not, however, come about until a later period.

From 1919 to 1925 Poland was one of the chief agents in advancing various schemes for a Greater Baltic Union. No great power had been active in the Baltic during the 1920's, and Poland, situated at the center of a system designed to counterpoise defeated Germany and act as a barrier to Soviet Russia, aspired to the position of leadership among the Baltic States.³¹

Finland showed at first considerable interest in the formation of some system of Baltic unity, but in the passage of time the Finns demonstrated less enthusiasm, preferring to orient themselves toward the Scandinavian states rather than the Baltic.³²

Fundamentally, suspicion of Soviet Russia was the powerful catalyst compelling Baltic unity. Other factors considered, the Polish-Soviet war, the attempted Communist coup in Estonia in 1924, and continued Communist pronouncements on world revolution tended to excite Baltic anxieties over Soviet intentions.

At the Paris Peace Conference in 1918-19 a project for a Baltic League had been devised and presented by the Estonian delegation. The plan provided for a political and economic union of the Scandinavian nations, the three Baltic States and Poland, in order to safeguard freedom of the Baltic Sea and to establish a common system of defense. Another project was drafted in August 1919 for a union

²⁹ Survey for 1920-23, pp. 243-244.

³⁰ Baltic States, p. 63.

³¹ Survey for 1939-46, pp. 245-246.

³² Baltic States, pp. 62-64. See also, Survey, 1920-23, pp. 241-245; Fischer, Louis. The Soviets in World Affairs, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1951, vol. II, pp. 517-521.

of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. In January 1920, the first Baltic conference proper, convening at Helsinki and consisting of representatives from Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland, considered the coordination of foreign policy, the organization of a general military defensive union, and neutralization of the Baltic Sea.³³ At Bulduri, Latvia, the second conference was held in August 1920 where it was agreed to adopt a draft arbitration convention and to set up a permanent "Council of Plenipotentiaries." However great the desire to create a union, this attempt, as the others, failed. The convention was never ratified, the council never was convened, and the project of a defensive alliance miscarried due to the Finnish refusal to adhere because of the unpleasant implications that might involve Finland in the Vilnius dispute.

Other attempts to form a greater Baltic bloc, either embracing all the succession states along the Soviet border or an attachment to the Scandinavian States, failed to materialize. In July 1921, a conference was convened at Helsinki. Finland hoped to secure a military alliance with Estonia, Latvia, and Poland. The conference resulted in a protocol calling for periodic foreign ministers' conferences of the four countries. A year later another conference was held in Warsaw which resulted in the projection of elaborate plans for Baltic unity. But stipulations to be undertaken under the proposed instrument aroused Finnish fears of involvement in possibly a future Polish-Soviet war and brought about the breakdown of the scheme.³⁴ Moreover, Latvia and Estonia were also disinclined to commit themselves to anything that might involve them in a war resulting from Polish activities. Besides, both states sympathized with Lithuania in its dispute with Poland.³⁵

Latvia and Estonia, brought into closer unity by these special circumstances, concluded a political and military agreement in July 1921. Two years later, on November 1, 1923, both states signed a definite Treaty of Defensive Alliance by the terms of which they undertook to pursue a peaceful policy toward all nations, especially their neighbors; to pursue a mutual and concerted course in international relations; to provide armed aid in the event of an attack; and, finally, not to conclude an alliance with a third party without consent from the other. A preliminary treaty for an economic and customs union was also signed.³⁶

Other conferences consisting of Finland, Poland, Latvia, and Estonia were held in 1923 and again in 1924, but the results were inconclusive. Plans for concerted action at the Assembly of the League that was about to convene failed because of Polish opposition; and Finnish reluctance to join in the projected arbitration treaty doomed that plan.³⁷

The year 1925 was the high-water mark of Polish efforts to create a Greater Baltic Union under its leadership. A conference held in January at Helsinki resulted in the conclusion of a general convention of arbitration and conciliation.³⁸ But, thereafter with the diminution of the fear of communism after the attempted coup in Estonia in

³³ Baltic States, p. 66.

³⁴ Baltic States, pp. 66-67. See also, Survey for 1920-23, pp. 244-245.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.* For text of the Latvian-Estonian Treaty of Alliance, see appendix, A, I, No. 1

³⁷ Survey for 1924, pp. 459-460.

³⁸ Baltic States, pp. 69-70.

1924—a common fear that disposed the Balts to court Polish support—the desire for Polish protection declined, and the tendency grew stronger for a Little Baltic Union.³⁹ In May 1924, the three Baltic States proper met at Kaunas to consider extension of the Latvian-Estonian Customs Union to Lithuania. Commissioners were appointed to study the question for further action to be taken at a future conference. Particularly meaningful was the agreement that all three states should pursue a concerted foreign policy, especially in the Assembly of the League of Nations.⁴⁰

In 1925, the tendency away from a greater Baltic bloc under Polish auspices and toward a rapprochement among the three Baltic States was given further encouragement in Estonia and Latvia. All three governments appeared to desire closer relations. Consequently, on July 1, 1925, a protocol was signed after a conference at Kaunas between Latvian and Lithuanian representatives with a view to future negotiations for economic and arbitration treaties on the basis of the existing Latvian-Estonian Treaty.⁴¹ This growing tendency for a purely Baltic bloc, as opposed to a larger coalition under Poland, was well expressed by the Latvian Foreign Minister who said in August 1925 that the question of the formation of a quadruple coalition between Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Poland, was no longer urgent, concluding that “sooner or later a close alliance between Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania would come.”⁴²

Closer Baltic unity—that is, a Baltic Union composed of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania—did not, however, come about until 1934, for reasons which will be clarified as the narrative unfolds.

3. *Lithuania: the Problems of Vilnius and Klaipeda*

(a) *Origins of the Vilnius dispute.*—Few problems proved to be more disruptive to Baltic unity and more discordant to the general tranquillity of northeastern Europe than the Vilnius dispute between Poland and Lithuania. Without attempting to weigh the merits of the case from either point of view, the simple facts that brought about this breach in Polish-Lithuanian relations are as follows:

Possession of Vilnius had passed through German, Lithuanian, Bolshevik, and Polish hands from 1914 until the signing of the Soviet-Lithuanian Peace Treaty in July 1920. Fortunes of the Polish-Soviet war changed thereafter causing the retreat of the Bolsheviks and leaving the Lithuanians for the first time face to face with the victorious Poles. Tension became acute; fighting broke out in the Suvalkai district. An armistice was finally signed on October 7, 1920, after intervention by the Supreme Allied Council, giving the Suvalkai sector to the Poles and the Vilnius district to the Lithuanians. On October 9, the day before the agreement was to come into force—the fighting had already been suspended—Polish forces seized Vilnius City and occupied the greater part of the province.

Attempted settlement of the dispute proved to be a prolonged and fruitless endeavor which in the course of the 1920's brought into the discussions the League of Nations and the Conference of Ambassadors. In 1923, the latter disposed of the matter, at least temporarily, by describing the Lithuanian-Polish frontier with recognition of the

³⁹ Survey for 1925, vol. II, p. 228. Also, *Baltic States*, pp. 69–70.

⁴⁰ Survey for 1924, p. 460.

⁴¹ Survey for 1925, v. II, pp. 230–231. Also, *Baltic States*, p. 70.

⁴² In Survey for 1925, v. II, p. 230.

status quo. For reasons of its own the Lithuanian Government refused to accept this decision. Diplomatic relations between both countries were never initiated. Here the matter lay until 1938 when Poland sought the resumption of normal diplomatic relations.⁴³ Another chapter in this dispute was written when by the terms of a Soviet-German agreement, which placed Lithuania within the Soviet sphere of influence, Vilnius was returned to Lithuania by the U. S. S. R. in 1939.

Historically, the importance of the Vilnius dispute is undeniable, but its major significance for the purposes of this study lies in the serious impact it had on the international relations in the Baltic region. In the first place, orderly Lithuanian and Polish relations were paralyzed for almost two decades. Until 1938, a state of virtual blockade existed on the frontier, and not until that date were normal diplomatic relations finally resumed between both countries. Furthermore, in the early 1920's the effects of Polish-Lithuanian friction reacted unfavorably on Lithuanian relations with the Allies which were at this time particularly anxious to have a stable Poland in Eastern Europe.⁴⁴

Most important, however, was the influence the Vilnius dispute had on Baltic unity. In a word, Vilnius constituted an imposing barrier to complete Baltic solidarity, for it was upon the rocks of Polish-Lithuanian disharmony that hopes for a Baltic Union persistently foundered. Polish leadership in attempts to form a Greater Baltic Union alienated Lithuania. Estonian and Latvian attempts at rapprochement with Lithuania were looked upon by Poland with disfavor, even as an "insult to herself."⁴⁵ Accordingly, both states hesitated in associating themselves too closely with Lithuania, apprehensive that they too might become involved in the perennial Vilnius affair, although they were sympathetic with Lithuania and held a certain distrust of Polish attitudes.

Finally, Lithuania in search of support against Poland—and relatively indifferent to the advantages of a Baltic Union—gravitated, diplomatically speaking, in a certain degree toward Soviet Russia with which it had no common frontier and thus shared less the anxieties of Estonia and Latvia, both less comital to their big neighbor. Of Lithuania's unique position in the politics of Northeastern Europe, the British Institute of International Affairs said:

Lithuania, who was cut off from contact with Soviet Russia by the incorporation in Poland of the Vilna (Vilnius) corridor, was swayed by her hostility towards Poland and was therefore not unfavourably inclined towards Poland's eastern neighbour.⁴⁶

Clearly, the attitude of the Soviet Government appears to have been one calculated to win Lithuanian favor; while Lithuania, isolated and

⁴³ Baltic States, pp. 89-91. See also, Survey for 1920-23, pp. 250-256.

⁴⁴ Survey for 1920-23, p. 249.

⁴⁵ Survey for 1925, v. II, p. 227.

⁴⁶ Survey for 1924, p. 459, the Survey for 1920-23 has this account: "Confronted on one side by Polish hostility and the difficulties experienced in its relations with the Principal Allies * * * the Lithuanian Government found great difficulty in maintaining its position. Partly for this reason Lithuania's relations with Soviet Russia during this period were more friendly than those of her three northern neighbors. In fact, it looked as though the Bolsheviks hoped to be able to use Lithuania and Lithuanian territorial claims as a means for stirring up difficulties both for Poland and for the Allies." See, Survey for 1920-23, p. 249. For an exposition of Lithuania's attitude toward Soviet Russia expressed while discussions were taking place in Moscow in June 1940, see below, pp. 326-327 and 329. For observations by the former United States Ambassador to the U. S. S. R., Joseph E. Davies, on Lithuanian-Soviet relations, see below p. 199, footnote 44.

needful of support against its stronger Polish neighbor, was not indifferent to Soviet diplomatic blandishments.

(b) *Origins of the Klaipeda dispute.*—Lithuania, essentially an inland state, acquired fuller access to the Baltic Sea by the redrawing of the map of Eastern Europe. For reasons of economic necessity Lithuania required, it had been argued, an additional outlet at Klaipeda, as a suitable channel of trade for the Lithuanian hinterland. The town of Klaipeda was almost entirely German, while the agricultural population in the adjoining area was largely Lithuanian.⁴⁷

For economic reasons and because of the Lithuanian ethnic character of the area, it had been decided at the Paris Peace Conference to detach the Klaipeda district from Germany and hand it over to the new Lithuanian Republic when it had received de jure recognition. By the terms of article 99 of the Versailles Treaty, Germany was, therefore, obligated to renounce all rights to the territory in favor of the Allied Powers and was further obligated to accept the final settlement. In 1922, the future of Klaipeda was still undecided even though Lithuania was recognized de jure by the powers. In January 1923, however, the Lithuanian Government, alarmed by the French proposal for the constitution of Klaipeda as a free city, took possession of Klaipeda.⁴⁸ Ultimately, the question was settled by the Memel (Klaipeda) Convention of 1924 by the terms of which the Allied Powers (Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan) transferred Klaipeda to Lithuania under certain governing conditions.

If Lithuania, like its other neighbors Poland, Latvia, and Estonia, had reason to dread the recrudescence of Soviet Russian power, its anxiety for the future revival of German might was also well warranted. Klaipeda, like Vilnius, complicated Lithuanian foreign relations with its neighbors, but the real threat to Lithuanian security, because of this outstanding question, did not come about until a later period when the Nazi movement, spilling over the German borders, won supporters in foreign areas with large concentrations of ethnic Germans. Nazi leaders, supported by their racial doctrines of German superiority, converted many of these areas where German minorities existed into outposts for future conquest. Klaipeda was such an outpost.

E. SOVIET RUSSIA AND THE BALTIC

1. *Soviet Russia in world affairs*

A major power in Northeastern Europe, Soviet Russia constitutes the final segment in the mosaic of international relations in the Baltic region. In this vital area Russian tribes had made an unsuccessful attempt in the 11th and 12th centuries to reach the Baltic by an invasion through the land held at that time by independent Latvian tribes.⁴⁹ Some centuries later, Estonia and that part of Latvia called

⁴⁷ Survey for 1920-23, p. 257. See also, Kalljarvi, Thorsten. *The Memel statute: its origin, legal nature, and observation to the present day.* London. R. Hale, Ltd., 1937. 256 p. Robinson, Jacob. *Kommentar der Konvention über das Memelgebiet.* Kaunas. Verlag Spaudos fondas, 1934. 2 vol. Dauksa, Stasys. *Le régime d'autonomie du territoire de Klaipeda.* Paris, Librairie de Recueil Sirey, 1937. 328 p. Documents diplomatiques. Question de Memel. Publication du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères de Lituanie. Kaunas, mdecccxxiii, v. I et II.

⁴⁸ Survey for 1920-23, pp. 248-249, 256-261.

⁴⁹ Gottlieb, Wolfram, *Russia and the Baltic.* Contemporary review (London), vol. 156, November 1939; pp. 556-561.

Livonia were formally ceded to Russia by the terms of the peace of Nystad in 1721, concluded after Russia's war with Charles XII of Sweden. Only in 1795, however, did Courland and Latgallia—the remaining Latvian territories—and Lithuania fall under Russian domination. For more than a century, having possessed these lands regarded by Russians as being economically and strategically important to Russia and then having lost them, it was not an unlikely prospect that Soviet Russia would wait on events and seize the opportunity at the proper moment to reclaim the heritage of czarism. In the course of the "negotiations" between the Latvian Foreign Minister, Vilhems Munters, and Stalin prior to concluding the Mutual Assistance Pact of October 1939, the Soviet Premier reminded the Latvian of this unclaimed heritage when he said:

Peter the Great saw to it that an outlet to the sea was gained. We are now without an exit, and the situation in which we are now cannot remain. We, therefore, wish to ensure ourselves the use of ports, roads to these ports, and their defense.⁵⁰

In the decade of the 1920's and prior to the emergence of Nazi Germany, the temporary eclipse of Soviet Russia was a dominant factor in international affairs. This state of conditional isolation is explained largely by the direct results of World War I and its aftermath which caused Russia great losses in life and property, and brought about a considerable reduction in its former vast empire. Soviet isolation, however, stemmed from more than just physical weakness. The revolutionary character of the Soviet Government and its professed claims at home through its organs of power and abroad through the Communist International placed Soviet Russia in a special category among the great powers.⁵¹ The motivating principles of Soviet ideology, fundamentally hostile to the other systems of government throughout the world, were such that it was not likely that Soviet Russia would win the confidence of the family of nations. The whole trend of Soviet foreign policy was, therefore, determined first of all by the political isolation of the Soviet Union.⁵²

It would be erroneous, however, to create the impression that Soviet Russia was completely inactive in world affairs. In 1922, the Soviet Government, which found it easier to get along with defeated powers, signed with Germany the Treaty of Rapallo, thus alining itself with the revisionism of Germany. Distrust of France and England had diminished very little, if at all, during the 1920's. In other areas of Europe and the Middle East, Soviet diplomacy was active.⁵³ Far from being somnolent in the Far East, Soviet Russia pursued an animated policy, taking affirmative steps to consolidate its control over Siberia and Outer Mongolia and energetically searching for areas of influence particularly in China.⁵⁴

As the decade of the 1920's moved on, however, there was a shift in emphasis in Soviet Russian policy from the advocacy of immediate world revolution to an orientation centered upon the development of Soviet Russia as a socialist state. In 1927, Leon Trotsky, the

⁵¹ Beloff, Max, *The foreign policy of Soviet Russia, 1929-41*. London, Oxford University Press, 1949. Vol. I, pp. 1-4.

⁵⁰ In Bilmanis, *Latvian-Russian relations*, op. cit., p. 193.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 1. See also, *Survey for 1934*, pp. 376-381.

⁵³ Beloff, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

⁵⁴ Dallin, David J., *The Rise of Russia in Asia*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1949, pp. 180-248.

chief exponent of world revolution, had been expelled; Stalin, consolidating his dictatorial powers, from then on appeared to place greater emphasis upon internal policies—at least for the time being. Inception of the first 5-year plan highlighted by the invocation to “build socialism in one country” became the cardinal objective of immediate Soviet policy. Requiring peace and security for the consolidation of the socialist state, Soviet Russia gradually reverted to a policy of greater engagement in European affairs as the decade of the 1920’s came to a close.⁵⁵

2. Soviet pacts of nonaggression of the Baltics

Anxious to stabilize and secure its western border, the Soviet Government pursued a diplomatic course designed to link those states along the frontier with Soviet Russia by treaties embodying the three major principles of nonintervention, nonaggression, and neutrality. Primarily, Soviet policy was fashioned to prevent the Baltic States from accepting the leadership of the “deeply mistrusted Poland.” The resurrection of the old French project of a “cordon sanitaire” remained deeply fixed in the suspicious Soviet mind. Accordingly, in pursuance of this policy, the Kremlin resorted to the tactic divide et impera and insisted on separate negotiations as a basis of agreement in its relations with Poland and the Baltic States.

At the Warsaw Conference in 1922 the Soviet Government advanced proposals for disarmament and the establishment of demilitarized frontiers. Subsequent meetings were held by representatives of Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Poland, and Soviet Russia at Riga and at Moscow. Lithuania was invited to the latter conference. But the projects for nonaggression pacts and disarmament never materialized, owing to differences arising out of the question of “moral” disarmament and Soviet refusal to make a pledge that Communist propaganda would be terminated.⁵⁶ Another conference, without Russia, was convened at Riga on July 9–11, 1923, where proposals were considered for applying the principles of the Washington Naval Conference to the eastern coast of the Baltic. Moreover, the four countries represented (Latvia, Estonia, Finland, and Poland) agreed to support proposals at Geneva for armament reduction joined with a general treaty of mutual guaranty. Naval disarmament, especially as it was related to the Baltic Sea, held the special attention of these smaller powers which were not disposed to see the reestablishment of Russian naval supremacy in that quarter.⁵⁷

Not until 1925 after the lapse of the Geneva Protocol—an international project requiring compulsory arbitration of disputes before a nation resorts to war—did the Soviet Union resume its attempts at securing nonaggression pacts with Poland and the Baltic States. Soviet relations with Estonia and Latvia in 1924 became strained after the attempted coup in Estonia.⁵⁸ However, after this failure the Soviet attitude tended for a time toward greater acceptance of the status quo in the Baltic area.⁵⁹ Tentative negotiations for nonaggression pacts with Poland and the Baltic States were instituted in 1925.

⁵⁵ Beloff, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

⁵⁶ Baltic States, p. 68.

⁵⁷ Survey for 1920–23, pp. 242–248. For other comments on Soviet Russia and the disarmament conference see Fischer, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 373–381.

⁵⁸ Survey for 1924, pp. 198–203.

⁵⁹ Gottlieb, *Russia and the Baltic*, *op. cit.*, pp. 560–561.

Poland, however, resisted Soviet attempts to break up Baltic unity by declaring that Polish cooperation depended on convening a conference including Finland. The Baltic States made no reply to the Soviet invitation to negotiate an agreement. During an official visit at Kaunas, Foreign Commissar George Chicherin expressed the Soviet Government's approval of a pacific, economic, and political union among the Baltic States, but at the same time he indicated its disapproval of a Greater Baltic Union under Polish leadership.⁶⁰

In 1926, the Kremlin continued advancing the idea of nonaggression pacts on Soviet terms in new overtures to Finland and the three Baltic States, this time waiving previous insistence on separate negotiations; but, apprehensive over the possibility of Polish hegemony in Eastern Europe, the Soviets refused to include Poland in any collective agreement. In the meantime Soviet Russia signed on April 24, 1926, a treaty of neutrality and nonaggression with Germany, an event not unfavorably received among the border States. This factor, along with the continued estrangement of Poland and Lithuania over Vilnius, and the apparent tendency to undervalue Baltic solidarity insofar as to resist the temptation to negotiate with Soviet Russia, prepared the way for the conclusion of a pact of nonaggression between Lithuania and Soviet Russia.⁶¹ On September 28, 1926, the pact was signed. By this accord Soviet Russia put on the record its continued recognition of Lithuanian title to Vilnius, in spite of an official Polish protest. Each party was bound to respect the territorial integrity of the other and to remain neutral if attacked by a third party. Articles 2 and 3 of this pact, which reaffirmed the peace treaty of 1920 as the basis for Lithuanian-Soviet relations, specifically stated:

ART. 2. The Lithuanian Republic and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics undertake to respect in all circumstances each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity and inviolability.

ART. 3. Each of the two Contracting Parties undertakes to refrain from any act of aggression whatsoever against the other Party.

Should one of the Contracting Parties, despite its peaceful attitude, be attacked by one or several third Powers, the other Contracting Party undertakes not to support the said third Power or Powers against the Contracting Party attacked.⁶²

Finally, a system for arbitrating disputes was agreed upon by both parties.⁶³

In the light of events occurring in 1939-40 this pact of nonaggression has particular importance. By the terms of the treaty, it is clear that Lithuanian independence was reaffirmed and that both contracting parties undertook engagements of nonaggression against the other. Lithuanian sovereignty was, therefore, given further support, both moral and legal; and Lithuanian security against a Soviet attack became fixed in international law.

Estonia and Latvia were not enthusiastic about the Soviet-Lithuanian Treaty, but, nevertheless, together they continued negotiations with the Moscow Government. Subsequently, Finnish-Soviet

⁶⁰ On this particular question Fischer commented: "In 1926 the Bolsheviks reckoned with the possibility of foreign attack. To guarantee themselves against this eventuality and in an effort to prevent the formation of a Baltic bloc, the Kremlin accordingly proposed to all Baltic States that they sign nonaggression pacts with Russia." Fischer, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 718-719.

⁶¹ Baltic States, pp. 70-72. Survey for 1927, pp. 223-231.

⁶² Survey for 1927, p. 544.

⁶³ *Ibid.* See also, Fischer, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 717-719. For text and protocol renewing the pact, see Hearings, pp. 481-485.

negotiations broke down on the failure to agree upon, among other points, the structure of the proposed commission of conciliation. Estonian and Latvian negotiations reached a deadlock for the same reason, but in 1927 the Soviet negotiators offered certain concessions to the Baltic point of view. From here on, however, the course of the discussions diverged, Estonia suspending negotiations while Latvia, mainly for economic reasons, initialing a pact on March 9, 1927, although the outstanding questions concerned with obligations to the League Covenant and the conciliation commission remained unresolved.

The apparent momentary departure of Latvia from Baltic solidarity struck a discordant note in Latvia-Estonian harmony, agitating considerably unfavorable public opinion in both countries.⁶⁴ While the initialing of the Latvian-Soviet Pact was regarded as "the most important single event" during the years 1926 and 1927, it did not, however, disrupt Estonian-Latvian unity as it had appeared superficially to do.⁶⁵ The pact was not actually signed, and it was not until 1932 that Baltic confidence in Soviet good faith was sufficient for them to place complete reliance upon instruments of nonaggression.

3. *The Litvinov protocol*

Heretofore, the Soviet Government was disposed to discredit all attempts by the Great Powers to solve the problems of security and disarmament. In August 1928, however, the Kremlin responded to the French invitation to sign the Kellogg-Briand Pact—an international treaty renouncing war as an instrument of national policy—with a declaration of adherence. Apparently, not content to rely solely upon the devices of the West, the Soviet Government, before final ratification of the pact, moved to anticipate this action by alining its border States in a general treaty providing for regional application of the ideas set forth in the proposed pact. Consequently, Foreign Commissar Maxim Litvinov addressed notes to the Polish and Lithuanian Governments, enclosing a draft protocol. In turn, the Lithuanian Government, having accepted the proposal, recommended to the Estonian and Latvian Governments that they also adhere. Poland, taken by surprise, hesitated, suspicious of Soviet attempts to divide the border States by its individual approach, and unwilling to accept an arrangement without the inclusion of Rumania. Subsequent talks at Moscow, however, brought about agreement between Litvinov and the Polish Government. In view of the Soviet Union's apparent conciliatory attitude, Estonia and Latvia, already having indicated their intentions to adhere, almost simultaneously with the Rumanian Government announced their readiness to join Poland. By this time Finland, disassociating itself from its Baltic neighbors, had no part in the negotiations, preferring an alinement with Scandinavia. Estonia and Latvia signed the protocol in February 1929 after their respective Parliaments had approved. Lithuania, to avoid giving the impression of amity with Poland, concurred in a less direct manner. Instruments of ratification were thereafter deposited at Moscow by all the signatory nations.

⁶⁴ Survey for 1927, pp. 227-229.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Significantly, the Litvinov protocol demonstrated Soviet willingness to deal collectively instead of individually with its Baltic neighbors. It quickened Soviet diplomacy which for a year had been passive and negative and, moreover, seemed to reveal a tendency in Soviet policy toward a stronger European orientation. Lithuania and Poland were for the first time since their estrangement brought into agreement, although in an oblique way. Finally, this pact represents an internationally recognized profession of faith by the Soviet Union to the world at large of its peaceful attitude toward the Baltic States and its other neighbors,⁶⁶ a profession of faith which later proved to be meaningless.

F. THE BALTIC STATES IN WORLD AFFAIRS

That the Baltic States had been active, diplomatically speaking, during this period of nascent independence has been demonstrated above. That they had assumed an honorable and responsible place in the family of nations in a broader sense is well substantiated by a review of the treaty arrangements negotiated with other nations and by an examination of their active participation in the League of Nations.

To illustrate the degree of Latvian participation in world affairs, Dr. Alfred Bilmanis, the late Latvian Minister to the United States, estimated that Latvia alone had signed during its 22 years of independence over 300 agreements with foreign powers.⁶⁷ Employing the same measurement, an examination of the British and Foreign State Papers General Index for the years 1922-34 has revealed that for Estonia there is recorded approximately 230 conventions, treaties, protocols, and other engagements negotiated with foreign States during the period from 1920 to 1934.⁶⁸ For the same period there were approximately 150 entries recorded for Lithuania.⁶⁹

The universal recognition of the rule of law, an ideal which the League of Nations professed to advocate, provided one of the few instruments in world politics that might insure the life and limb of small nations. The Baltic States, therefore, looked upon the League as an instrument of peace with the hopeful expectation that it would safeguard their interests of security. In the League of Nations the Baltic States rendered active service, especially to those larger conceptions of international peace, and even in the most difficult days of the League, they maintained a "somewhat desperate loyalty."⁷⁰ Disarmament measures, especially as they were related to the world's navies, held the special interest of the Baltic statesmen, as already mentioned above. Latvia and Estonia, moreover, signed the Geneva protocol, an instrument proposed under the auspices of the League, and then there was common adherence of the Baltic States to the

⁶⁶ Survey for 1929, pp. 63-69. See also, Baltic States, pp. 74-75, and Fischer, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 782-784. For text, see appendix A, I, No. 2.

⁶⁷ Bilmanis, *op. cit.*, p. 381.

⁶⁸ Great Britain. Librarian's department of the foreign office. General index to the British and foreign state papers. London, His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1948, vol. CXXXVIII, 1197 p.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Bilmanis, *op. cit.*, p. 386. See also, Survey for 1920-23, p. 245, and Walters, Francis P. A History of the League of Nations. London, Oxford University Press, 1952, vol. II, p. 649.

Kellogg-Briand Pact.⁷¹ Finally, the Vilnius dispute was often under consideration by the League.⁷²

II. SEARCHING FOR SECURITY, 1930-38

A. EUROPE IN THE 1930'S

The decade of the 1930's was a tragic decade. It was a decade of world economic crisis, of universal insecurity, of violence, and of suffering. War in Ethiopia and China, civil war in Spain, and finally the beginning of another major international conflict were the legacies of 1914-18 bequeathed to a lost generation.

Great expectations of the League, of the many disarmament conferences, and of the profound hope that all men might live in peace were ruthlessly swept aside and ground to dust. Totalitarianism—Communist, Fascist, and Nazi—posed for the first time in over 2½ decades the gravest challenge to world democracy. International anarchy was in the ascendancy in the 1930's; universal respect for the rule of law was in decline.

The powers of revision, at last emerging strong enough to disrupt the equilibrium of Europe established at Versailles, began to fashion Europe to their own image and likeness. Beneath the groundswell of German discontent, the Nazi movement had taken root and had grown to such proportions that Adolf Hitler at last gained full dictatorial power and, leading the German people along the ill-fated highway of German rearmament, reoccupation of the Rhineland, the Anschluss, Munich, Prague, Klaipeda, and finally Poland, plunged the world into another universal war.

The U. S. S. R. emerged from its state of semieclipse in this decade, and for a time alining itself against revisionism, assumed superficially a more respectable place in international society. But the Soviet Union, holding the all-important balance of power on the eve of the world crisis, rejected an alinement with the Western Powers and cast its lot with Germany. Soon after becoming a partner with the Nazis, the Soviet Union promptly began to revise the settlement of 1918-20 by invading Poland, attacking Finland, and willfully destroying the Baltic Republics.

Moreover, Japan joined Italy and Germany in the march toward war during the 1930's.

The western democracies, unable to check the growing tide of totalitarianism, searched for a formula of peace and found appeasement. Not until the early months of 1939, however, did they begin to face up to the enormity of the danger that had beset them, but, then, it was too late; the die had long been cast.

America, slowly rising from the great depression, was not unmindful of Europe's travails during this period; but with continued reluctance

⁷¹ Survey for 1925, vol. II, p. 2. Of Latvia's fulfillment of its international obligations, Dr. Bilmanis with measured pride wrote in 1944: Latvia "strictly adhered to its international obligations. It accepted the decisions of the World Court, and the The Hague Tribunal of Arbitration. It respected all the recommendations of the International Labor Organization, and ratified all the conventions concerning labor, hygiene, etc." Latvian-Russian relations, op. cit., p. 16.

⁷² Baltic States, p. 90. It is not without interest to note that the Baltic States were "unlike other small nations amongst those who signed the invitation to Russia to join the League." Pick, F. W., The Three Baltic Nations. Journal of Central European Affairs (Boulder, Colo.), vol. 3, January 1944, pp. 437-38.

to pursue a policy of engagement in world affairs, it viewed with some detachment and to some extent with unwarranted complacency these years of crisis.

B. TRENDS IN BALTIC FOREIGN POLICY

Strategically, the Baltic region lost none of its potential danger as a battlefield for great power ambitions; rather it gained in international importance during the 1930's. In a very real sense, the Baltic States became an ideological and economic as well as a strategic barrier between their two great and powerful neighbors, Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany.⁷³ In 1934, European statesmen began to focus greater attention on the Baltic region, wondering and speculating upon the role the Balts were to play in the future course of international politics. Far from being a quiet and secluded place, the Baltic region became during the 1930's a zone of conflict and tension.⁷⁴

The rise of Hitler posed new and formidable problems for the Baltic Republics. Generally, apprehension for Baltic security, heretofore centered upon Soviet Russia, now shifted to Nazi Germany.⁷⁵ Despite these seemingly abated fears of Soviet Russia, the Baltic States, nevertheless, maintained generally a course of diplomatic conduct along the same lines as were laid down in the 1920's. Greater emphasis was placed upon Baltic solidarity, however, and "absolute neutrality" emerged as the guiding principle in all relations with the great ideological blocs that divided the European continent. Especially when the League failed to resolve the great issues of the day, the Baltic States resorted to their own devices to maintain their cherished independence.⁷⁶

C. INTER-BALTIC RELATIONS

1. Bases for Baltic fears of Germany

Writing about Europe in the mid-1930's, Prof. Arnold Toynbee described the international alinement in these terms:

By the close of the year 1936, the destiny, not merely of Czechoslovakia and the Baltic States, but of all successor states of Romanov, Hohenzollern, Habsburg, and Ottoman Empires, from Finland to Turkey, inclusive, had come to look as though it were governed by the question whether this "Balkanized" region of Europe was to be dominated and unified and organized under the star of the German Third Reich or under that of the Muscovite "Third Rome."⁷⁷

In the Baltic region, however, statesmen began to look upon Germany as a greater menace to their security than Soviet Russia, and with good reason, for many unpleasant realities could not be ignored after Herr Hitler became Reich Chancellor.⁷⁸ A not inconsiderable

⁷³ Baltic States, p. 62.

⁷⁴ Survey for 1934, p. 407.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 408-409. See also, Baltic States, p. 85, and Gottlieb, Wolfram, Russia's Grip on the Baltic States. The 19th century (London), vol. 126, December: 714.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* See also, Machray, Robert, Baltic trends. The Fortnightly (London), vol. 151, January 1939: 77. For other commentaries on Baltic foreign policy in the early 1930's see Graham, Malbone W., Stability in the Baltic States. Foreign Policy Reports (New York), vol. 7, May 27, 1931: 119-36; and by the same author, Security in the Baltic States. Foreign Policy Reports (New York), vol. 7, February 17, 1932: 437-454.

⁷⁷ In Cakste, Mintauts, Latvia and the Soviet Union. Journal of Central European Affairs (Boulder, Colo.), vol. 9, April 1949: 32-33.

⁷⁸ The British Institute of International Relations commented in 1936: "The Power whom the Baltic statesmen feared at this time was not Russia but Germany * * *." Survey for 1936, p. 537. See also the comments by Robert Machray who wrote: "In 1932 fear of Germany had replaced fear of Soviet Russia, alike in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

German minority very active in Baltic life resided in their territories, and these minorities, receptive to Nazi propaganda and not unsympathetic with Nazi ambitions in northeastern Europe, posed a serious problem to Baltic security.⁷⁹ As the Nazi movement gained momentum, there were serious outbreaks among native sympathizers in Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia. The following account well described the extent of subversive activities in the Baltic States:

A different picture of the situation is presented, however, by a long list of the plots laid bare, and illicit movements suppressed, in the Baltic countries themselves. * * * To name only a few, Nazi organizations for spreading German propaganda in Latvia were discovered in January 1934, and again in April 1936, while in October 1934 the Latvian Branch of the *Baltische Bruderschaft*, a society working for the assimilation of the Baltic countries with Germany, was suppressed. In Lithuania the Kaunas *putsch* of June 1934 was commonly attributed to German inspiration, while in April 1936 several persons were arrested for smuggling across the Lithuanian-East Prussian frontier large quantities of anti-Lithuanian propaganda printed in Germany, inciting the Lithuanian peasants to refuse the payment of taxes. In Estonia a "monster trial" was held in August 1936 of 154 Estonian members of the Liberators' movement, charged with organizing a *putsch* under instructions from Germany. It is impossible to say how far German propaganda and financial assistance were really responsible for this and other similar movements, but there was undoubtedly some ground for complaint on the part of the Governments of the Baltic States.⁸⁰

Furthermore, Latvia and Estonia had once constituted the medieval domain of the Teutonic Knights, a factor of strong ideological appeal among Germans. Then, there was Klaipeda, a city predominantly German and in Lithuania hands. Moreover, there were the German Balts who, having returned to Germany after being dispossessed of their wealth by postwar agrarian legislation, soon after their diaspora began an agitation in Germany for the return of their lands.⁸¹ None of these situations were calculated to deflate German hopes or forestall Nazi subversive activity.

Moreover, the Nazis themselves professed long-range objectives in the Baltic. Burning with incandescent zeal Alfred Rosenberg, a German Balt by birth and intimate adviser of Hitler on foreign affairs, openly preached the doctrine that Germany's manifest destiny lay in a vast expansion eastward with immediate attention given to the eastern Baltic. It is not without significance that an official Nazi calendar as early as 1934 expressed the typical official German attitude toward the Baltic. Two illustrations of Baltic scenes with German troops in action well interpreted the legend "Deutsche Wacht in Balticum." On a scroll beneath the pictures was the following inscription:

The Baltic has an almost entirely German population; in 1915 the victorious German troops were greeted with joy; the Russian Bolsheviks set up a terrible

It increased in 1933, when it became clear that the Third Reich aimed at the possession of the whole of the eastern Baltic up to the Gulf of Finland." Machray, Robert. *The Baltic Pact, Vilna and Memel*. The 19th Century, vol. 117, May 1935: 587.

⁷⁹ Gottlieb, Wolfram: the Baltic States Without Germans. The 19th Century (London), vol. 127, April 1940: 436.

On January 1, 1939, Estonia had an estimated total population of 1,133,917 of which 1.5 percent were German Balts. See Raud, Villibald: *Estonia*. New York, Nordic Press, 1953, pp. 34, 41. In 1935 Latvia had an estimated population of 1,950,502 of which 62,144 or 3.2 percent were Germans. See *Latvian Economic Review* (Riga, Latvia), No. 1 (17), January 1940: 10. The Lithuanian Statistical Yearbook of 1937 placed the population of Lithuania in 1923 at 2,170,660 of which 4.1 percent were Germans. See *Valstybes Statistikos Kalendorius*, 1937. *Centralinis Statistikos Biuras*, Lithuania, p. 74. In 1939 the German minority was estimated to be 88,568. Simutis, op. cit., p. 13.

⁸⁰ Baltic States, pp. 87-88. For Nazi subversive activities in Klaipeda, see below "Klaipeda: The Beginning of the End," p. 191.

⁸¹ Machray, *The Baltic Pact, Vilna and Memel*, op. cit., p. 586. See also, Bilmanis, Alfred, Dr., *Grandeur and Decline of the German Balts*. *Slavonic Review* (Cambridge), vol. 3, December 1944: 50-80.

reign of blood; in 1918-19 German volunteer regiments conquered the country; in 1920 the Peace Treaty of Versailles set up a foreign Government over its people.⁸²

In large capital letters beneath the scroll was inscribed, "Das Baltikum wird wieder deutsch werden"—"The Baltic will again be German."

Public expression of such motives would hardly have a mollifying effect on Baltic anxieties. But, German actions spoke as loud as their words. With the proclamation of Hitler's conscription manifesto of March 16, 1935, the Baltic States began to see with greater clarity the threatening menace of the German Reich to their security. From 1936 to 1938, while Germany concentrated on expansion into Southeastern Europe, nevertheless, the focal point of Nazi ambitions began to shift to the Baltic region. Once more Germany commanded the Baltic Sea when in 1935 the Anglo-German naval agreement relieved Germany of the naval restrictions imposed upon it at Versailles. In some quarters this agreement was regarded as virtually handing over control of the Baltic Sea to the German Navy.⁸³ Thereafter, German policy in the Baltic region unfolded in such a way as to justify the quickening apprehension of Baltic statesmen.⁸⁴

The resurgence of Germany as a great power had a threefold effect upon the Baltic States. The Soviet Government accelerated its efforts to secure the western frontier by creating a system of security arrangements based upon nonaggression and mutual assistance pacts with its neighbors. Secondly, Baltic statesmen began to look upon Soviet Russia with less suspicion as the Nazi movement gained momentum. Finally, the Baltic States, faced with a common danger, drew closer together, a tendency which culminated in the formation of a Little Baltic Entente independent of great power auspices.⁸⁵

2. *Baltic unity accomplished*

Ratification of the German-Polish Nonaggression Pact in January 1934 and the refusal of Germany to join Soviet Russia as a guarantor of Baltic security in March 1934 were the principal forces that finally brought Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into a Baltic Union.⁸⁶

Alarmed by Poland's latest orientation and for other reasons already discussed above, Estonia and Latvia signed a treaty for the organization of the alliance on February 17, 1934, which supplemented the treaty of alliance concluded in 1923. Going considerably beyond the former alliance, this new agreement, modeled on the Balkan Pact, provided that the two countries should act together in international conferences and should be represented by a common delegation; that conferences of the two nations, heretofore only occasional, should henceforth be held at regular intervals; and that a joint council be created for the coordination of legislation and, if necessary, political and economic action.⁸⁷

Lithuania had greater reason to dread the consequences of the new Polish-German rapprochement. Having carried on an "implacable feud" with Poland since the latter's seizure of Vilnius, Lithuania,

⁸² Machray. *The Baltic Pact*. Op. cit., p. 586.

⁸³ *Baltic States*, p. 85.

⁸⁴ *Survey for 1939-46*, p. 262.

⁸⁵ *Baltic States*, pp. 76-77.

⁸⁶ For a brief analysis of the Baltic Entente, see Sidzikanskas, Vaclovas, *Our Tradition of Cooperation*. *The Baltic Review* (New York), No. 1, December 1953: 40-42.

⁸⁷ *Survey for 1934*, pp. 401-411. for text, see League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. 150, 1934, pp. 103-109.

whose anti-Polish orientation had drawn it into closer accord with Soviet Russia—which was itself anxious to exploit this falling-out of historic neighbors for its own peculiar advantage—was now thrust into greater peril when the Klaipeda question arose with heated animation to plague Lithuanian-German relations. Unable to resolve its outstanding questions with Poland and Germany, Lithuania was now virtually isolated with two formidable, discontented neighbors on its flanks. The Polish-Soviet Nonaggression Pact of 1932, renewed in May 1934, tended to deprive Lithuania of a hitherto strong prop in its anti-Polish orientation.⁸⁸ More striking, perhaps, was the state of continuing tension in Soviet-Nazi relations which made Lithuania's position even less palatable.⁸⁹

Accordingly, on April 25, 1934, the Lithuanian Government proposed in a note to the Latvian and Estonian Governments the broadening of the Baltic Entente to include Lithuania. In May, Lithuania was invited to adhere to the recently concluded treaty of defensive alliance. Mindful of the potential danger inherent in the Klaipeda and Vilnius disputes, the Latvian and Estonian Governments, however, established as a condition for negotiations release from any treaty obligations that might involve them in a dispute with either Poland over Vilnius or with Germany over Klaipeda. With this reservation fixed in the treaty instrument, Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia signed the treaty of good understanding and cooperation at Geneva on September 12, 1934. Briefly, the three signatories pledged to confer jointly on foreign policy questions of common concern and to extend to one another mutual political and diplomatic support in their international relations. Among other things, the pact extended the principle of periodic conferences contained in the February treaty to include Lithuania.⁹⁰

Subsequently, conferences were convened by the three Baltic States where such important questions as the Eastern European Pact and arbitration schemes to settle their own differences were discussed. In 1935, a "Bureau for the Promotion of Cooperation Between Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania" met at Riga and devised there a plan for concerted action in cultural and economic matters. In 1936, Latvia, as a representative of the three Baltic States, obtained a nonpermanent seat on the League Council. Other foreign ministers' conferences of the Baltic Union were held in the future. At Tallinn, they convened on May 7-9, 1936, and again in Tallinn from December 9, to December 11 of 1937. During June 10-12, 1938, they met at Riga and finally, in Kaunas on February 1-2, 1939. Problems brought about by pre- and post-Munich conditions, and various concrete questions were subjects for discussion. Treaties and conventions were signed, among which was the trilateral treaty on legislative unification of economic relations. In addition to these meetings, there were several conferences on cultural cooperation held at Kaunas, Riga, Tallinn as well as Helsinki during this period.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Machray, *The Baltic Pact, Vilna and Memel*, op. cit., p. 586.

⁸⁹ Survey for 1934, p. 413.

⁹⁰ Machray, *The Baltic Pact, Vilna and Memel*, op. cit., pp. 585-596. Survey for 1934, pp. 413-415. For text, see appendix A, I, No. 3.

⁹¹ Sidzikauskas, op. cit., pp. 41-43. See also Survey for 1936, pp. 538-539; *Baltic States*, op. cit., p. 84, and Akzin, Benjamin, *Choices Before the Baltic States*. Foreign Affairs (New York), vol. 15, April 1937: 495-508.

Final achievement of Baltic unity was significant for four important reasons. Lithuania, which heretofore had pursued a divergent course and remained aloof from any close attachment with its sister Baltic States, was finally brought into this new territorial and political entity. Secondly, it symbolized the professed intentions of the three Baltic States to maintain their independence and territorial integrity. Thirdly, this Entente, recognized by the League as a "new bloc," became a factor of significance in the changing power alignment when Europe was poised on the threshold of war in the critical months of 1939. Finally, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia, in search for security in a strong Baltic entente, reverted to a collective policy based upon Baltic interdependence from which ultimately there issued a united policy of "absolute neutrality."

Future events, notably the decline of the League of Nations—the citadel of peace where so many small nations had deposited their hopes—conspired against the Baltic Entente. Unfortunately, its great expectations were never fully realized.

3. *Absolute neutrality: Keystone of Baltic policy*

From 1934 to the end of 1938 events placed into sharper focus the lines of foreign policy open to the Baltic States. To place their trust in neutrality, relying upon the inner strength of a tightly knit Baltic Entente, was one possibility. A rapprochement with Germany, such as Poland had accomplished, was also open to them. Finally, an alliance with Soviet Russia was not out of the question.⁹²

At first, the Baltic States were enthusiastic about the Eastern Locarno Pact—a Soviet-inspired security plan to be discussed below—but when Poland and Germany, especially the latter, refused to become signatories, they, too, would not adhere. Rather than offend Germany and run the risk of encountering its resentment by concluding a regional pact under Soviet auspices without the inclusion of that great Teutonic power, the Baltic States abandoned the project.⁹³

The Ethiopian crisis and the subsequent failure of the League of Nations to respond effectively to the challenge of fascism and nazism compelled the Baltic States to reexamine their position in the light of a possible conflict between Germany and Soviet Union. In spite of the fearful consequences that indecision often entails, they could not make up their minds whether to exorcise their haunting fear of Germany, and, like Czechoslovakia, adopt a policy of defiance by joining the Soviet-French alliance, or, like Poland, adopt a policy of conciliation and attachment with Germany.⁹⁴ In 1936-37, however, the three Baltic States showed signs of wavering in some degree toward Soviet Russia—a prospect the Germans tried to counter by means of "threats, blandishments, and propaganda," even if they, themselves, failed to win Baltic support—but, after some setbacks, they hewed to a policy which Poland, as well as their own best interest, commended to them, the policy of neutrality.⁹⁵

Munich marked a milestone in Baltic determination to remain neutral. Baltic statesmen might well have shared the anxiety enter-

⁹² Survey for 1936, pp. 533-539. See also Baltic States, p. 84.

⁹³ Survey for 1936, p. 537.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 536.

⁹⁵ Ibid., pp. 537, 393. See also, Machray, Baltic Trends, op. cit., p. 77.

tained by Robert Machray who, traveling in the Eastern Baltic during the critical month of September 1938, reported:

I was making a tour of the Eastern Baltic from Danzig to Helsingfors last September when the crisis kept on growing in intensity till it reached its climax at Munich as the month was closing. From early in that month I found a feeling in the air that the destinies of the little nations, not excepting the Baltic States, were in the balance.⁹⁷

In December 1938, Latvia and Estonia adopted neutrality laws.⁹⁷ Lithuania followed in January 1939.⁹⁸ Thus, Baltic neutrality, now no longer a pious declaration, became fixed in the Baltic law of the land.

4. Lithuania: the Continuing Problem of Vilnius and Klaipeda

(a) *Vilnius, another chapter.*—Like an incurable malignant growth, the Vilnius dispute continued to be the most disruptive factor in normal relations between Poland and Lithuania. In the end, however, the resurgence of Nazi Germany compelled both countries to reconsider carefully the damaging effect their enduring hostility had had upon their own national interest.

The Klaipeda and Vilnius disputes had won for Lithuania bitter animosity from both Germany and Poland, but with the continued ascendancy of Nazi power and the greater acceptance of its doctrines, the center of gravity shifted from Vilnius to Klaipeda. This development, along with the rapprochement between Germany and Poland in 1934, required Lithuania to reexamine its position with the result that there were evidences of a general tendency in the direction of a more conciliatory policy toward Poland.⁹⁹

Poland, too, was not insensitive to the rise of German power. To be sure Warsaw sought and achieved a rapprochement with Berlin in 1934 and was the first to do so, but this marriage, one of convenience rather than love, never went much beyond the clasping of hands.¹ In the middle 1930's Polish policy tended in the direction of neutrality and detachment. To maintain Poland's great power status, Polish statesmen oscillated between other powers of Europe in response to successive shifts in the power balance, fearful, primarily, of being caught in a Soviet-Nazi pincer movement.² Moreover, efforts by Warsaw statesmen to maintain Polish influence in the Baltic region had, apparently, never diminished to any notable degree. Poland's refusal to sanction the Eastern Locarno Pact, a step which ultimately influenced the Baltic decision, was predicated partly upon the hope of extending Polish influence in the Baltic.³ Significantly, Poland tended also toward an inclination to improve its relations with Lithuania, for quite conceivably Vilnius stood as a barrier for any future plans for broadening Polish influence in the Baltic region.

So strong were the passions in both Poland and Lithuania on this Vilnius question, however, that subsequent attempts to reconcile outstanding differences were doomed to failure. Finally, on March 11, 1938, the day before the German invasion and annexation of Austria,

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

⁹⁸ For texts, see British and Foreign State Papers, 1939, vol. 143, pp. 467-472, 554-559.

⁹⁹ Billmanis, *op. cit.*, p. 388.

¹ Survey for 1935, pp. 275-276.

² Survey for 1936, p. 395.

³ Survey for 1936, p. 394.

⁴ Survey for 1935, vol. I, p. 275.

a crisis was precipitated which ultimately led to a Polish ultimatum on March 17, requiring the unconditional establishment of normal diplomatic relations. French and British diplomats urged both Kaunas and Warsaw to reach an amicable solution. Apparently, Riga and Tallinn, concerned over the crisis, advised the Lithuanian Government that they considered as highly desirable establishment of normal relations. Accordingly, Lithuania submitted, accepting the Polish propositions.⁴ From the Lithuanian point of view, however, the establishment of relations did not alter the legal status of the problem, since its Government would not renounce its right to possession of Vilnius. Thereafter, agreements were reached between both nations which normalized economic and diplomatic relations.

Not until the Molotov-Ribbentrop negotiations in August and September of 1939 was there to be written another chapter in this historic and tragic dispute, but, in the meantime the way had been cleared, temporarily at least, for the consummation of any Polish plan to create a neutral bloc stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea.⁵

(b) *Klaipeda: The beginning of the end.*—The importance of Klaipeda to Lithuanian economic well-being has been discussed above. Suffice it to say that, not only did Klaipeda provide Lithuania the only practicable access to the sea, but in the decade of the 1920's and 1930's it became a comparatively important industrial center.⁶

In the history of Klaipeda during the period under review, one dominant theme, already suggested above, arises in full view, and that is the threat to Baltic security, particularly Lithuania, brought about by the Nazi Revolution of 1933, and as a result of this the quickening activity of the Nazis directed toward the final return of Klaipeda to Germany. Whatever stability had been achieved in the Government of Klaipeda was swept aside by the advent of Hitler. The formation of Nazi parties in Klaipeda; Lithuanian counteraction to reduce their activity; treason trials of Nazi offenders; unstable government; slight improvement in German-Lithuanian relations in 1936; followed by increasing tensions as Germany marched along the road of aggression—all were part of the fluctuating and disturbing currents of affairs in Klaipeda.⁷

After Munich, Nazi activities continued openly and unabated, although they had never ceased their agitation beneath the surface prior to that time. By the end of 1938, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia were filled with greater anxiety that Klaipeda was destined to become the entering wedge of German supremacy in the eastern Baltic. Munich had opened the sluice gates for Nazi domination in the Danubian basin and southeastern Europe; there were no assurances that the seizure of Klaipeda would not indicate a similar thrust to northeastern Europe.⁸

While it is true that the Klaipeda question undoubtedly added to the many zones of peril and areas of discontent in Europe, nevertheless it probably had at least in the long run the salutary effect of making

⁴ Baltic States, pp. 90-93.

⁵ In September 1938, Warsaw "toyed again" with the idea of creating an Eastern European neutral bloc, a "Helsinki-Bucharest Axis." Survey for 1939-46, p. 270.

⁶ Baltic States, p. 102.

⁷ Survey for 1936, pp. 533-539. See also Survey for 1935, pp. 246-265, Survey for 1932, pp. 401-408, and Machray. The Baltic Pact, Vilnius and Klaipeda, op. cit., pp. 594-595.

⁸ Machray, Robert. Baltic trends. The Fortnightly (London), vol. 151. January 1939: 78-79.

less desirable further Polish and Lithuanian estrangement and of compelling greater solidarity in the Baltic Entente.

D. SOVIET RUSSIA AND THE BALTIC REGION

1. *Characteristics of Soviet foreign policy*

If the decade of the 1930's was highlighted by the Nazi Revolution, it was highlighted in no lesser a way by the adherence of Soviet Russia to a policy of engagement in the West. The policy of rapprochement with Germany, laid down at Rapallo, now suffered a complete reversal with the revival of German militarism, and the events of the early 1930's were in themselves grave enough from the point of view of Soviet national interest to catapult Soviet Russia from its previous status of quasi-isolation back again onto the stage of European international politics. The aggressive potentialities of Germany, demonstrated with greater clarity as Nazi policy aims unfolded, compelled Soviet Russia to seek new arrangements for its security, even among nations heretofore reluctant to associate with the foremost international outcast of the decade.

In the Far East, where Japan had emerged as the primary threat to world peace, Soviet Russia liquidated temporarily many of its interests and commitments so that by appeasing its bellicose oriental neighbor, the eastern flank of the U. S. S. R. would be better secured, thus permitting the Soviets to meet Germany on more equal terms. Europe was now to take precedence, for only in Europe, it was argued, could a fatal blow be struck against Soviet Russia.

Collective security seemed to be the watchword of Soviet policy, and cooperation with other powers became the order of the day. For a time Moscow stopped pursuing the policy of world revolution, at least superficially, and settled down to somewhat less overtly hostile preoccupations in the so-called "united front." Basically, Soviet policy objectives were: To establish friendly relations with all nations which could contribute to the advancement of Soviet economic well-being; secondly, to prevent the creation of an anti-Soviet bloc; finally, to broaden the security system already existing between the Soviet Union and its neighbors as an added precaution against an attack from the West.⁹

2. *Manifestations of the New Policy*

Conclusion of a series of bilateral nonaggression treaties provided the means for the Soviet Union's entry into European affairs on a larger scale. Expanding the network of treaties already concluded with its Middle Eastern neighbors, the Soviet Government negotiated from 1931 to 1933 treaties of nonaggression with Finland, Poland, Latvia, Estonia, France, and Italy.¹⁰ The Franco-Soviet rapprochement, described as "epoch making," was largely responsible for launching the Eastern Locarno project in 1934, which culminated in the Franco-Soviet alliance of 1935. With the conclusion of this important pact and its extension in May 1935 to include Czechoslovakia—an outgrowth of common apprehension of German recrudesc-

⁹ Survey for 1933, pp. 180, 174-178. Survey for 1936, pp. 370-392. See also Beloff, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 12 and 70.

¹⁰ Survey for 1934, p. 381.

cence—the Soviet Government alined itself with the antirevisionist powers, a significant development in its latest demarche.¹¹

Resumption of diplomatic relations with the United States in 1933 was significantly part of the Soviet Union's broader objectives to seek greater security in the Far East and in Europe.¹²

Entry of the U. S. S. R. into the League of Nations in 1934, a complete reversal of past policy and proclamation, was a further manifestation of the changing attitude of the Soviet Government. Heretofore, the League, described by Moscow as "the holy alliance of the bourgeoisie for the suppression of the proletarian revolution," had been regarded with "contempt not unmingled with the suspicions that its underlying purpose was the organization of collective action against the Soviet Union."¹³ Factors motivating the Soviet demarche are, however, brought into clearer focus by the knowledge that the Soviet Union entered the League on the third anniversary of the Manchurian crisis and less than 12 months after the day on which Germany announced its intentions of withdrawing from the League.¹⁴

3. *Impact of Soviet policy on the Baltic region*

(a) *Detente in the Baltic.*—Soviet policy in the Baltic, part of the broader plan to checkmate the rise of Nazi Germany, was governed largely by the desire to erect a defensive bloc of friendly nations. To take the initiative in this endeavor and to ease the anxieties of the Baltic peoples from any latent thoughts of Soviet revisionism, seemed to be the guidelines of Soviet activity.

In the early and middle 1930's, Soviet Russia, apparently, gained some measure of success in exorcising temporarily Baltic fears of bolshevism. With bewitching eloquence, the Kremlin renounced its territorial ambitions and abandoned, ostensibly, the Communist consummate achievement, world revolution. In its review of this period, the Royal Institute stated :

* * * the Soviet Government succeeded in convincing all the border states of their sincerity in their protestation that they cherished no territorial ambitions and that they were genuinely content with the frontiers which they had voluntarily accepted in the "postwar" treaties they had negotiated * * * the Soviet Government had now capped their renunciation of territorial ambitions by also abandoning their endeavors to hasten the advent of a World Revolution.¹⁵

Accordingly, Finland, relieved momentarily, gravitated with greater acceleration into the Scandinavian bloc. Poland went quite independently about its own business, resulting in a tendency among the Western Powers to place greater reliance upon the Soviet Union as a counterweight to Germany.¹⁶ Soviet-Lithuanian relations remained "always correct,"¹⁷ while Latvia and Estonia, both succession

¹¹ Survey for 1939-46, pp. 259-260. An earlier account by the Royal Institute of International Affairs recorded the following: "In order to remove any lingering suspicions from the minds of those nations with whom they now sought an understanding for the purpose of mutual defense against a common danger, the Soviet Government accompanied their overtures in 1933 by pointedly proclaiming their conversion, on territorial questions, to the antirevisionist doctrine * * *." Survey for 1933, p. 179.

¹² Browder, Robert Paul, *The Origins of Soviet-American Diplomacy*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1953, 256 pages. See also Bailey, Thomas A., *America Faces Russia*, Ithaca, N. Y., Cornell University Press, 1950, ch. XXI and XXII.

¹³ Beloff, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 6, 42.

¹⁴ Survey for 1934, pp. 354, 371-404.

¹⁵ Survey for 1934, pp. 408-409. For other comments, see Simonds, Frank H., and Brooks Emeny, *The Great Powers in World Politics*, New York, American Book Co., 1937, pp. 371-372, and Beloff, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 24-26.

¹⁶ Survey for 1934, p. 409. Also, Survey for 1939-46, p. 258.

¹⁷ Gottlieb, Wolfram, *Baltic Neutrality*, the *Fortnightly* (London), vol. 152, July 1939, p. 74.

states bordering directly on the Soviet Union, were "now no longer haunted by the fear of being reannexed by their gigantic neighbor; for the Soviet Union was now undisguisedly on the defensive * * *"¹⁸

(b) *Nonaggression pacts concluded.*—Conclusion of the nonaggression pacts marked a milestone in Soviet-Baltic relations. In 1926, the Soviet Government had already negotiated successfully a nonaggression pact with Lithuania, while negotiations with Latvia and Estonia had long been inconclusive. Not until 1932 were nonaggression pacts and supplementary conventions of conciliation finally signed with Estonia and Latvia as well as Finland. The terms of the Latvian and Estonia treaties were practically identical.¹⁹ In substance, all the nonaggression pacts the Soviet Government had concluded with the Baltic States contained the principle that the contracting parties undertook—

to refrain from any act of aggression directed against the other, and also from any acts of violence directed against the territorial integrity and inviolability or the political independence of the other Contracting Party, regardless of whether such aggression or such acts are committed separately or together with other Powers, with or without a declaration of war.

ARTICLE 2. Each of the High Contracting Parties undertakes not to be a party to any military or political treaties, conventions, or agreements directed against the independence, territorial integrity, or political security of the other Party, or to any treaties, conventions, or agreements aiming at an economic or financial boycott of either of the Contracting Parties.²⁰

These treaties of nonaggression, which were renewed to stay in effect until December 31, 1945, by protocols signed at Moscow on April 4, 1934, had a threefold effect. They contributed immeasurably to the stabilization of the Baltic area, a matter of great importance to the Baltic States themselves and for eastern European politics in general.²¹ Provisions had been made for eventual neutralization of these Baltic States under an international guaranty.²² Secondly, the legal basis for Soviet-Baltic relations and Soviet recognition and guaranty of Baltic independence and sovereignty was given added strength by these engagements. Finally, these nonaggression pacts "dispelled all fears" of Soviet hostility so predominant in the opening years of Baltic independence.²³

(c) *Convention on the definition of an aggressor.*—Another gesture by the Moscow Government to take the leadership in the Baltic area and to allay any suspicions there might be of Soviet revisionism was the conclusion of the convention defining an aggressor. At the disarmament conference in 1933 the Soviet delegation, as if to emphasize its antirevisionist tactic, proposed an "uncompromising" and "compre-

¹⁸ The quotation continued: "and in a strategy of self-defense she stood to gain less by being mistress of the Balticum herself than by having Latvia and Estonia as neutral buffer states—to serve the Soviet Union in a future war as the Netherlands had served Germany when she had been under blockade during the war of 1914-18." Survey for 1934, p. 409.

¹⁹ For a detailed juridical analysis of the treaties, see Rutenberg, *The Baltic States and the Soviet Union*, op. cit., pp. 607-615. For text, see appendix A, IV, 3.

²⁰ Bilmanis, *Latvian-Russian Relations*, op. cit., pp. 17-71. In addition to the conclusion of the nonaggression pacts, conventions were signed between Estonia and Soviet Russia and Latvia and Soviet Russia relating to the peaceful settlement of disputes by conciliation. For texts, see *Latvian-Russian Relations*, op. cit., pp. 172-175; *Nazi-Soviet Conspiracy and the Baltic States*, London, Boreas Publishing Co., 1948, pp. 31-32, and hearings, pp. 499-502 (Latvia) and pp. 528-529, 531 (Estonia). By the terms of these conventions, a procedure was laid down for the peaceful settlement of any differences that might arise between the two Baltic signatories and Soviet Russia. For texts of conventions of conciliation, see hearings, pp. 530-531 (Estonia).

²¹ Rutenberg, op. cit., p. 598.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 614-615.

²³ Gottlieb, *Baltic Neutrality*, op. cit., p. 74.

hensive" definition of an aggressor.²⁴ Nothing more was heard of this proposal, however, until the World Economic Conference at London.²⁵ In the following June the Conference convened and again the idea was advanced by the Soviet delegate. This time, Foreign Commissar Litvinov approached representatives from those nations signatory to the Litvinov protocol of 1929 with a view to taking the same anticipatory action, this time on defining an aggressor as set forth in the Geneva draft of May 24, 1933, before the conclusion of the disarmament conference. All states, except Lithuania and Finland, accepted the Litvinov proposal. Accordingly, a convention was signed by eight states including Estonia, Latvia, Poland, and the U. S. S. R. on July 3, 1933. Finland adhered in a convention signed on the following day.²⁶ Again, to avoid the appearance of direct agreement with Poland, the Lithuanian Government concluded a separate bilateral agreement with the Soviet Union on July 5.

In the light of the subsequent conquest of the Baltic States by the U. S. S. R., articles II and III of this convention have special significance. By the terms of these articles, the signatories had undertaken to accept in their relations with each of the other parties the following definition of aggressor:

Article II

* * * the aggressor in an international conflict shall, subject to the agreements in force between the parties to the dispute, be considered to be that State which is the first to commit any of the following actions:

- (1) Declaration of war upon another State;
- (2) Invasion by its armed forces, with or without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State;
- (3) Attack by its land, naval, or air forces, with or without a declaration of war, on the territory, vessels or aircraft of another State;
- (4) Naval blockade of the coasts or ports of another State;
- (5) Provision of support to armed bands formed in its territory which have invaded the territory of another State, or refusal, notwithstanding the request of the invaded State, to take, in its own territory, all the measures in its power to deprive those bands of all assistance or protection.

Article III

*No political, military, economic or other considerations may serve as an excuse or justification for the aggression referred to in Article II * * ** [Italics furnished.]²⁷

Thus, another stone was added to the already imposing legal structure of Soviet-Baltic relations.

Even Soviet leaders gave wide publicity to Moscow's new look in foreign policy. In May 1933, *Izvestia* published a series of articles by Karl Radek, apparently, intended to exorcise suspicions among those small powers along the western frontier that the Soviet Union harbored aggressive territorial ambitions. One such declaration stated:

The way to revision of the predatory Versailles Peace leads through a new world war. Discussion of revision is the smokescreen behind which Imperialism prepares the most terrible and ruthless war that the human brain can conceive, a war by comparison with which all the horrors of the Imperialistic War of 1914-18 will pale * * * The mere fact that revision of the Versailles Treaty is

²⁴ Survey for 1933, pp. 180-181.

²⁵ Beloff, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 53.

²⁶ Survey for 1933, pp. 180-183. Also, *Baltic States*, pp. 77-78.

²⁷ Bilmanis. *Latvian-Russian relations*, *op. cit.*, p. 176. See also, hearings, pp. 486-488 (Lithuania); pp. 508-510 (Latvia). (Estonia.)

linked up with the victory of Fascism shows how much this revision could reckon with the interests of the masses of nations which are regarded by the *Fascisti* as "lower."²⁸

(d) *Failure of the Eastern Locarno Pact.*—By far the most energetic project of Soviet Russia to erect a security network along its western periphery was the negotiations for an Eastern Locarno Pact during the years 1934–35. The Locarno Pact of 1925 had already contributed to the weakening of the Versailles system in eastern Europe. By distinguishing between the western and the eastern frontiers of Germany, the pact ostensibly secured the western frontier, while the eastern, which England refused to guarantee, took on a less sacrosanct character.²⁹ To deter a possible German thrust to the east, Soviet Russia, as has already been demonstrated, concentrated on the revival of existing international instruments. Another course, pursued simultaneously, was to complete the Locarno system by securing the eastern frontier of Germany and bridging the two security systems, thus giving greater substance to the recent rapprochement with France and at the same time advancing the Soviet Union's own security objectives in eastern Europe.³⁰

After Germany had withdrawn from the Disarmament Conference in October 1933 and announced its intention of withdrawing from the League, the Soviet and Polish Governments proposed in December 1933 an engagement to Latvia, Estonia, Finland, and Lithuania whereby jointly they would guarantee their sovereignty and independence against German aggression. Finland rejected the proposal; the others had not yet decided. On January 26, 1934, a new and disturbing element entered into the picture: Germany and Poland signed a pact of nonaggression. Aware that Baltic hesitation was fixed in a common fear of arousing German antagonism, Litvinov proposed on March 28 that Germany too become a guarantor. On April 25, Germany flatly rejected the Soviet proposal. Accordingly, the Baltic States also refused to concur on the grounds that the guaranty was useless without Germany. Not disposed to arouse German discontent, they held fast to this position, preferring to draw closer together the bonds of Baltic unity.³¹

With dogged determination, Foreign Commissar Litvinov pursued his plan for an Eastern Locarno. On May 18, again he brought up the plan for a pact with the French Foreign Minister, Louis Barthou, this time at Geneva. Barthou was receptive, and the two foreign ministers projected a plan for an East European Pact of Security and Mutual Assistance. As the plan took form, the Governments of Soviet Russia, Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Finland, and the Baltic States were to be included in a broad project which in substance called for nonaggression pledges among the signatories; concerted action to aid signatory nations which were victims of aggression; French and Soviet adherence as additional guarantors to the Eastern Pact and the Locarno Pact respectively, and, finally, a general act emphasizing the peaceful intentions of the engagements and their compatibility with the Covenant of the League.³²

²⁸ Survey for 1933, p. 161.

²⁹ Survey for 1930–46, p. 247.

³⁰ Beloff, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 92.

³¹ Survey for 1934, pp. 410–413. See also Survey for 1935, vol. I, pp. 58–63, and Baltic States, pp. 78–79.

³² Survey for 1935, vol. I, pp. 62–67. Also, Baltic States, pp. 78–79.

Not informed of the terms of the proposed pact, the Baltic States remained noncommittal. In the meanwhile, Poland tried to discourage any engagement by Estonia and Latvia, but even after a visit by the Polish Foreign Minister, Col. Joseph Beck, both Governments continued cautiously their noncommittal attitude. In July, the Latvian and Estonian foreign ministers visited Moscow and on the 29th issued declarations assenting in principle to the pact, although reserving final decision pending receipt of the treaty text. Likewise, after a Moscow visit the Lithuanian Foreign Minister issued a statement substantially along the same line.

Other governments had concurred in the projected plan, but the refusal of Germany and Poland to participate finally determined not only the fate of the pact itself but also the Baltic decision. As a matter of fact, the Baltic States, which were "strongly in favor" of the pact, accepted the German rejection as the "worst shock" to their security.³³

Polish and German rejections were based on the argument that existing treaties sufficiently secured Eastern Europe. Moreover, the proposed pact, it was argued, would tend to stabilize the status quo of Klaipeda and Vilnius, thus causing complications because of the positions taken on these questions by Lithuania, Germany, and Poland.

Then, Germany could not very well reconcile a pact with Communist Russia with the pronounced doctrine that Germany was the chief bulwark against communism.³⁴ Finally, it was unlikely that Germany would accept an arrangement which might conceivably restrain its ambitions to the east.³⁵

Further negotiations for the proposed pact lapsed until the early part of 1935 when they were resumed again in London. On March 13, 1935, the Ministers of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia informed the British Foreign Secretary of the favorable disposition of their Governments toward the pact. Three days later, however, Germany denounced the armament clause of the Versailles Treaty and proclaimed compulsory military service. Thereafter, the French, Soviet, and Czechoslovakian Governments, determined to reach security arrangements with or without Germany, began to take positive action which culminated in the conclusion of an alliance of mutual assistance between the Soviet Union and France on May 2 and between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia on May 16, 1935. Overtures had been made to the Baltic States for a similar arrangement, but the exclusion of Germany dampened any Baltic enthusiasm, although Baltic statesmen did not close the door entirely on a regional agreement for their security.³⁶

In September 1935, the Ethiopian crisis erupted, attracting the attention of European statesmen and pushing to the background the question of an Eastern Locarno.

(e) *Stresses, strains, and normality in Soviet-Baltic relations.*—The years 1936 through 1938 were banner years in the rise of fascism

³³ Gottlieb. *Russia's Grip on the Baltic States*. The 19th Century (London), vol. 126, December 1939 : 714.

³⁴ Survey for 1935, vol. I, pp. 73-79. Also, *Baltic States*, p. 79.

³⁵ Beloff, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 92.

³⁶ A communique issued after the conference of the Baltic States on May 6-8, 1935, reaffirmed their acceptance of and willingness to take part in regional security arrangements. Survey for 1935, vol. I, p. 78.

and nazism. Mussolini concluded his Ethiopian venture with its annexation to Italy; Hitler's troops occupied the Rhineland in March 1936; the civil war had begun in Spain; war was resumed on the Asiatic continent in 1937 between China and Japan; in March 1938, Germany annexed Austria, and, finally, as a result of the Munich agreement in September 1938, Czechoslovakia was dismembered.

The Baltic States, especially Latvia and Estonia, clung loyally to the principle of neutrality, but in 1936 there was a noticeable tendency of "wavering slightly towards closer relations with the U. S. S. R."³⁷

In the spring of 1936, the Chiefs of General Staff of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia made a simultaneous visit to Moscow. Subsequently, the Fourth Annual Conference of the Baltic Entente, convening at Tallinn, opened on this note of alarm when the Estonian Foreign Minister declared:

The chief object of our meetings is the consolidation of peace, but today peace seems farther off than at the time of our first conference. During the recent international conflicts the League of Nations has shown itself powerless and has thus lost the best part of its prestige and influence. The armaments race has begun again in all countries, the pre-war system of alliances is growing up, and mutual distrust between the nations is increasing day by day.³⁸

In a communique issued on May 9, the Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their faith in the League, demanded equality of guaranties of security for all parts of Europe, and proffered their cooperation in construction of a general system of security, although not rejecting the principle of regional arrangements which remained within the framework of such a system or the League.³⁹ A subsequent conference held in December 1936 reflected substantially the same views, objectives, and alarms as the previous one.⁴⁰

News of the Anti-Comintern Pact signed between Japan and Germany, Soviet Russia's foremost potential enemies, caused some apprehension among the Baltic States which were fearful "lest new pressure on the Soviet Union in Asia should weaken its power to defend them against Germany."⁴¹

Friendly relations with the Soviet Union, however, suffered a setback in November 1936. In a speech before the Congress of Soviets, Andrei Zhdanov, secretary of the Communist Party for the Lenin-grad region, uttered a threat to the Baltic States which in the light of subsequent events 3 years later was indeed prophetic:

Round us are small countries which dream of great adventures or allow great adventurers to manipulate their territory. We are not afraid of these little countries but if they do not mind their own business, we shall be compelled to open our borders and it will be too bad if we are compelled to use the Red Army on them.⁴²

The Kremlin tried to counter the effects of Zhdanov's outspoken remarks by assuring the Baltic States that Soviet Russia had no aggressive intentions. Later at Kaunas, however, Soviet Minister Karsky declared that Soviet-Lithuanian friendship was an "important factor of peace"; that the Baltic States "could not remain outside a conflict in Europe"; that "declarations of neutrality only excited the

³⁷ Baltic States, p. 85.

³⁸ In Survey for 1936, p. 537.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 536-537.

⁴⁰ Baltic States, p. 86.

⁴¹ Beloff, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 78.

⁴² In Beloff, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 78.

greed of the aggressor"; and, finally, that only the Soviet Union "was in a position to protect the Baltic States."⁴³

Throughout 1937, Soviet-Baltic relations remained "reasonably good." The Soviet Chief of Staff, Marshal Egorov, visited the Baltic capitals, ostensibly to return the courtesy of the Baltic Chiefs of Staff. The Soviet Warship *Marat*, moreover, made a visit at Riga. In June 1937, Foreign Commissar Litvinov used the visit of the Latvian statesman, V. Munters, to Moscow as an occasion to reassure the Baltic States of continued Soviet friendship. Alluding to the 17 years of good relations between Soviet Russia and Latvia, Litvinov stated that:

Latvia's geographical position is such that the U. S. S. R. cannot help being interested in the maintenance of her complete independence.⁴⁴

For the future orientation of the Baltic States there seems to be no doubt that the Soviet Union had entertained some concern. This deep concern was, however, more forcefully demonstrated during the Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations which were to be carried on in the spring and summer of 1939.

E. THE BALTIC STATES IN WORLD AFFAIRS

The Baltic States continued to be loyal supporters of the League of Nations, energetically playing a positive role in the broader schemes for international undertakings to maintain world peace. Baltic conferences provided a suitable platform for the many occasions on which Latvian, Estonian, and Lithuanian statesmen pronounced their adherence to the League and other plans of peace not incompatible with the covenant. Final consummation of the Baltic Entente was a highlight in Baltic relations with the League, for the Baltic States, recognized formally as a consolidated, positive political entity, were henceforth assigned one seat in the Council of the League.⁴⁵

It was not without alarm that the statesmen of Tallinn, Riga, and Kaunas witnessed the growing weakness of the League. To ignore the disintegration of the Versailles system, they could not do; nor could they ignore the disturbing spectacle of seeing Europe sinking into an abyss of lawlessness. In search of a policy to suit their own national interests, Baltic statesmen placed greater emphasis upon Baltic solidarity and ultimately settled upon the precarious policy of absolute n utrality.

III. BETWEEN NAZI GERMANY AND COMMUNIST RUSSIA, 1939

A. EUROPE IN 1939

During the opening months of 1939, the darkening clouds of war began to gather, casting their ominous and forbidding shadows across

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 78-79.

⁴⁴ In *Baltic States*, pp. 96-87. Contemporary comments by Joseph E. Davies, former Ambassador of the United States to the Soviet Union, shed an interesting light on Baltic-Soviet relations. Estonia: "Their attitude to Russia is friendly and formal. They want to get along with their big neighbour, but they still remember the unsuccessful Communist putsch of 1924 * * * From the military point of view, in the event of a German attack on Russia, they seem to think that they are outside the danger zone." Latvia: "A balance and a strict neutrality between Germany, Poland, and the U. S. S. R. are * * * imperative * * *" Lithuania: "It is in the heart of the danger zone as between the Soviet Union and Germany and while desirous of maintaining strictly formal relationships with Germany it is the most friendly to Russia of all the European states adjacent to the U. S. S. R. * * * the government and the entire population are bitterly hostile to Poland." In Beloff, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 79.

⁴⁵ Sidzikauskas, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

the Continent of Europe. The powers of lawlessness and aggression, having long seized and held the initiative, dominated the European scene, and fashioning events to suit their own whims and fancies seemed prepared to take on greater adventures in order to extend their authority to the east and west, to the north and south.

At this late hour France and England joined with Soviet Russia and attempted at the last moment to construct a circle of strength—a “peace front,” as it was called—to contain the already excited ambitions of Nazi Germany. But Soviet Russia, conscious of the impending crisis in Europe, interpreted by its high priests as the “second imperialist war of the bourgeois capitalist powers,” proved to be a fleeting partner. In August 1939, as the shadows of tragedy, descending, closed in upon Eastern Europe, Soviet Russia, while simultaneously negotiating with France and England, struck a bargain with Nazi Germany.

Except for Soviet Russia, which stood alone as the unknown quantity, the die of power alinement had been cast long before the opening months of 1939. The equilibrium of Europe depended solely upon Soviet Russia; it was Soviet Russia which held the vital counterpoise in the balance of power. Whichever way its Government chose to cast its weight was destined to be a determining factor in deciding the question of war or peace. Taking what the highest bidder had to offer, the U. S. S. R., which seemingly had more to gain in the short run from a German rapprochement, chose the path of conquest for itself, a choice which meant war for the rest of Europe, and for itself, immediate aggrandizement through seizure of the Baltic States, eastern Poland, and other areas along the borderlands of Western Europe. Thus, Soviet Russia succeeded, temporarily, in partial fulfillment of its fundamental objective of Communist world dominion. By diverting German aggression to the west, Soviet Russia hoped to create in addition the conditions for what it termed the “second imperialist war” among the Western Powers, from the ruins of which, according to Communist dogma, Soviet Russia might thereafter stand supreme among nations with strength unimpaired and energy undiminished ready to advance the cause of world communism.⁴⁶

The United States, troubled by the shocks of crises and wars that from the East and the West reverberated against the American shores, saw with greater clarity, and greater alarm, the perils that were besieging the world beyond them.

B. ATTEMPTS TO CREATE A PEACE FRONT

1. *Power alinement*

The Munich agreement had opened up a pandora's box of woe for Europe, for the first fruits of this ill-advised accord were the

⁴⁶ Survey for 1939-46, p. 529. See also, Seton-Watson, Hugh, *From Lenin to Malenkov: The History of World Communism*, New York, Frederick A. Praeger, 1953, ch. 10: “The Nazi-Soviet Pact.” For other works dealing with world communism, see: Ebon, Martin, *World Communism Today*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1948, 536 p.; Borkenau, Franz, *European Communism*, London, Faber & Faber, 1951, 564 p.; *Blueprint for World Conquest*, Washington, Human Events, 1946, 264 p.; Carew-Hunt, R. N., *The Theory and Practice of Communism*, London, Geoffrey Bles, 1950, 232 p.; Carman, Ernest D., *Soviet Imperialism; Russia's Drive Toward World Domination*, Washington, D. C., Public Affairs Press, 1950, 175 p.; Bouscaren, Anthony T., *Imperial Communism*, Washington, D. C., Public Affairs Press, 1953, 256 p.; Haines, C. Grove, ed., *The Threat of Soviet Imperialism*, Baltimore, the Johns Hopkins Press, 1954, 402 p.; and U. S. Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Strategy and Tactics of World Communism*, 80th Cong., 2d sess., Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1948, supplements I, II, and III.

German occupation of Prague and the dissolution of the Czechoslovak Republic in the middle of March 1939. At Munich, England and especially France had abdicated, temporarily at least, their historic influence in Eastern Europe. German influence expanded eastward, hastily filling the vacuum of power.⁴⁷ Small nations could now no longer count on the support of the Western Powers. After March 15, the power alinement was crystallized into three divided camps: the Anti-Comintern Powers, the Western Powers, and Soviet Russia.⁴⁸ Hopes for a neutral bloc of Eastern European states now quickly dissipated—an illusion and nothing more. Poland, directly menaced by German forces on three sides, “poised for a quick and telling blow,” was left to its own resources.⁴⁹ The seizure of Klaipeda by Germany forewarned the Baltic States; they sought what consolation there was in the phantom of neutrality. Soviet Russia, whose suspicions of and hostility toward the Western Powers were confirmed by its exclusion from the Munich settlement, was the unknown quantity in the European power alinement—the “x” factor, so to speak, in the European equation of great powers. But the Soviet Government, which had for those months after Munich pursued a policy of disengagement from Western Europe, could not now safely ignore the danger to its own security inherent in the German thrust to the East.

Forces of common interest seemed to bring Soviet Russia into closer alinement with the Western Powers; for after March 15, England and France tried to salvage in Eastern Europe what they could from the ruins of their past misjudgment. In an attempt to construct at this late hour a peace front as the best assurance against further German aggression, their efforts were directed along two main lines: to support Poland and other Eastern European States by guaranties of mutual assistance; and to bring Soviet Russia into a system of security by mutually guaranteeing States in Eastern and Western Europe against German aggression.

2. *Baltic States in the Anglo-Polish negotiations*

Seizure of Klaipeda followed the German occupation of Prague, and like the latter event had far-reaching effects on the diplomacy of the Western Powers. The forceful solution of the Klaipeda question had been coupled with a military threat from the German Foreign Minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop, who declared that if Lithuania resisted or if there were any spilling of German blood, “the matter would have to be handed over to the German military authorities, in which case the matter might not eventually stop at the Memel territorial frontier.”⁵⁰ Not only Poland, whose frontier directly adjoined Lithuania, but also England registered concern should Germany carry out its military threat.⁵¹ Subsequently, on March 31 both France and Great Britain pledged their assistance to Poland in the event of any threat to Polish independence. Later, on April

⁴⁷ Survey for 1939-46, p. 277.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 509-510.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 291.

⁵⁰ Great Britain. Foreign Office. Documents on British foreign policy, 1919-39. London, His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1951, vol. IV, p. 397. No. 441: Sir G. Oglvie-Forbes (Berlin) to Viscount Halifax, March 20, 1939.

⁵¹ Halifax in his instructions to Sir Kennard (Warsaw) on March 21, 1939, stated that “if Lithuanian independence were placed in jeopardy, this was a matter which would affect all of us.” *Ibid.*, p. 436, No. 471.

4-6, 1939, when the British and Polish Governments opened negotiations to give this pledge greater substance by the conclusion of a mutual assistance pact, the question of Lithuanian territorial integrity was brought up several times in the discussions that ensued. Poland particularly was anxious to encourage "in a discreet way" the spirit of resistance among the Lithuanian people, while, at the same time, not unnecessarily provoking Germany.⁵²

In a joint declaration published after the negotiations had been concluded, the British and Polish Governments announced that pending final conclusion of the pact both nations undertook to consider themselves bound by obligations of mutual assistance. The temporary agreement, like the permanent agreement, did not state the country against which the pact was directed. Significantly, however, the temporary agreement, containing the phrase that the pact was designed to assure Britain and Poland of mutual assistance in the event "of any threat, *direct or indirect*, to the independence of the others" [italics furnished], has been interpreted as meaning that Poland considered a threat to Lithuanian independence as a threat to its own independence.⁵³ The final agreement left no doubt on this point, but so disturbed was the Soviet Government by the words "indirect" threat—apparently, as it might bear on Lithuania—that through the Soviet Ambassador in London it sought further clarification from the British Government on this point.⁵⁴

Finally, on August 25, 1939, the Anglo-Polish Mutual Assistance Pact was signed. Article 1 established the conditions of aggression and war under which the pact would take effect. Article 2, paragraph 2 of the agreement, which extended the provisions of Article 1, stated that:

Should one of the Contracting Parties become engaged in hostilities with a European Power in consequence of action by that Power which threatened the independence or neutrality of another European State in such a way as to constitute a clear menace to the security of that Contracting Party, the provisions of Article 1 will apply, without prejudice, however, to the rights of the other European State concerned.⁵⁵

By the terms of a secret protocol, which more clearly defined the above articles of the pact, Germany was specifically named as the European power against which the pact was directed. No less important was paragraph 2b and 2c of the protocol which specifically stipulated Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia as falling within the area of Polish security requirements. By the terms of these paragraphs, Poland and Britain agreed that:

(b) Until such time as the two Governments have agreed to modify the following provisions of this paragraph, they will consider: that the case contemplated by paragraph (1) of Article 2 of the Agreement is that of the Free City of Danzig; and that the cases contemplated by paragraph (2) of Article 2 are Belgium, Holland, Lithuania.

(c) Latvia and Estonia shall be regarded by the two Governments as included in the list of countries contemplated by paragraph (2) of Article 2 from the moment that an undertaking of mutual assistance between the United Kingdom and a third State covering those two countries enters into force.⁵⁶

⁵² Great Britain. Foreign Office. Documents on British foreign policy, 1919-39 edited by E. L. Woodward and Rohan Butler. London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1962. IV Series, vol. V, p. 3, No. 1.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, vol. IV, p. 35, No. 1.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. V, p. 53, No. 19.

⁵⁵ Umiatowski, R. C. Poland, Russia, and Great Britain, 1941-45.

London, Hollis and Carter, 1946, pp. 519-520.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

3. *Baltic States in the Anglo-French and Soviet negotiations*

The Czech crisis of March 15 was the signal for a rapprochement between Soviet Russia on the one hand and France and England on the other. Without attempting to untangle the maze of diplomatic negotiations that characterized subsequent discussions among these powers, suffice it to say that after 4 months of lengthy, arduous negotiations, the project to include Soviet Russia in a peace front to counter the Rome-Berlin axis ended in a "complete fiasco."⁵⁷ While simultaneously negotiating with the Germans, the Soviet Russians enriched themselves by increasing their demands upon each party as the negotiations were prolonged, demands largely met by concessions, followed by greater demands and greater concessions. From the Germans, the Soviet Government won concessions that France and England could not match, and thus Moscow took the highest bid.

The problem of the Baltic States offered the most insuperable obstacle to the successful conclusion of an Anglo-French-Soviet mutual assistance accord. Briefly, the main obstacles were: the insistence of Soviet Russia upon direct guarantees for the independence of Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Rumania, Turkey, Greece, and Belgium whether or not those powers wanted such guarantees; and the insistence of Soviet Russia that the guarantees should be against both direct and indirect aggression.⁵⁸ To meet the Soviet demands and resolve the outstanding differences, France and England proposed a "veiled guarantee" of the Baltic States—a conciliatory gesture of particular importance to the Soviet point of view—in return for a Soviet guarantee of Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. On July 4, the Soviet Government rejected this proposal, insisting in addition that the guarantee should embrace both direct and indirect aggression. A guarantee of Switzerland and Netherlands they would not accept, and further stated that a military agreement must be concluded as a prior condition to any political engagement.⁵⁹

The British and French were disheartened by these new demands which in effect would make them partners to Soviet imperialism in the Baltic region.^{50a} The formula of indirect aggression could be interpreted in many ways, depending upon one's own subjective desires. Left alone to judge for themselves when indirect aggression occurred, the Soviet Russians could accept or create any peculiar set of circum-

⁵⁷ Dallin, David J., *Soviet Russia's Foreign Policy, 1939-42*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1944, p. 13. For detailed treatment of these negotiations see Beloff, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 211-276; Langer, William L., and S. Everett Gleason, *The Challenge to Isolation, 1937-40*, New York, Harper, 1952, ch. III; and Dallin, op. cit., ch. III.

⁵⁸ Langer, op. cit., pp. 117-119. In a letter to the Latvian Government, and likewise to the Governments of Estonia, Finland, Poland, and Rumania, dated May 30, 1939, the British Government stated in part:

⁵⁹ Langer, op. cit., p. 119.

^{50a} England had given this assurance to Latvia:

"His Majesty's Government had endeavored, in drafting their proposals to the Soviet Government, to meet the wishes of the Latvian Government not to be associated with the Soviet Government in the system of guarantees which the British, French, and Soviet Governments are undertaking. It is in particular to be noted that any Government desirous of receiving the help of the three signatories of the proposed agreement may under Article I obtain this without being compelled for this to accept any guarantee from the Soviet Government or to enter into undertaking with the latter. Under the proposed agreement assistance would be given only (1) in pursuance of an undertaking previously given in conformity with the wishes of the State concerned or (2) in consequence of a request by the State concerned for assistance in resisting a violation of its neutrality. Likewise, should the Soviet Government wish to give an undertaking such as is referred to in Article 2 they will have under Article 6 to consult Great Britain and France before doing so. His Majesty's Government hopes that these safeguards will be completely reassuring to the Latvian Government and will convince them that their liberty of action is in no way prejudiced." [Italics furnished.]

From the archives of the Latvian Legation in London and quoted by Sprudz, Adolfs. *The Annexation of Latvia by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*. Louvain (type-written dissertation), July 1953, pp. 14-15.

stances to effect an intervention by their armed forces. In commenting upon the outstanding differences, two noted American historians observed:

*** there was more than sufficient reason for believing that the Soviet Government had territorial ambitions with regard to the entire frontier region lost to it in 1917 and the succeeding years. London and Paris were well aware of Soviet claims and hopes and therefore found themselves in an awkward if not impossible position when confronted with the Soviet note of June 2, 1939. Apart from their unwillingness to aid and abet the expansion of Communist power, they felt strongly that, after posing as the defenders of small states against aggression, they could hardly themselves take part in forcing upon the Baltic States arrangements which they definitely did not want and would not accept. *** They would never, so they said, accept a definition of indirect aggression that would permit the Soviets to march into the Baltic States at their pleasure. ***⁶⁰

Suddenly, on July 24, 1939, the Soviet Foreign Commissar, Vyacheslav Molotov, announced the satisfaction of the Soviet Government, substantially, with the French and English position.⁶¹ All along the line Moscow conceded, abandoning largely its heretofore intransigent posture, although it stipulated that the guaranteed States listed in a secret protocol were to be Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Rumania, Turkey, Greece, and Belgium.⁶²

Hopefully, London and Paris had great expectations that this new Soviet move meant that Moscow was determined to sign a pact. It seemed as if the way was clear for final consolidation of a peace front. Special British and French military missions arrived in Moscow on August 11 to confer with Soviet military authorities. There, they were feted with cordial and respectful enthusiasm. But all of this proved to be only an empty gesture; for Molotov's sudden concession to the French and British was no more than a "cunning move" to gain time and to create the impression in the official German mind that the U. S. S. R. was about to join the peace front. If successful, the Soviets could strike a better bargain that would enable them to avoid the impending conflict while simultaneously furthering their own imperialistic aims in Eastern Europe.⁶³

C. AFFAIRS IN THE BALTIC

1. *Neutrality in jeopardy*

The Baltic Entente had been the quintessence of Baltic achievement and absolute neutrality the touchstone of Baltic hopes for peace and security. It is not an exaggeration to say that the Baltic States, especially Latvia and Estonia, clung desperately to their adopted policy of absolute neutrality during the critical months of 1939. The power of final decision, however, lay not in Riga, Kaunas, and Tallinn but rather in Berlin and Moscow. Between Nazi Germany and Communist Russia, the small Baltic States, virtually compelled to dance

⁶⁰ Langer, *op. cit.*, 117, 119.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

⁶² *Ibid.* Why Lithuania was included among those nations to be guaranteed at the final stage of negotiations and not in the earlier period raises an important question. At that time Soviet Russia had not, apparently, considered Lithuania as lying within its sphere of vital interest because significantly later negotiations with Nazi Germany, which culminated in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of August 23, had placed Lithuania in the German sphere. Not until the second Molotov-Ribbentrop agreement of September 28 was Lithuania finally considered as being part of the Soviet sphere. See in appendix secret protocol of August 23 and September 28, 1939; U. S. Department of State, *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-41*, Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1948, pp. 78 and 107, in appendix A, I, pp. 4-5.

⁶³ Langer, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

on a needle's point, were unable to protect themselves against any danger that might descend upon them. For, the logic of events—the failure of the League as a reliable supporter; the ascendancy of international immorality; the inability of France or England to provide physical support to Eastern Europe in any practical, realistic way; the inability of the London and Paris Governments to satisfy Soviet avarice in the prolonged negotiations discussed above; and, finally, the bargain struck between Stalin and Hitler—all, placed Baltic neutrality in dire jeopardy: more than that, as Soviet policy soon unfolded in Northeastern Europe, it meant ultimately the willful destruction of Baltic independence and national sovereignty.

2. *Klaipeda: Solution by force*

Baltic neutrality became a matter of domestic law after Munich. The Czech crisis, the seizure of Klaipeda, and the subsequent German thrust eastward, however, dealt a serious blow to the security of the entire area of Northeastern Europe. As early as October 1938 plans had already been laid for military action against Lithuania once the Czechoslovakian question had been resolved.⁶⁴

The ultimatum which accompanied the demand for the retrocession of Klaipeda has been discussed above. Suffice it to say, therefore, that on March 22 an "agreement" was signed, designed to secure "friendly relations" between Lithuania and Germany. In the opening declaration the Klaipeda territory, "severed from the Reich by the Treaty of Versailles," was to be "this day reunited with the German Reich." The instrument ended with an undertaking by both Governments "not to use force in their mutual relations, *nor encourage its use against either by a third party.*"⁶⁵ In the light of subsequent Soviet-Nazi negotiations, which centered partly on the Baltic region, this last engagement is not without special interest. It is no less significant, moreover, that the German seizure of Klaipeda was carried out wholly beyond the realm of law and in contravention to the Memel (Klaipeda) Convention of 1924 which, according to article 15, stipulated that neither the sovereign rights in the Klaipeda territory nor the exercise of these rights could be transferred without the consent of the High Contracting Parties.⁶⁶

3. *Absolute neutrality affirmed*

During the Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations that followed the seizure of Klaipeda, Latvia and Estonia were the most active politically among the Baltic States. Lithuania, the first Baltic State to experience overt German aggression, had been brought into the negotiations between the Polish and British Governments which finally extended the guarantee of mutual assistance to include Lithuania, and ultimately, in a less direct way, Estonia and Latvia.⁶⁷ During the critical months from April to August, Estonia and Latvia, however, maintained an independent course, asserting vigorously their policy of absolute neutrality and even going so far as to conclude a non-aggression pact with Germany.

⁶⁴ Documents. Survey for 1939-46, vol. I, pp. 36-39.

⁶⁵ Italics furnished. See Namier, Lewis B., *Diplomatic Prelude, 1938-1939*. London, Macmillan, 1948, pp. 86-88.

⁶⁶ Dauksa, op. cit., p. 291.

⁶⁷ Dallin, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

Latvia and Estonia did not equivocate in stating their intention of remaining neutral. On March 28, 1939, the Soviet Government announced in a declaration to both Riga and Tallinn that it could not remain impassive if the independence of the Baltic States were infringed upon, either by their own consent or under outside pressure. Soviet Foreign Commissar Litvinov stated to the Estonian Minister in Moscow on March 28:

* * * This declaration is made in the spirit of sincere benevolence towards the Estonian people, with the purpose of enhancing in the Estonian nation a feeling of security and confidence in the readiness of the Soviet Union to prove with deeds, in case of need, its interests in preserving in its entirety for the Republic of Estonia its independent existence as a state and its political and economic independence, as well as confidence in the inability of the Soviet Union to remain an idle bystander of open or masked attempts to destroy Estonia's self-determination and independence.⁶⁹

In reply, both Baltic Governments, however, perceiving clearly the dangerous implications of the declaration, rejected forthwith any restrictions upon their sovereignty, reserving for themselves the right to judge when that sovereignty was endangered.⁶⁹

Almost simultaneously, the groundwork was being laid for the Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations, and as has been demonstrated above, one fundamental demand from Moscow called for a guarantee of the Baltic States. Alarmed at the possibility of being "sacrificed" by Great Britain and France, Estonian and Latvian statesmen reacted forcefully to the Soviet demand that the Baltic States be compelled to accept against their will a guarantee against direct and indirect aggression.⁷⁰ With apparent uneasiness, the British and French Governments, themselves not unmindful of the implications of the Soviet demand, resisted this course, and ultimately agreed only to a "veiled guarantee." On their part Latvia and Estonia preferred not to be mentioned even by name in any agreements between the Great Powers of either group in such a way as would by implication compromise their neutrality.⁷¹

While it is true that Baltic statesmen dreaded the resurgence of German power—and the Klaipeda affair, which seemed to foreshadow a Nazi drive into the eastern Baltic, fully justified their anxieties—the source of their great fear was, nevertheless, now centered upon Soviet Russia and not Germany.⁷² In October, when the die had already been cast, the American Minister to Latvia had been informed by the German Minister, Hans Ulrich von Kotze, in a private conversation that the Latvian Cabinet was divided on the question of placing Latvia "at the entire disposal of Germany (meaning presumably to ask for a German protectorate) arguing that anything was preferable to Soviet occupation."⁷³

Fear of the Soviet Union was, therefore, the cornerstone of Baltic resistance to the proposed international guaranty.

⁶⁹ Kef. August, ed., *Nazi-Soviet Conspiracy and the Baltic States*. London, Boreas Publishing Co., 1948, p. 35.

⁷⁰ Malmans, *Latvian-Russian relations*, pp. 188-189. See also, Langer, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

⁷¹ U. S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, Soviet Union, 1933-39*. Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1952, p. 937.

⁷² *Ibid.*, Bernard Guffer (Lithuania) to Secretary of State, June 8, 1939, No. 473, p. 935.

⁷³ Macbray, *Baltic Trends*, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-73.

⁷⁴ *Foreign relations of the United States, Soviet Union, 1933-39*, Wiley (Riga) to the Secretary of State, October 2, 1939, No. 219, p. 945. Dallin concluded that "Fear

of Moscow was greater than fear of Berlin. Had history, in spite of the desperate situation of these states, forced them to make a choice they would have tied their fortunes to Moscow." Dallin, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

To allay German suspicions that might arise from the Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations and to give further emphasis to their desire to remain neutral, Latvia and Estonia accepted the German offer to negotiate nonaggression pacts which were finally concluded in June 1939.⁷⁴

Seemingly protected from any eventualities, Estonia and Latvia now had guaranties of nonaggression from both Germany and Soviet Russia, and while in retrospect this momentary security was nothing more than an illusion, nonetheless, their statesmen were not reluctant to express great delight. In fact, a guaranty from the Western Powers similar to the one that Lithuania already had in the British-Polish agreement—extended in a secret protocol to include less directly Estonia and Latvia—would have been very desirable from their point of view. Baltic hopes for continued neutrality were well expressed by the Estonian minister, Aleksander Warma, in conversation with the American representative at Kaunas, Bernard Gufler, who reported :

Some days previously the Estonian Minister told me with an air of satisfaction that Latvia and Lithuania have now been forced by the logic of events to see that the policy of absolute neutrality long advocated by Estonia was the only possible one for the Baltic States. In his opinion great care must be taken by all of the smaller states in the Baltic region to avoid any appearance of association with either of the groups of Great Powers against the other. Not only is this policy of neutrality dictated by prudence because of the present delicate state of affairs but on a long term basis it suits the real long term interests of the Baltic States. It would, he said, be very dangerous to the continued independence of Estonia should either Russia or Germany collapse. Estonia needs a strong Russia and a strong Germany and has no desire to aid either to overcome the other. He expressed satisfaction that Estonia already had a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union and would shortly have one with Germany.⁷⁵

Lithuania was also determined to maintain its course of absolute neutrality. During the early weeks of the war, Germany actively encouraged Lithuania to join the German cause in a common assault upon Poland, offering to Kaunas what appeared to be a double advantage: the return of Vilnius; and assurances of protection against possible Soviet aggression. The Lithuanian Government, however, resisted persistently these blandishments from Berlin and turned a deaf ear to the anxious appeal of Foreign Minister Von Ribbentrop that "Lithuania must act promptly, march quickly—quickly, quickly, quickly," adhering with complete constancy to the adopted policy of absolute neutrality.⁷⁶

However desirable neutrality may have seemed to Baltic statesmen, it was not for them in the last analysis to make the final decision. Only upon the will and whim of the Soviet and German leaders did Baltic neutrality rest. The caprices of Hitler and Stalin and not the wishful thinking of Baltic statesmen was the predominant factor in determining the destiny of Latvian, Estonian, and Lithuanian independence.

4. *Baltic States in the Soviet-Nazi negotiations*

(a) *Origins of the Soviet-Nazi rapprochement.*—The drawing together of the ties between Germany and Soviet Russia—ties created

⁷⁴ Beloff, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 252-257. See also Gottlieb, Wolfram, *Baltic Neutrality. The Fortnightly* (London), vol. 152, July 1939, pp. 75-77; and Gottlieb, *The Baltic States Without Germans*, *op. cit.*, pp. 436-437. For texts, see appendix A, II, No. 4, and A, III, No. 9.

⁷⁵ Foreign relations of the United States Soviet Union, 1933-39. Gufler (Kaunas) to the Secretary of State, June 8, 1939, No. 473, pp. 938-937.

⁷⁶ German attempts to draw Lithuania into the Axis bloc. Memorandum on the restoration of Lithuania's independence. The Lithuanian Executive Council, 1950, pp. 26-28.

at Rapallo in 1922—may well have been initiated by the speech of Premier Stalin before the 15th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on March 10, 1939, when he declared:

We stand for peace and the strengthening of business relations with all countries. That is our position; and we shall adhere to this position as long as these countries maintain like relations with the Soviet Union, and as long as they make no attempt to trespass on the interests of our country.

We stand for peaceful, close, and friendly relations with all the neighbouring countries which have common frontiers with the U. S. S. R. That is our position; and we shall adhere to this position as long as these countries maintain like relations with the Soviet Union, and as long as they make no attempt to trespass, directly or indirectly, on the integrity and inviolability of the frontiers of the Soviet state * * *⁷⁷

It was no less an indication of the coming demarche in Soviet policy when on May 3 the Kremlin announced that Molotov replaced Litvinov as Foreign Commissar of the Soviet Government. Litvinov, "notoriously anti-German," had long symbolized the Soviet policy of collective security with the West, a policy of which he had been the "vociferous champion."⁷⁸ What course would Moscow now take with Litvinov out of the way was the big question at that moment.

Subsequent German action, however, left no doubt of Berlin's desire to improve its relations with its great Slav neighbor.⁷⁹ The resumption of trade discussions in Berlin on July 22, and the course of other discussions which had been going on culminated finally, much to the surprise of the entire world, in the conclusion of a treaty of non-aggression on August 23.⁸⁰ In a secret protocol affixed to this pact, Foreign Minister Ribbentrop, a strong advocate of the Soviet-German rapprochement, and the Soviet Union's Molotov discussed in "strictly confidential conversations" the question of the bounds of their respective spheres of influence in Eastern Europe. With reference to the Baltic States, paragraph 1 of the protocol, which placed the line dividing the spheres at the northern border of Lithuania, thus placing Lithuania within the German sphere, stated:

1. In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement in the areas belonging to the Baltic States (Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), the northern boundary of Lithuania shall represent the boundary of the spheres of influence of Germany and the U. S. S. R. In this connection the interest of Lithuania in the Vilma [Vilnius] area is recognized by each party.⁸¹

(b) *Effects of the rapprochement.*—That the Nazi-Soviet Pact had far-reaching effects goes without saying. Germany, momentarily at least, capitulated its historic interest in the Eastern Baltic by the official acknowledgment that strategically and politically this area lay beyond its sphere of influence.⁸²

For Soviet Russia, the effects of their decision were clear: having held the vital counterpoise in the critical balance of power during these months of impending crisis, it had finally cast its fortunes with the powers of revision. If the Baltic States had any illusion of maintaining "absolute neutrality," they would have been quickly dispelled had they been witnesses to the Ribbentrop-Molotov conversations. By the

⁷⁷ Stalin, Joseph, *Problems of Leninism*. Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1940, p. 629.

⁷⁸ Langer, op. cit., p. 105.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 111-115.

⁸⁰ Beloff, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 259-276. For text of treaty see U. S. Department of State, *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-41*. Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1948, p. 77. In appendix A, I, No. 4.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

⁸² Gottlieb, Wolfram, *The Baltic States Without Germans*, op. cit., p. 439.

terms of the protocol all obstacles, save one, had now been removed to make clear the way for final Soviet conquest of the Baltic States.

Thus, the question of Baltic neutrality had been taken from the realm of international law. The "new dispensation" discarded these "outmoded" concepts, and within the framework of a "New Order," the independence of the Baltic States was placed in grave danger, for now there was no recourse to the protection of international law.

In a very real sense, therefore, the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement of August 23, 1939, was for the Baltic States a prelude to conquest.

5. *Prelude to conquest*

(a) *More agreements.*—The pact of August 23, 1939, relieved Germany of any immediate anxiety concerning Soviet intentions of joining the peace front. Accordingly, on September 1 German forces invaded Poland, igniting the fuse which was to set off World War II. For the first month the storm center of the conflict lay in Northeastern Europe. Hopefully, the Baltic States proclaimed their neutrality on September 1.⁸³ But the situation changed radically when the impending collapse of the Polish effort brought about a Soviet invasion of Poland from the East on September 17. On September 27, Warsaw surrendered. On the evening of the same day Foreign Minister Ribbentrop arrived at Moscow, and a new German-Soviet agreement with secret protocols was signed on the following day.

While the new German-Soviet arrangements were concerned primarily with Poland, important decisions were also made bearing directly upon the Baltic States. In a confidential protocol provisions had been made for the repatriation of "Reich nationals and other persons of German descent residing in the territories" under Soviet jurisdiction.⁸⁴ After 700 years of residence in the Baltic, the German Balts in a new diaspora were finally to return to the land from whence they came.⁸⁵

By a secret supplementary protocol, Lithuania was handed over to the Soviet Union as part of its sphere of influence, while Germany was compensated with Polish territory. The protocol stated:

The Secret Supplementary Protocol signed on August 23, 1939, shall be amended in item 1 to the effect that the territory of the Lithuanian state falls to the sphere of influence of the U. S. S. R., while on the other hand, the province of Lublin and parts of the province of Warsaw fall to the sphere of influence of Germany. * * * As soon as the Government of the U. S. S. R. shall take special measures on Lithuanian territory to protect its interests, the present German-Lithuanian border, for the purpose of a natural and simple boundary delineation, shall be rectified in such a way that the Lithuanian territory situated to the southwest of the line marked on the attached map should fall to Germany. * * *

(b) *Baltic sovereignty breached.*—In the months to follow Soviet attention was focused primarily upon the Baltic States. In that quarter its immediate objectives were: To conclude mutual assistance pacts with Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia; and to acquire military and naval bases on their territory.

As early as September 18, Soviet Russia began its diplomatic offensive against Estonia, alleging that Polish submarines had taken

⁸³ Bilmanis, *op. cit.*, p. 390.

⁸⁴ Nazi-Soviet relations, p. 106. For text, see appendix A, I, No. 5.

⁸⁵ For a sympathetic treatment, pointing out the contributions of the Baltic Germans to the Baltic States, see Rothfels, Hans, *Russians and Germans in the Baltic*. Contemporary Review (London), vol. 152, March 1940: 320-326.

⁸⁶ Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 107.

refuge in Baltic naval bases, according to Tass, "with the connivance of the ruling circles," an allegation Estonian authorities promptly denied.⁸⁷ Although the campaign against Estonia had already begun, Premier Stalin informed Berlin on September 25 that with German consent—which was granted forthwith—he would proceed to the "solution of the problem of the Baltic countries."⁸⁸

Ostensibly to negotiate trade agreements, the Estonian Foreign Minister, Kaarl Selter, went to Moscow on September 23. After 2 days in the Soviet capital, he returned to Tallinn. In the meantime, increased detachments of Soviet troops were concentrated along the Estonian border. On the 27th, Selter returned again to Moscow with authority to conclude a Soviet-Estonian "mutual assistance" pact. In a meeting that followed at the foreign office, Selter was "curtly" told:

There will be no preliminary conversations. You have the Soviet proposals and there can be only one answer: Yes or no. Molotov will receive you this evening, and you must be ready with the answer.⁸⁹

Molotov received the Estonian Foreign Minister, and in the presence of Stalin confirmed the Soviet demands. On the next day, September 28, the pact, as well as a trade agreement, were signed by Foreign Commissar Molotov and Foreign Minister Selter.

By the terms of this arrangement Estonia was compelled to hand over to the Soviet Union naval and air bases on Estonian territory and to provide for a garrison of some 25,000 Soviet troops. In a special article, article 5, the Soviet Government renounced any intention of compromising Estonian sovereignty, stating specifically that "The enforcement of the present Pact may in no way impair the sovereign rights of the Contracting Parties, or more especially, their economic system or political structure."⁹⁰

The Soviet press gave wide coverage to this alleged self-denying clause, pointing to it as proof of Soviet belief in the principles of independence and national self-determination. On this point, Bolshevik, the leading Soviet party journal, commented:

Aggression and the desire to oppress smaller nations are alien to the spirit of the U. S. S. R. The Soviet people is interested in lasting peace and in fraternal collaboration with other peoples. Such collaboration can be realized only if it is based on mutual trust and the principle of noninterference in each other's internal affairs. Because it respects the sovereignty of other states, the Soviet Union does not interfere in their internal affairs.⁹¹

Notwithstanding these denials and platitudes, the world, much less the Estonians, was far from convinced. According to two eminent American scholars: "Opinion everywhere, and not least of all German opinion, accepted the treaty as marking the first stage of the absorption of Estonia into the Soviet Union."⁹² The American Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Laurence A. Steinhardt, described this pact as amounting "to a Soviet military protectorate over Estonia. * * *"⁹³

Estonia thus swiftly brought into line, the Kremlin turned next to Latvia. The pattern in this case varied little from the one just de-

⁸⁷ Dallin, *Soviet Russia's Foreign Policy*, op. cit., p. 80.

⁸⁸ In Langer, op. cit., p. 319.

⁸⁹ In Dallin, op. cit., p. 83.

⁹⁰ *Nazi-Soviet Conspiracy*, p. 40. For text, see hearings, pp. 532-533.

⁹¹ Dallin, op. cit., p. 84.

⁹² Langer, op. cit., p. 319.

⁹³ See *Foreign Relations of the United States, Soviet Union, 1933-39*. Steinhardt to the Secretary of State, September 29, 1939, No. 648, p. 944.

scribed, except that the Latvian Foreign Minister, Vilhelms Munters, was received more ceremoniously. Like the Estonians, Munters "negotiated" directly with Stalin and Molotov. Notwithstanding the pretense at decor and formal protocol, however, the course of the discussions and the final results were no more salutary. The Latvian Minister was handed an ultimatum by Molotov requiring a reply within 48 hours. With an obvious display of pressure by the presence of Marshal Voroshilov and Soviet Chief of Staff Shaposhnikov, Munters was informed that rejection of the Soviet proposals would compel the Soviet Government to take all necessary measures. In the course of the conversations that ensued, Stalin remarked:

I think that you will not swear at us. Twenty years have passed; we are stronger and you also are stronger. We want to discuss those same airfields and military defenses.

We do not encroach upon either your constitution, organs, ministries, foreign policy, financial policy, or economic system. Our demands are based upon the war between Germany, England, and France. * * * War is raging, and we have to see to our safety. The States of Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland have already disappeared; others may also disappear. We think that in relations with you there is not yet a true guarantee. That is not for you * * *, but we are principally thinking of ourselves. *That which was determined in 1920 cannot remain for eternity.* Peter the Great saw to it that an outlet to the sea was gained. We are now without an exit, and the situation in which we are now cannot remain. We, therefore, wish to ensure ourselves the use of ports, roads to these ports and their defense * * *.

After a conversation with the German Ambassador, F. W. von der Schulenburg, who advised submission to the Soviet demands, Foreign Minister Munters followed the pathway already taken by Estonia's Selter and on October 5 signed the Soviet-Latvian agreement.⁹⁵ The new pact repeated word for word the terms of the Estonian-Soviet agreement even to the statement of article 5 which was intended to preserve Latvian national sovereignty and independence. With regard to this point, Foreign Minister Munters, in his conversations with Stalin and Molotov preliminary to the signing of the treaty, gave particular emphasis to the preservation of Latvian territorial integrity. In his report Munters declared:

Most essential, however, we consider the principle already analyzed by me yesterday and emphasized several times to the effect that the conclusion of this treaty must not appear in the eyes of the Latvian people to be an imposed heavy yoke in which public opinion might see the restriction of their military and consequently their political independence of the State, and a menace to the free existence and development of the people in the future. Under the military measures mentioned by you yesterday, even after decreasing them by excluding the capital of Latvia from the treaty and reducing the total number of garrisons, there cannot be the slightest doubt that the treaty will be interpreted as the creation of something similar to a protectorate—a situation unacceptable to a liberty-loving nation, particularly since the strength of the Latvian army under the possibilities opened up by Article II of the project at the present time is sufficient to ensure the safety of Latvia and indirectly of the U. S. S. R.⁹⁶

By other terms of the treaty Soviet Russia gained control of the Gulf of Riga, having obtained leases on bases in Liepaja and Ventspils, several airfields, and the right to establish coast artillery installations between Ventspils and Pitragi. Soviet troops, 30,000 in number, were

⁹⁵ Italics furnished. Bilmanis. *Latvian-Russian Relations*, pp. 192-193.

⁹⁶ Dallin, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-86. For text, see hearings, pp. 506-507.

⁹⁷ Bilmanis. *Latvian-Russian Relations*, p. 195.

also to be quartered on Latvian soil. On October 30, the Soviet Army entered Latvia.⁹⁷

The course followed by Moscow in imposing its demands upon Kaunas varied somewhat from the cases of Latvia and Estonia. After a number of conversations between the Lithuanian Foreign Minister, Juozas Urbysys, and Soviet authorities a pact was signed on October 10. By the terms of the treaty, Vilnius was returned to Lithuania, an event of major significance among Lithuanians. On the question of Vilnius, differences had arisen between Germany and Soviet Russia as to which Government should require Lithuania to compensate Germany for the cession of Vilnius. In the report of the German Ambassador at Moscow to the German Foreign Office, there was a striking insight into German expectations of the ultimate objectives of the Soviet Union in Lithuania. Herr Von der Schulenburg wrote to Berlin:

Molotov's suggestion seems to me harmful, as in the eyes of the world it would make us appear as "robbers" of Lithuanian territory, while the Soviet Government figures as the donor. As I see it, only my suggestion enters into consideration at all. However, I would ask you to consider whether it might not be advisable for us, by a separate secret German-Soviet protocol, to forego the cession of the Lithuanian strip of territory until the Soviet Union actually incorporates Lithuania, an idea on which, I believe, the arrangement concerning Lithuania was originally based.⁹⁸

Along with the Vilnius settlement, other points of the Lithuanian Pact varied from the arrangements imposed upon Estonia and Latvia, but essentially the treaties followed the same pattern and were advanced under comparable pressure. Article 5 of the Latvian and Estonian treaties, whose counterpart in the Lithuanian Pact was article 7, was augmented in the Lithuanian Pact by a statement of added assurance that the Soviet Government would follow a policy of "noninterference in the internal affairs" of Lithuania.⁹⁹

Artfully, Soviet propaganda placed heavy emphasis upon the return of Vilnius, again an obvious attempt to win over Lithuanian public opinion by exploiting the old dispute with its neighbor, Poland. Generally, the Soviet press went into "rapturous comments upon the magnanimity of the Soviet Union," just as it had done after the conclusion of the Latvian and Estonian treaties. Even the more restrained Bolshevik gleefully commented:

The foul breath of imperialist wars in Europe poisons the atmosphere of the small and so-called neutral states which find themselves within the sphere of influence of the powerful capitalist countries * * * Switzerland * * * Holland. * * * The news from Eastern Europe, however, is of an altogether different character. The news from there is joyful and inspiring. The return of Vilno [to Lithuania] is an illustrious act which only the Soviet Union was able to accomplish. Ever since achieving her independence, Lithuania has lived in fear of aggression. Now this threat is removed.¹

(c) *Effects of the new Soviet-Baltic pacts of "mutual assistance."*—The far-reaching significance of the demands imposed upon the Baltic States in the form of mutual assistance pacts cannot be overemphasized. Soviet Russia now clearly contested German authority in the Baltic. By the end of October 1939, the U. S. S. R. had succeeded in

⁹⁷ Billmans, op. cit., p. 391.

⁹⁸ Italic furnished. Nazi-Soviet Relations, op. cit., p. 112.

⁹⁹ Dallin, op. cit., pp. 87-91. For text, see hearings, pp. 488-489.

¹ Italic furnished. In Dallin, op. cit., pp. 91-92.

extracting from the Germans vast concessions which the Allies had refused to grant.

In a narrower sense, these pacts of mutual assistance—which were by the way far from being “mutual”—added to the countless assurances which had already been given by the Soviet Government that it would not impair or impede the sovereignty or independence of the Baltic States. Paradoxically, Soviet Russia had already violated its provisions in the very act of imposing upon the Baltic States the forceable conclusion of the pacts. By inserting article 5 in the Estonian and Latvian pacts, and article 7 in the Lithuanian, the Soviet Government, apparently, tried to resanctify or legitimize what had already been accomplished in an illegal and immoral way; for, ostensibly these articles again made sacrosanct Baltic sovereignty and independence. That force and intimidation had been used and that the free will of the Baltic peoples had been forceably restricted in the course of “negotiating” these pacts are clear beyond a shadow of a doubt.

Notwithstanding this demonstration of compulsion, the Soviet Government gave continued assurances that Baltic independence would not be impaired. In a speech delivered before an extraordinary session of the Supreme Soviet late in October 1939, Foreign Commissar Molotov declared:

* * * The Pacts with the Baltic States in no way imply the intrusion of the Soviet Union in the internal affairs of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, as some foreign interests are trying to make believe * * * These pacts are inspired by mutual respect for the governmental, social and economic system of each of the contracting parties. We stand for an exact and honest fulfilment of agreements signed by us on a basis of reciprocity and declare that foolish talk of sovietization of the Baltic States is useful only to our common enemies and to all kinds of anti-Soviet provocateurs.¹

By numerous assurances, through agreements and statements of Government officials, the Soviet Union professed to recognize and respect the sovereignty and independence of the Baltic States. But, as it will be demonstrated in the next and final chapter, the Soviet Government, disregarding all past assurances, legal or otherwise, willfully destroyed the legal structure that had been so carefully, and hopefully, constructed during two decades of Soviet-Baltic diplomatic relations.

Not content to remain within the framework of international law in order to satisfy the alleged territorial needs of its security—as indeed the United States had later done legitimately by leasing bases in the West Indies, Iceland, and elsewhere to satisfy its real security requirements—Soviet Russia chose rather to pursue a course of conquest far beyond the requirements of national security, outside the realm of law and the universally accepted concepts of international morality.^{2a}

Within a few brief months during the critical year of 1939, the Soviet Union reverted from a course of antirevisionism to a course of revisionism, and from there was propelled by its insatiable desire for the expansion of communism into a course far more ambitious: imperialism and territorial aggrandizement. Firmly and forcibly harnessed to the wheels of the Soviet chariot by the Nazi-Soviet agreements and the pacts of mutual assistance, the Baltic States were forthwith precipitated recklessly down the road to national destruction.

¹ In Nazi-Soviet conspiracy, op. cit., p. 45.

^{2a} See below, pp. 237-238.

CHAPTER V

PART I—ESTONIA

INTRODUCTION

ESTONIA AND THE SOVIET UNION IN 1939

For 20 years the enigma that the Soviet Union appeared to be in the eyes of the whole world was less of a mystery and more of a threat to Estonia. The leaders and the people of Estonia lived under the perpetual and the potential danger of unpredictable Communist policy and listened and read with apprehension every utterance that came from the Kremlin. Official announcements and political moves were studied avidly for any perceptible clue that might indicate the lines of action the Soviet giant might take in the direction of the Baltic. Estonian Communists with the help of Moscow had failed to frustrate Estonian democracy which they sought unsuccessfully to overthrow in 1924. When the Estonian Government outlawed the Communist Party, it went underground to pursue weak and desultory efforts at organizational rehabilitation.

The nonaggression treaty Estonia concluded with the Soviet Union in 1932—not to be confused with the mutual-assistance pact later—eased the tension particularly among those who hoped desperately that the Soviet Union was sincere in its protestations, as manifested in action in this treaty, that it would not concern itself with the internal affairs of its small neighbors. But border incidents in 1938 robbed the Estonian people of their deluded sense of ease and shocked them into a sense of danger before a powerful Soviet State that solemnly pledged its word 1 day and rejected it the next.

In January 1938, two Soviet frontier guards crossed Lake Peipsi (Peipus) from the Russian side into Estonia and were promptly ordered to surrender by Estonian border guards. The Estonians declared that it was the intent of the Soviet guards to capture Estonian fishermen. Failing to halt and surrender, the Soviet guardsmen were shot and killed by the Estonian guardsmen. Basic to the incident was the more or less accepted fact that it was not particularly unusual for Soviet guards or agents to kidnap the nationals of other countries and either hold them as hostages, or after the process of brain washing send them back for purposes of espionage and kindred activities.

The Soviet Union rebuffed efforts to settle the incident through diplomatic channels and ignored special machinery through a conciliation convention which had been set up precisely to deal with events of this type. The reply was to retaliate. The Soviets kidnaped two Estonian border guards and killed them. When World War II broke

out in September 1939, incidents like these cast a shadow over the relations between the Soviet Union and Estonia.¹

I. SOVIET MILITARY ACTIONS AGAINST ESTONIA

A. SOVIET NAVY "PROTECTS" ESTONIA

The outline of events to come became increasingly clear by September 18 and 19, 1939. The Soviet Union had just invaded Poland and a Polish submarine, the *Orzel*, sought refuge in the Estonian harbor of Tallinn, presumably for repairs. Although the Estonians interned it, in accordance with international custom, the *Orzel* escaped during the night of September 17-18. A TASS report in the Soviet press charged that the Estonian authorities had connived in this escape and that the Baltic ports were harboring submarines hostile to the Soviet Union. TASS reported also that the Soviet Baltic fleet had as a consequence received orders "to take measures * * *"²

Soviet warships proceeded to blockade the Estonian coast. What this foreshadowed was reported bluntly in *The New York Times* of September 20, 1939 in a story with this headline: "Russian Navy Reported Blockading Estonian Coast—Baltic Grab Seen." The harbor of Tallinn, said the report, was "under particular surveillance." All Estonian communication by sea with the outside world was now controlled by the Soviet Navy. What this meant for Estonia was stated by the Estonian Foreign Minister: "U. S. S. R. aggression against Estonia and the whole Baltic had begun."³

But, Moscow described these measures as "protection" for Estonia. Molotov in the Kremlin told the Estonian Envoy on September 19, 1939:

As the Estonian government cannot guarantee its neutrality, the Soviet Baltic Fleet will engage in the protection of the Estonian waters.⁴

Meanwhile, Estonia was seething with reports that in Moscow's diplomatic circles there had been discussions of "the possibility that Soviet troops might march into Estonia."⁵

The theory of these conjectures was simple enough: if the Soviet Union felt free to violate Estonian sovereignty on the sea—why not on land? The violations ceased only with the conclusion of the Mutual Assistance Pact of September 28, 1939, between the Soviet Union and Estonia which was concluded much against Estonian de-

¹ In the special mixed commission set up under existing agreements to investigate this incident the Soviet representatives flatly refused to participate in an on-the-spot investigation and only repeated their protests that the Estonians had crossed the Soviet border. The Estonian investigation, based on the tracks in the snow and ice, showed that the Soviet border guards had invaded Estonian territory and kidnaped the men from Estonian side of the border. (Statement by Lt. Col. Juhan Labidas who was the Estonian representative in the mixed commission as the commander of Estonian border guard in this district.) See reports in the *New York Times* of January 21, 1938 (9:1), January 25, 1938 (9:1), and February 10, 1938 (13:4), and in *Pravda* No. 24 of January 25, 1938, and No. 41 of February 11, 1938.

² For an index of witnesses whose testimonies before, and statements deposited with, the House Baltic Committee, were used in this chapter, see appendix. Hereafter the expression "statement of" refers to statements deposited with the House Baltic Committee.

³ *Pravda* No. 260 of September 19, 1939.

⁴ Statement by Karl Selter in the files of the House Baltic Committee. Mr. Selter has been Estonian Minister for Foreign Affairs from 1938 to October 12, 1939, and served afterward as Estonian representative to the League of Nations and Minister to Switzerland.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ An Associated Press dispatch of September 18, 1939, printed in the *New York Times* of September 20, 1939, p. 6. In this dispatch it was also speculated that such a move would give the Soviets a complete control over the Finnish Gulf which was assumed to be the aim of the Soviet Government.

sires. Until then, the violations were an everyday occurrence and the evidence is abundant. At least five documented incidents of the violation of international law and the practices of neutrality can be proved by witnesses, according to Estonian authorities.

Usually the Soviet naval ships entered Estonian waters in force and in formation, sometimes 3 destroyers and smaller vessels, or 1 destroyer and a small escort.⁶ One actual attack was reported when Soviet destroyers in the Bay of Loksa fired their anti-aircraft guns at an unarmed Estonia observation plane flying over the Estonian mainland.⁷ The New York Times reported also that "the Russian Navy had planted mine fields in the easternmost part of the Gulf of Finland to protect the entrance to Kronstadt and the extensive fortifications outside Leningrad." The New York Times dispatch added significantly: "Strengthening of the coastal fortifications and unusual naval activity indicate the Soviet is preparing for action, although it is not known against whom."⁸

Soviet allegations that the Estonian Government had failed to employ proper safety measures to prevent the Polish submarine from leaving the port of Tallinn or facilitated its escape have been proved groundless. The *Orzel*, 1 of the 2 remaining Polish submarines, had suffered a breakdown of an important piece of equipment while patrolling the Baltic Sea during the second week of the war. It called at the port of Tallinn for repairs. Under international law a belligerent's ship is entitled to remain under such circumstances at a neutral port for 24 hours. The Estonian Government, however, decided to intern the ship as it was still seagoing and started to disarm it. The ship's crew managed to escape in the submarine from the port in the night of September 17-18, taking Estonian sentries along with them as hostages. This story, told by an impartial observer, confirmed the statements of the Estonian Government that it had taken all steps to prevent the *Orzel* from leaving port. Estonian coastal batteries and units of the Estonian navy opened fire. It was sheer luck that the *Orzel* escaped unharmed and turned up later in England.⁹

⁶In his statement to the Baltic Committee the Estonian Foreign Minister, K. Selter, lists in detail these violations. He wrote: "On September 20, 1939, at 6 a. m., three Russian destroyers (*Engels*, *Volodarsky*, *Artem*) approached the Estonian island Muhu from the north. They entered Estonian territorial waters until the Pakri meridian was reached, whence they turned back to sea. On the same day at 7:45 a. m., the Russian ship *Minsk*, and two G-type destroyers passed the Estonian island Ristna and entered our waters at the Bay of Põdura. On September 22, 1939, from 8:12 a. m. until 10:45 a. m., three S-type torpedo boats stayed in Estonian waters at Narva Jõesuu." There are also the supporting statements of Capt. Karl Kolbre, who served as an artillery officer in the Estonian coastal fortress on the island Aegna near Tallinn, and of Max Lee, who was the port captain in Narva-Jõesuu.

⁷Statement by Estonian Air Force Officers, Maj. E. Adof and Ensign Ilmar Saaren, the pilot and the navigator of the plane which was fired on. At the moment of shooting the ships were about two kilometers (2,200 yards) from the coast.

⁸New York Times, September 22, 1939, p. 3: 8.

⁹The story of the *Orzel* has been told by an English naval writer, A. D. Divine, in his book: *Navies in Exile*, New York, E. P. Dutton & Co., 1944, pp. 18-23. This story corroborates the official accounts of Estonian authorities and even describes in detail the plot the Polish sailors planned and executed. The author also states that Estonian naval authorities took all necessary precautions. He wrote: "Armed parties descended on *Orzel*, ammunition, rifles, the breeches of guns, charts, and other items of equipment were removed. Preparations were made to disembark the torpedoes." P. 20.

It should be noted that the German minister in Tallinn accepted as satisfactory Estonian explanations in regard to the escape of the *Orzel*. But he voiced anxiety about the possible reaction of Soviets to this incident and told the Estonian Foreign Minister: "We fear that because of this incident you could have trouble with Moscow. You can speak about international law with the Soviets if you are backed by force." (Statement by K. Selter.)

The Estonian story of the escape of the *Orzel* is corroborated by an Estonian naval officer, Fred V. Pau, in his written statement deposited with the Baltic Committee. Pau was the officer on duty in the navy port at Tallinn in the night of September 17-18 when the escape occurred. His testimony avers that Estonian naval or other authorities in no way facilitated the escape. The Chief of Naval Forces and his chief of staff were both removed from their posts the next day.

See also New York Times, September 19, 1939, p. 13: 4, and September 22, 1939, p. 3: 7.

Likewise, the accusations that "submarines of other states are finding refuge in Baltic ports" had "no foundation whatsoever," said a report to Washington by the United States Ambassador in the Soviet Union.¹⁰

B. SOVIET AIRPLANES OVER ESTONIA

The Soviet Union, which had been trying to pick a quarrel by land, near the Lake Peipsi frontier, and by sea, in the Baltic and the Gulf of Finland, now proceeded to try a few irritants in the air over Estonia. Beginning on September 26, 1939, the Soviets began to carry on a little war of nerves in the air, provoking and intimidating the Estonian authorities in a campaign to broaden their demands on the Estonian delegation which had just arrived in Moscow for negotiations looking toward settlement of border disputes and initial talks on the forthcoming mutual assistance pact. But conscious of Soviet intentions to provoke an "incident," the Estonian Government strictly forbade its armed forces to fire on the invading Soviet aircraft.¹¹ Whether or not this intensified Soviet boldness can only be conjectured, for the Soviet flyers made no effort to conceal their craft or to camouflage them while flying, usually, over strategic points, and making open reconnaissance.¹² The flights were made in formation, revealing they were not the result of loss of direction. And they ceased abruptly when the Soviet Government ascertained that Estonia was ready to sign the mutual assistance pact.

C. MOLOTOV THREATENS: THE RED ARMY WAITS

Molotov, as the Soviet Foreign Commissar, warned the Estonian Foreign Minister on September 24, 1939, that the Soviet Union would use "other means"—including force—to attain their objectives if Estonia would not accept a mutual assistance pact with the Soviet Union.¹³ The Soviet Navy was operating off the Baltic coast in Estonian waters; the Soviet Air Force was maneuvering in Estonian skies, and now four Red army corps, it was estimated, were concentrated along Estonia's southeastern border in the region of Pskov.¹⁴

¹⁰ U. S. Department of State: Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, the Soviet Union, 1933-39, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1952, p. 941, footnote 4 (hereafter quoted as Foreign Relations). Also, New York Times, September 21, 1939, p. 4:1.

¹¹ The statement by Lt. Col. Juhan Labidas, contained the declaration that as the commander of the border guard district along the Peipsi Lake, he had received "no shooting" orders from the command of the Second Division and from the headquarters of the border guard. Also the statement of Air Force Captain Johannes Kant, adjutant of the Air Force Training School. Statement of Johannes Klesment, legal adviser of the Cabinet.

¹² Statement of K. Selter.

Statement of J. Labidas.

Statement of J. Kant.

Statement of Paul Riiner. In 1939-40, Riiner was a police officer in County Tartumaa.

Statement of August Tomander. Col. A. Tomander was the commander of the Fourth Infantry Regiment stationed in the northeastern part of Estonia.

Statement of K. Kolbre.

Statement of M. Lee.

New York Times, September 29, 1939, p. 8:3.

¹³ See below, p. 14.

¹⁴ Statement of Army Capt. Sergei Maripuu. In his statement, the major of the border guard at that time, August Kõrgma, estimated that at least 10 divisions of Soviet troops had been assembled in this section.

Military formations were also in readiness at the Estonian northeastern border in the region of Kingissepa.¹⁵

This information had been collated by Estonian Army and border guards deployed along the Soviet frontier. They employed a network of observation posts from which movements of the Red army were carefully reported. The Red army, far from concealing its activities, participated in war games with simulated attacks intended to convey to Estonian observers what would happen in the event of difficulties. In addition to the construction of field fortifications as an obvious gesture of hostility, the Red army units conducted field exercises with armored and cavalry units that moved close to the barbed-wire fence, the frontier demarcation between the two countries.¹⁶

Evidences multiplied that the Red army was poised for attack. Battle orders had been issued; the zero hour was yet to be fixed. Infantry, cavalry, artillery, tanks were in formation ready to move. Objectives had been designated both for the major force and the minor units.¹⁷ Preparations were so bold as to constitute an open threat.¹⁸ The purpose was to make it plain what the penalty would be if the Estonian delegation then in Moscow failed to accede to Soviet wishes of the proposed mutual assistance pact while discussions were under way.¹⁹

In the face of this open display of force by the Soviets, the Estonian military adopted a precisely reverse attitude, displaying the limit of human patience and the strictest correctness. The Estonian authorities had issued strict orders warning their sea, land, and air forces not to attack even when Estonian territory was violated.²⁰

The orders extended even to the admonition not to open fire on Soviet troops should they cross the frontier. The Estonian purpose

¹⁵ The Foreign Minister, K. Selter, wrote in his statement to the Baltic Committee: "I left Tallinn in the night of September 22-23. The next morning I reached the U. S. S. R. border station Kingissepa. In that town I saw everywhere Russian troops. Our coach which, according to the usual plan, should have proceeded at once to Leningrad, was unhooked and left waiting in Kingissepa. This delay showed us the concentration of troops. We saw three military trains passing by and two troop columns moving on the road with supply and arms."

The statements of Maj. A. Kõrgma, Col. August Tomander, Col. Elias Kasak, and of Maj. Michael Mullart, staff officer with the First Division, confirmed the facts about Soviet troop concentrations.

The New York Times reported on October 2: "It was confirmed today that Marshal Klementy E. Voroshiloff ordered the withdrawal of Russian troops totaling about twenty divisions that were concentrated along the border during the Russo-Estonian crisis, together with large detachments of tanks, armored cars, and bombers." See p. 1: 5. [Italics furnished.]

¹⁶ Statement of Capt. S. Maripuu.

¹⁷ "The grouping and directions of movement of the Red Army units led to the conclusion that at the Narva front they had planned main attacks in two directions:

"1. Frontal attack along the Jamburg (Kingissepa)—Narva highway with the city of Narva as the first objective.

"2. An encircling movement through Narva-Jõesuu possibly directed at the interception of roads connecting our troops in the sector of Narva with the western part (of the country) (Highway and railway of Tallinn-Narva). This assumption is supported by the fact that the enemy assembled against the left flank of our front (Narva-Jõesuu) great quantities of equipment for forcing the river, and engineer units. Several long columns of pontoons were noticed moving in this direction.

"Besides this in the Finnish Gulf a lively activity of the Red Fleet was noticed, presumably with the intention to land a *dessant* force in the rear of Estonian troops operating at the Narva front." This is the summary of conclusions drawn by Maj. M. Mullart who served in the staff of the 1st division stationed in Narva.

¹⁸ Maj. M. Mullart testified that these views were expressed by Soviet officers after the signing of the pact: "These facts were confirmed personally to me by Soviet Captain Meletsenko whom I later met on official business. He said that they (the Red army) had in every detail made all preparations for the attack and had been waiting only the final order for attack. He also mentioned that the Red army soldiers were in a very warlike spirit and just could not wait for the order to destroy Estonia as military base of western militarists. It is clear that this propaganda was intended to prepare the Red army for the coming operation."

¹⁹ U. S. Department of State, Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-41, Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1948, telegram No. 163 on September 27, 1939, from German military attaché in Tallinn to Army High Command, Attaché Section, p. 103.

²⁰ Statements of Col. A. Tomander and Capt. S. Maripuu.

was not to complicate the work of their harassed diplomats in Moscow, not to fall into a Soviet trap, and not to provide the Soviet with the very position they most wanted: more pretexts to make more and more demands on Estonia.

In the end, of course, the threats of the Soviet sea, land, and air forces had succeeded. The Kremlin had achieved its first great objective, the conclusion of the mutual assistance pact, which established its iron fingers inside Estonian territory.

II. NEGOTIATIONS IN MOSCOW AND CONCLUSION OF THE MUTUAL ASSISTANCE PACT

A. MOLOTOV TURNS FROM TRADE TO MILITARY PACT

Negotiations for the mutual assistance pact had an altogether innocent background and came as a great surprise to the Estonians in the course of negotiations to improve trade relations with the Soviet Union. The beginning of World War II had interrupted many regular trade channels with other two countries and deprived Estonia of needed raw materials. Estonia approached Moscow for a new trade agreement, and the response was highly cooperative. Negotiations for improved trade relations began during the month of September 1939; and after relatively friendly discussions, the agreement was ready for signatures on September 20. But the "incidents" had intervened during this period. However, there were no signs that these "incidents" would hamper the negotiations over trade. The Soviet Union had asked for the presence of the Estonian Foreign Minister, K. Selter, in Moscow for the signing of the agreement. The general atmosphere seemed most encouraging when Moscow replied to an inquiry from Estonia that no other topic, except that of the agreement, would be discussed during the Selter visit.²¹

On September 24, Mr. Selter, accompanied by the Estonian Minister in Moscow, August Rei, was received by the Soviet People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, V. Molotov. Having touched upon some problems in connection with the trade agreement, Molotov mentioned that the trade relations between the two countries were good, but such was not the case in their political relations. He cited as an example the escape of the Polish submarine *Orzel* from the harbor of Tallinn on September 17 and emphasized that the Estonian Government was either unwilling or unable to maintain order and security in its own country, a failure which was also endangering the security of the Soviet Union. He rejected as unsatisfactory an Estonian note on the *Orzel* case which had been presented earlier.

In view of the requirements of the security of the Soviet Union in the Baltic region, Molotov said that the Government of the Soviet Union had resolved to ask further guaranties for its security from the Estonian Government and to propose the conclusion of a mutual assistance pact between the two states which would give the Soviet Union air and naval bases on Estonian territory.

This was the denouement of the innocent beginnings of a trade agreement. The Estonian Minister replied that he was not authorized to discuss the questions raised by Molotov and that such a treaty would

²¹ Statement of K. Selter. The Soviets insisted on the Foreign Minister coming to Moscow.

violate the Estonian position as a neutral state. He also emphasized that the Estonian Government could not be accused of helping the Polish submarine to escape. He spoke of Estonia's preparedness to defend its neutrality.

The Soviet Foreign Commissar pressed for immediate negotiations on the proposed mutual-assistance treaty and declared that the Soviet Union had no intention of sovietizing Estonia in particular or of interfering in Estonian internal affairs in general.²² However, he warned that Estonia should not force the Soviet Union to employ "other means" in order to achieve its aim. The Soviet Union would take the necessary steps for its security without Estonian consent.

Molotov repeatedly stated that the mutual-assistance pact was considered urgent by the Soviet Union; and that Estonia had better accede. He said:

*The situation needs immediate solution. We cannot wait long. I advise you to accede to the wishes of the Soviet Union in order to avoid something worse. Do not compel the Soviet Union to use force in order to achieve her aims * * * At present all hope for foreign assistance would be an illusion. Thus you can be sure that the Soviet Union in one way or another will see to her security. If you would not acquiesce in our proposal, the Soviet Union would carry out the safeguarding of her security in another way, according to her own discretion, without Estonia's assent.²³*

On the insistence of Estonian representatives that they, as members of a parliamentary government, could not proceed in such negotiations without special authorization, Molotov agreed to suspend the negotiations and to give Foreign Minister Selter the opportunity to inform his Government.

That same evening at midnight the Estonian representatives were called back to the Kremlin. There, they were presented with a draft of the proposed mutual-assistance pact.²⁴ Molotov emphasized again that the proposal of the Soviet Union was based on strategic needs and that no interference with the Estonian form of government, sovereignty, and economic system was intended. In elaborating upon the proposed draft, Molotov demanded naval bases in Estonian harbors and airbases on islands off the west coast. The land upon which the bases were to be established would remain Estonian territory and were to be given to the Soviet Union on a long-term lease. In further clarification to individual points of the draft, Molotov declared that military assistance would not be automatic, but on request, and that only an aggression in the Baltic region would call for the assistance provided for in the pact.

The Estonian Foreign Minister declared that he would inform his Government, the President, and the Parliament accordingly. Charging that Estonia was stalling, Molotov, who had been conducting the negotiations together with A. I. Mikoyan, the People's Commissar for Foreign Trade, agreed very reluctantly to Mr. Selter's return to Tallinn for instructions.²⁵

²² According to the minutes of the meeting drawn up in the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and now available in the Archives of the Estonian Consulate General in New York (hereafter quoted Minutes), Molotov said: "The assistance pact with the Soviet Union would not bring any perils. We do not want to impair your sovereignty or form of government. We are not going to force communism upon Estonia. We do not want to hurt the economic system of Estonia. Estonia will retain her independence, her government, parliament, foreign and domestic policy, army and economic system. We are not going to touch all this" (p. 3).

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁴ See appendix A, II, No. 5.

²⁵ Minutes, pp. 6-9.

B. ESTONIAN CABINET YIELDS TO FORCE

When the Estonian Cabinet, under the chairmanship of President K. Päts, met on September 25, 1939, to consider the Soviet proposal for a mutual-assistance pact and the demands for military basis, it had to evaluate the whole international situation and Estonia's helpless place in it.

The cabinet was confronted with an ultimatum by its powerful neighbor. It had to take into consideration the available means and potential assistance and help from outside in case refusal unleashed Soviet forces. By every manifestation the Soviets demonstrated that they meant business up to and including immediate war.

The Estonian Cabinet bowed under the weight of Soviet force, representing 170 million people and backed by an overwhelming military machine. "To reject in this situation the Soviet Russian proposal would mean—to put the lives of the people in jeopardy," stated the President.²⁶ Calm deliberation prevailed at the meeting. Facts were presented and possible effects weighed. A feeling of loneliness hovered over the heads of the men who had to make the decision. Not a hand outside their borders would be raised on their behalf. Who would intercede for them? Which of the nations would fight for Estonian freedom? The great powers of the West were locked in a struggle among themselves. Poland, the biggest of the Baltic States, had been crushed under the war machines by the combined efforts of Nazi Germany and Communist Russia.

What the Estonian Cabinet did not know at the time was that the fate of Estonia had been decided more than a month before. Molotov and Ribbentrop, when they signed the Soviet-Nazi Non-aggression Pact and the secret protocol on August 23, had reached an agreement which had given Moscow a free hand in dealing with its small neighbors.²⁷

The indifference of Germany toward Estonian-Soviet relations during the current weeks had aroused suspicion in Government circles, but no one in the Estonian Cabinet was prepared to accept such conduct in international relations, even from the Soviets and the Nazis.²⁸

Estonian acceptance of the Soviet ultimatum was inevitable. To go to battle would have constituted, at most, only a feeble gesture. However heroic, it would have in the end only enhanced Soviet military glory. For the Estonian commander in chief reported that military resistance would be brief at best and lead to wholesale Estonian annihilation. What confronted those who held the decision were facts that made talk of resistance puerile and academic. Overwhelming Soviet air superiority, for instance, rendered grave doubts

²⁶ Statement of J. Klesment who participated at this meeting.

²⁷ The German Ambassador in Moscow, Schulenburg, reported on September 25 to Berlin that Stalin had told that night: " * * * if we (Germany) consented, the Soviet Union would immediately take up the solution of the problem of the Baltic countries in accordance with the protocol of August 23, and expected in this matter the unstinting support of the German Government. Stalin expressly indicated Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, but did not mention Finland" (Nazi-Soviet Relations, pp. 102-103). Curiously enough the Soviet Union had presented its demands to Estonia on September 24 but did not inform Germany until the next day.

²⁸ When the Estonian Foreign Minister on September 24 drew the attention of Molotov to the fact that such a treaty between Estonia and the Soviet Union as proposed by the Soviets would be in contradiction to the Estonian-German nonaggression treaty of 1939, Molotov replied: "If you are afraid of a contradiction between the Estonian-German nonaggression treaty and the Soviet Union's demands, then I can assure that Germany will give her consent to the conclusion of an Estonian-Soviet mutual assistance pact. If you wish, I will procure this consent" (Minutes, p. 4). [Italics furnished.]

as to whether even a successful mobilization could have been carried out.²⁹ The Foreign Minister and Rei, Estonia's minister in Moscow, quoted Molotov's words:

I ask you not to compel the Government of the Soviet Union to use force to safeguard her security.

And continued:

* * * if the Estonian Government does not agree with the Soviet proposal, then the Soviet Union in another way, using other means, will achieve her security through the goals mentioned in the pact.³⁰

Estonia had been warned not to conduct public debate on the Soviet proposal in the Parliament. But the Estonian Cabinet, politically and constitutionally responsible to the Parliament, informed the Parliament's foreign affairs committees in detail. Representatives of the parties in both Chambers were provided a full briefing on the depth, scope, and character of the danger to Estonian sovereignty. Completely informed on the peril and the hopelessness of Estonia in trying to meet force with force, the constitutionally designated bodies of the nation approved the position of their Government.³¹

It was the beginning of the end of Estonian independence.

C. NEW DEMANDS BY MOSCOW

The Estonian delegation departed for Moscow with instructions to accept the Soviet demands in principle and to try to alleviate the terms. The mood of the men who had to shoulder the responsibility at this hour was expressed in the words of Foreign Minister Selter when he asked the German Minister in Tallinn to inform the German Government that:

The Estonian Government, under the gravest threat of imminent attack, perforce is prepared to accept a military alliance with the Soviet Union * * * The general tendency is to meet the demands only as far as necessary to prevent an attack * * *³²

Foreign Minister Selter headed the delegation, which included the speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, Prof. J. Uluots, former Foreign Minister and member of the Chamber of Deputies, Prof. A. Piip, and the Minister to Moscow, Mr. Rei. The delegation arrived in Moscow in the afternoon of September 27. That same night they were summoned to the Kremlin.

They were met by Molotov and the Commissar for Foreign Trade, Mikoyan. The atmosphere was tense. But come what may, the delegation, determined to be clear and forthright, at once confronted the two top representatives of Soviet foreign affairs with a catalog of Estonian complaints and protests.

The Estonian delegation protested at the outset that the violations of Estonian territorial integrity by Soviet airplanes and warships were not conducive to the progress of negotiations and deprecated

²⁹ Statement of J. Klesment.

³⁰ Minutes, p. 5. Also, John Alexander Swettenham, *The Tragedy of the Baltic States: a Report Compiled From Official Documents and Eyewitnesses' Stories*. London, Hollis and Carter, 1952, pp. 31-32. This atmosphere at the cabinet meeting is also confirmed by the testimony of J. Klesment.

³¹ Statements of Johannes Nyman and Leonhard Vahter. Nyman was a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the State Council (the second chamber) and has submitted to the House Baltic Committee copies of the records of this meeting. Vahter was a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies.

³² The text of the telegram by Fröhwein, German Minister in Tallinn, is reproduced in telegram No. 437: The German Foreign Office to the German Embassy in the Soviet Union of September 27, 1939, in *Nazi-Soviet Relations*, pp. 104-105.

these acts of violence by the Soviet Government. Molotov took up the assistance pact and surprised the Estonian delegation with increased Soviet demands. In addition to naval and air bases, Molotov now insisted on the right to station about 35,000 Soviet infantry, cavalry and air force men on Estonian territory at selected strategic points. He based this new demand on the alleged changed situation resulting from a torpedo attack on a Soviet merchant ship near the Gulf of Narva off the Estonian coast. To prevent Estonia and the Soviet Union from becoming involved in the war, and to protect internal order and peace in Estonia, the stationing of Soviet troops in Estonia would be an absolute requirement from the point of view of Soviet security, he said.²³

The Estonian delegation answered that they knew nothing of internal disorders in Estonia. Estonia, they said, was able to maintain order itself in its own country. As for the attack on the Soviet ship they said they would investigate whether Estonia had any responsibility in the matter. Molotov's evidence was a reference to a TASS story of September 27 which reported that the Soviet merchantman, *Metallist*, had been torpedoed by an unidentified submarine and sank as result of the attack.²⁴

This proved to be a nonexistent incident, entirely fabricated by the Soviet information agency. It was to serve as justification for new and far-reaching Soviet demands. That the sinking of the *Metallist* was a hoax, was proved by many facts later established.

D. THE "INCIDENTS" THAT NEVER HAPPENED

Grounds for accusations had been carefully prepared by the Soviets. Tass reported that unidentified submarines had been sighted in the vicinity of the Gulf of Luga (east of Narva) and allegations were made that secret submarine bases existed in Estonian waters. On September 27, a brief announcement about Estonian-Soviet negotiations had appeared in the Soviet press. It said that the Estonian explanation on the escape of the Polish submarine had been held unsatisfactory and negotiations had been started to guarantee security in Soviet waters. The announcement continued:

If we keep in mind that according to a dispatch from Leningrad there were two instances of the sighting of periscopes of unidentified submarines today, in the region of the Gulf of Luga, the conclusion could be drawn that the unidentified submarines might have their secret base in some place not far from Estonian coast.²⁵

Information developed from the Estonian side that no Soviet ships were sunk in the Gulf of Narva at this time. The supposedly sunk

²³ The survey of the Moscow negotiations was compiled on the basis of the following documents which have all been submitted to the Baltic Committee:

1. The official records of the negotiations compiled in the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from the Archives of the Consulate General of Estonia in New York, N. Y.

2. The diary of the late Prof. Ants Pliip, member of the delegation, Minister for Foreign Affairs since October 12, 1939.

3. Statement of August Rei, member of the delegation: Estonian Minister to Moscow.

4. Statement of Karl Selter, Chief of Estonian delegation.

5. A. Varma, Soviet Union Aggression in the Baltic States, Estonia. Manuscript of a forthcoming booklet based on official sources. Varma was an Estonian career diplomat and served later (1939-40) as Minister to Finland.

²⁴ This story was published in Pravda No. 269 on September 28, 1939, and reads as follows: "Leningrad, September 28 (Tass).—The Soviet steamer *Metallist*, of 4,000 tons, was torpedoed on September 27 at about 6 o'clock in the evening in the region of the Gulf of Narva by an unidentified submarine and sank. Nineteen members of the ship's crew of twenty-four were picked up by Soviet patrol vessels whereas five persons were not found."

²⁵ Pravda No. 268 of September 27, 1939.

steamer *Metallist* appeared at a later time in the harbor of Paldiski.³⁶

There was a report, however, that the Soviets had staged the explosion of a barge loaded with ship repair equipment near the Estonian coast with the obvious intent of fabricating evidence that a vessel was attacked and was sunk.³⁷

E. STALIN ENTERS ; PRESSURE INTENSIFIED

Stalin entered the conference at a critical juncture, adding his will and his weight as a world personality to the impending doom of Estonian independence. For the new demand by Molotov made it plain to the Estonians that the Soviet Government, by threat, intimidation, and invented incidents, was determined through diplomatic processes to achieve complete military occupation of Estonia. Nevertheless, they held desperately to their position, insisting that they lacked the constitutional power even to discuss the new Soviet demands. But Stalin and Molotov pressed more vigorously. Stalin said:

The placing of Red army units in Estonia, according to the proposals presented today, is *absolutely necessary*. Otherwise the Soviet naval and airbases could not feel themselves secure during the present time of war. [Italics furnished.]

The demands in detail seemed incredible to the Estonian diplomats. Under the threat of military force the effort was made to get the Estonian delegation to surrender at once and on the spot practically all Estonian sovereignty. The Soviet leaders said they had to have a Soviet naval base directly in Tallinn, the Estonian capital. They demanded the strategic deployment of Soviet troops all over Estonia to preserve "internal order." But, however adamant Stalin and Molotov proved to be, the little Estonian delegates clung to their position of integrity and their country's freedom. They would go only as far as they had agreed to go. If necessary, they would break off the negotiations then and there rather than accede to the new demands.

After having proceeded along the lines of the old demands, the negotiations were concluded. Stalin then turned to the Estonian Foreign Minister and said:

I can tell you that the Estonian Government did wisely and well in the interests of the Estonian people by concluding the agreement with the Soviet Union. It could have happened to you what happened to Poland. Poland was a great country. Where is now Poland? Where is Moscicki, Rydz-Smigly, and Beck? I tell you frankly that you acted well and in the interest of your people.³⁸

³⁶ Ilmar Raudma, "Punane hüdra Eesti Vabariiki neelamas (The Red Dragon Swallowing the Estonian Republic)," *Eesti Rada* (Estonian newspaper published in Augsburg, Germany), No. 49, of June 19, 1948. Raudma was in 1939-40 the chief of the Press Department in the Ministry of Information.

³⁷ The chief of the border guard district of Narva, Maj. A. Kõrgma, gave the following details in his statement: "Some border guards on their patrol alongside the seacoast west of the mouth of the Narva River, between Meriküla and Toila, observed some time before dusk (a day at the end of September) a steamer moving from East to West and dragging something behind it which appeared to be a barge. Though both the steamer and the barge were clearly visible even without fieldglasses they, nevertheless, were so far from the coast that the name of the ship and its nationality (flag, color, etc.) could not be seen. Suddenly a dark explosion was heard from the sea, near the steamer and the barge, after which the barge disappeared, evidently having been sunk. The following day the sea ran high and washed refuse to the shore opposite the place where the above-described incident had taken place: waste boards, a door, a plate belonging to some kind of a small telephone exchange, etc. All this could not come from any source other than the barge that had been sunk the evening before, though it seemed most improbable that there could have been a telephone exchange on that barge. The door was not of the kind that is usual on boats. It was evident that these objects had been placed on the barge for some special purpose."

Also, the statement of M. Lee.

³⁸ Minutes, p. 14.

F. THE PACT IS SIGNED; STALIN MAKES A PROMISE

Stalin, the principal in this drama, played his role during the negotiations with a kind of benign reassurance, professing complete indifference to Estonian internal affairs. On Estonian insistence he even agreed to reduce the proposed 35,000 Soviet troops to 25,000, so that the Soviet bases on Estonian soil could be protected. The 10,000 the Estonian delegation thought sufficient was rejected outright. For further proof of his "benevolence" Stalin agreed to locate the Soviet naval base at Paldiski (Baltischport) instead of Tallinn. He did even more for Estonia. Molotov, in the assistance clause of the mutual assistance pact, demanded that it should apply in case of aggression by a large or a small state, while the Estonian delegation wanted it to read to apply only in the case of aggression by a great power. Stalin upheld the Estonian position.

And then Stalin, when the signatures were affixed, gave even further assurances to Estonia. He promised to respect Estonia's sovereignty and its form of government. The promise was repeated. When the Estonians acceded reluctantly to the presence of 25,000 Soviet troops on Estonian territory, Stalin eased their fears:

Do not be afraid of these garrisons. We have assured you that the Soviet Union does not want in any way to affect Estonian sovereignty, her government, or her economic system, nor her internal life or foreign policy. We do not want to act the way Germany has in Czechoslovakia. Consequently, the Soviet troops will refrain in everything that is not in harmony with these promises.

However, Stalin repeatedly emphasized that the Soviets did not trust the Estonian Government to maintain order in the country. Thus, he insisted that Soviet troops would help to preserve the peace in Estonia. To the Estonians it proved that from the very beginning the Soviets wanted to have complete control over Estonian internal affairs; for the deployment of Soviet troops as some kind of internal police force would have given it them. In fact, the number of Soviet troops requested originally by Molotov would have exceeded thrice the size of the Estonian active army.

The Estonian delegation, explaining the reasoning that motivated the signing of the mutual assistance pact, reported officially:

The delegation found that regardless of the friendly tone of the negotiations, the talk of the Soviet representatives had repeatedly shown, as before, the same urgency and warnings about the threatening dangers which would confront Estonia in case the pact was not concluded.

The delegation found that the Soviet demands in the open questions were very difficult. The delegation, conscious of its responsibility before history, the Estonian people, and the state, found that it could not do otherwise than continue the negotiations. They wished to do whatever was still possible to ease the terms and to conclude the agreement. The delegation found that thereby it would fulfill the Government's directive and also its duty before the Estonian people. In case the agreement was not concluded, *the Estonian people would then be faced not only by war and conquest, but by partial destruction.*

The members of the delegation felt in their conscience that they could not incur such a risk, although the will of the Estonian people for independence, for the attainment of which heavy blood sacrifices have been brought in the past, spoke against the pact being forced upon us by the Soviet Union. *Preservation of the people in the present situation is the compelling factor which the Government must keep as the goal.* The future does not bring anything to a people that in the meantime has been destroyed or has been subdued for a considerable period of time. [Italics furnished.]³⁰

³⁰ "The painful decision, it was said, had been taken only in the hope of avoiding still more far-reaching demands and because it was realized that the Soviet Government was determined to force Estonia to yield." The New York Times, September 29, 1939, p. 8: 5. Minutes, p. 11.

Under those circumstances the mutual assistance pact was signed the night of September 28, 1939, together with a confidential protocol. "By the signature to the two treaties * * *, the little Baltic republic passed under the full domination of the Soviet Union and yielded to Russia naval bases and the right to maintain military forces in Estonian territory," the *New York Times* reported.⁴⁰

G. RATIFICATION

The pact was duly ratified within the period of time provided for in article 6, and the ratification instruments were exchanged in Tallinn on October 4.⁴¹ The ratification for Estonia was done by the President, because the Soviet Union had demanded that the treaty should not go to the Parliament.⁴² Under the Estonian Constitution and Law on Ratification Procedure of International Treaties, the President was authorized to ratify a treaty, without prior approval by the Parliament, if it was a treaty of nonaggression or a treaty of alliance. In this case, however, he had to secure the views of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament.⁴³

H. THE TRADE AGREEMENT

Simultaneously with the mutual assistance pact a trade agreement between Estonia and the Soviet Union was signed.⁴⁴ This agreement provided for an increase of 4½ times the exchange of commodities between Estonia and the Soviet Union, bringing the total of the balance of trade to approximately \$10 million per year. Exports from the Soviet Union into Estonia were to be chiefly raw material and semimanufactured products, including mineral oil products, iron and steel, chemical fertilizers, salt, sugar, and raw cotton. No increases in finished products were contemplated, while exports from Estonia were to be chiefly agricultural products. The Soviet Union was also to grant transit facilities for Estonian commodities on Soviet railways and waterways to Murmansk, Soroka (on the White Sea), and to Black Sea ports. In return the Soviet Union was granted transit privileges to Estonian ports.⁴⁵

III. THE MUTUAL ASSISTANCE PACT

A. ITS CONTENTS AND ANALYSIS

The mutual assistance pact consisted of seven articles, the terms of which were specified in a secret protocol. It provided for mutual aid, including military assistance, in the event either of direct aggression or threat of aggression on the part of some great European power against the maritime border of the contracting parties or against their land frontier through Latvian territory (art. 1).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, September 29, 1939 (1:5).

⁴¹ Printed in *Riigi Teataja* (Estonian Official Gazette), 1939, 16, 28.

⁴² Statement of Johannes Klesment, J. Klesment, former Socialist member of Estonian Parliament, held in 1939-40 the post of legal adviser to the Cabinet. He was also authorized to sit in at Cabinet meetings.

⁴³ Sec. 101 of the constitution and sec. 3 of the Law on Ratification Procedure of International Treaties of April 6, 1938. *Riigi Teataja* 1938, 36, 325.

⁴⁴ *Riigi Teataja* 1939, 16, 27. See appendix A, II, No. 7.

⁴⁵ The Minister in Latvia (Wiley) to the Secretary of State, October 3, 1939. *Foreign Relations*, p. 950, and the Chargé in Estonia (Leonard) to the Secretary of State, October 4, 1939, No. 81, *ibid.*, pp. 952-952.

The general consensus at the time of the conclusion of the pact was that it was directed against Germany, even though at that time Germany was the ally of the Soviet Union.⁴⁶

Subsequent events have revealed that the basic aim of the Soviet Union was complete domination of the Baltic States.⁴⁷ The initial demands for complete control of Estonian internal affairs, and the proposal, contained in the Soviet draft, that the Soviet Union would "assist the Estonian Republic * * * in the field of foreign policy and diplomacy"⁴⁸ indicated the direction of future developments. These demands were dropped but not forgotten. A correspondent analyzed the situation in the following way:

Stalin has not bothered to annex Estonia. *That may come later.* Russian control of the naval bases places the little nation completely at the mercy of the Kremlin.⁴⁹ [Italics furnished.]

In the confidential protocol, the military assistance clause was qualified, stipulating that assistance was to be rendered only "at the expressed desire of the other party," thus excluding any automatic application of this key clause. Further, it was provided that if either Estonia or the Soviet Union were at war with a third party, the other contracting party might by common agreement remain neutral (art. 3).

On its part Estonia ceded naval and air bases on a leasehold basis on the islands of Saarmaa and Hiiumaa as well as in the port of Paldiski (Baltischport). For the protection of these bases the Soviet Government obtained the right to maintain garrisons (art. 3). The secret protocol limited the number of troops in garrisons to 25,000 and stated that they might remain there for the duration of the war (art. 1). Soviet ships were given the privilege of taking on stores and of seeking shelter in the port of Tallinn for the duration of hostilities, provided the period did not exceed 2 years (art. 2). The use of Tallinn was intended as a substitute for Paldiski, pending its construction.

Article 5 provided that the pact should in no way infringe upon the sovereign rights of the contracting parties, particularly their economic and political structure. The land under bases and airfields was to remain Estonian territory for which the Soviet Union was required to pay rent.

The contracting parties were forbidden to enter into, or conclude, alliances with third powers which would be directed against one of them (art. 4). It was clear that all existing treaties, for instance the defense alliance with Latvia, would not come under this provision. In the Russian text of the pact even the word "zakliuchat," was used which grammatically refers to the future.⁵⁰

The Estonian Army was entitled to buy armaments and other war material from the Soviet Union (art. 2).

Finally, the text of the pact provided that it should enter into force upon the exchange of ratification instruments which was to take place at Tallinn within 6 days after signing. Its validity ran for 10 years and, if not renounced, it automatically extended for a subsequent period of 5 years (art. 7).

⁴⁶ Soviet Information Bureau, *Falsifiers of History* (Historical Survey). Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing Co., 1948. Hereafter quoted as *Falsifiers of History*.

⁴⁷ See pp. 209-213.

⁴⁸ Art. 2 of the draft.

⁴⁹ Augur in the *New York Times*, September 30, 1939, p. 5: 3, 4.

⁵⁰ Minutes, p. 9. *Diary of A. Pilp*.

The Soviets had insisted on a speedy ratification, and at first wanted the pact to take effect with signing. Because this was incompatible with Estonian constitutional procedures, a period 6 days finally was agreed upon.⁵¹

Under article 4 of the secret supplementary protocol, a mixed commission was to be set up to work out the operation of the pact with both parties having equal representation.

In the preamble of the pact the peace treaty of 1920 and the non-aggression treaty of 1932 were recognized as the basis for mutual relations between the two countries. The preamble stated that this meant "recognition of independent political existence and nonintervention by either Contracting Party in the internal affairs of the other Contracting Party."

B. THE MILITARY TAKES OVER

The mutual assistance pact had provided for certain naval and air bases to be leased to the Soviet Union and for stationing up to 25,000 Soviet troops on these bases. Entry of troops, exact locations of bases and airfields, quarters for troops, etc., were neither determined in detail in the pact nor in the secret protocol. These matters had to be agreed upon in a special agreement. Negotiations for the conclusion of the supplementary military agreements were held in Tallinn from October 2, to October 9, 1939. The agreements were signed on October 10, and the entry of Soviet troops to the bases on Estonian territory followed almost immediately.

From the beginning the Soviet delegation, headed by General Meretskov, presented demands for garrison establishments and airfields which exceeded the agreement reached in Moscow. Article 3 of the Pact provided:

The Republic of Estonia grants the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics the right to have naval bases on the Estonian islands Saaremaa and Hiiumaa and in the town of Paldiski, together with a number of aerodromes for air forces, on lease at reasonable rates. The exact sites of the bases and aerodromes in question shall be assigned, and the limits thereof defined, by common accord.

C. SOVIET DEMANDS INCREASE

The Soviets were not satisfied with only bases and airfields on the islands and in the region of Paldiski. They insisted that an armored brigade should be stationed in Paide (central Estonia) and a cavalry brigade in Valga (south Estonia); also, that airfields for two bomber wings (regiments) should be located further inland. For the navy they wanted, in addition to the use of the harbors of Tallinn and Paldiski, the use of the harbor Rohuküla (western Estonia near Haapsalu).⁵²

The Estonian delegation pointed out that these demands did not conform with the provisions and spirit of the pact. The stationing of Soviet troops in several places in the country, they said, would mean, in fact, military occupation of the country. Basing their demands on the requirements of security, the Soviet delegation did not

⁵¹ Minutes, p. 13.

⁵² Varma, A., Soviet Union Aggression in the Baltic States: Estonia, pp. 28-30. Varma, an Estonian professional diplomat and later envoy and minister to Finland, participated in the first phase of the military negotiations as the representative of the Foreign Ministry. See also statements of J. Klement and K. Selter.

yield. Even the presence of the Estonian Foreign Minister and other members of the delegation in Moscow did not change the position taken by the Soviet military. Consequently, the Estonian Government protested to higher levels in Moscow.⁵³

D. PROTEST TO MOSCOW

On instructions from the Foreign Minister, the Estonian Minister in Moscow, A. Rei, transmitted the Estonian protest to Molotov on October 4.⁵⁴ On the results of this protest Rei sent the following message:

Today at 19 o'clock I was received by Mr. Molotov. I read to him a note drawn up on the basis of today's telegram and supplemented it by verbal explanations. Mr. Molotov did not agree that our interpretation was the right one but announced that taking into consideration explanations offered by me, he has sent, after consultation with Mr. Stalin, the following telegram to the chairman of the army and naval commissions:

"We propose abandonment of stationing of Soviet troops and location of airfields at Valga and other points inland of Estonia. It is recommended that you will limit yourself to coastal regions, islands, and the district of Paldiski."⁵⁵

Molotov, however, insisted on a naval base and garrisons in the town of Haapsalu and vicinity, and airfields in western Estonia. He argued:

Article 3 of the Pact provides for naval and military bases of the U. S. S. R. only in certain places on Estonian territory (the islands Hiiumaa and Saaremaa and the coastal town of Paldiski), whereas it is not said that aerodromes cannot be situated in other places in Estonia.⁵⁶

E. MILITARY AGREEMENTS AND ESTONIA'S POSITION

As a result of this Estonian demarche, the Soviet military delegation dropped the demand for garrisons in Valga and Paide but continued to press for airfields inland and for the use of Rõuküla as a harbor. After several meetings, when the Soviets had modified some of their demands, the Estonian Government had to agree to some airfields inland and to the use of the Haapsalu region for stationing of troops.⁵⁷ This concession exceeded the Mutual Assistance Pact itself but was made under constant pressure from the Soviets and in view of the numerous Soviet troop concentrations behind the Estonian border.

In the course of these negotiations the following statement was made by the Estonian Foreign Minister to the Soviet military delegation:

According to the exact meaning of the pact the troops of the U. S. S. R. have to be stationed in districts separated for bases and airfields, to wit, on the islands

⁵³ Statement of K. Selter. Also A. Varma, op. cit., pp. 30-31.

⁵⁴ The following telegram was sent by the Estonian Foreign Minister to the Estonian Minister in Moscow: "The draft of the pact presented to us explicitly stated that the airfields shall be located on islands. During the negotiations no mention was made of airfields elsewhere than on the islands, with the exception of Paldiski, of course, which in the wording of the pact was put on an equal footing with islands. The right to locate airfields in other places at choice, would mean the right for unlimited military occupation, a possibility denied by both Stalin as well as Molotov. This also would ignore the cooperation of our army as an ally of Russia and would thus be in complete contradiction to the spirit of the pact.

"Grammatical as well as logical interpretation of article 3 of the pact does not leave any doubt that the geographical names refer also to airfields. If this were not the case the sentence should have been edited differently. If the geographical names would not refer to airfields, the whole sentence would lose its sense. To assume that the locations of bases were exactly determined, but the sites for airfields were available at choice would be unbalanced interpretation of individual provisions.

"Finally, a generally recognized rule of law says that no obligations or special rights should be given a broader interpretation." Varma, op. cit., p. 31.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Statement of K. Selter.

⁵⁷ Statements of K. Selter, and J. Klesment. A. Varma, op. cit., pp. 32-34.

of Saaremaa and Hiiumaa and in the town of Paldiski. As you know, the Estonian delegation stated at a previous meeting that it will agree to the stationing of the troops of the U. S. S. R. on the entire territory of Saaremaa and Hiiumaa until the districts for bases and airfields there are separated and determined, but for not longer than 2 years. On the other hand, the delegation of the U. S. S. R. raised the question for a provisional stationing of troops in the region of Haapsalu basing it on requirements of an orderly dislocation [deployment]. This proposal exceeds the provisions of the pact, and, therefore, it was submitted to the Government of the Republic. The latter agreed to propose to the Parliament that the troops of the U. S. S. R. may be stationed temporarily, for the duration of the present European war but not longer than for 2 years, in the town and region of Haapsalu, provided the military delegations will arrive at an agreement as to the boundaries of the respective districts and the exact stationing of troops.⁵⁸

Throughout the negotiations the Soviet delegation emphasized the importance of the time element in constructing the airfields and requested sites which would be easily convertible to use as airfields.⁵⁹ Not until the Soviet-Finnish war started and Soviet bombers used airfields in Estonia in their raids against Finnish towns did the meaning of the insistence on speed become clear.

For the implementation of the pact seven detailed military agreements were concluded during these negotiations.⁶⁰ These agreements limited the districts to be allocated for bases and airfields and specified the military installations that the Soviets were entitled to construct and install.

IV. UNDER THE SHADOW OF SOVIET POWER

A. THE RED ARMY MOVES IN

The negotiations between Soviet and Estonian military delegations had unmistakably shown that the Soviet Union did not consider itself bound by the letter of the mutual assistance pact. This was considered by them only as a vehicle for consolidation of their strategic position in Estonia, and as a basis for further demands which exceeded the concessions made by Estonia in the pact and in the confidential protocol. During the negotiations for the military agreements the Soviets demanded more and more bases and airfields; they tried to get Estonian communications under their control, and they violated the provision which determined the number of troops they were authorized to bring into Estonia under the terms of the confidential protocol of September 28, 1939.

Article I of the confidential protocol provided :

* * * the U. S. S. R. has the right, for the duration of this war (the European war of 1939), to keep separate garrisons of land and air forces totaling up to 25,000 men in the sites appropriated for aerodromes and bases.⁶¹

On October 18, the Soviet Army began moving into its bases in Estonia. At the end of October there had arrived by rail and on highways at least 30,000 soldiers, in addition to those which were transported by sea. This number increased continuously with the arrival

⁵⁸ Archives of the Estonian Consulate General in New York, N. Y.

⁵⁹ Varma, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

⁶⁰ Archives of the Estonian Consulate General in New York, N. Y.

⁶¹ The confidential protocol was never officially published. The correct text of the protocol is published in: *Nazi-Soviet Conspiracy and the Baltic States: Diplomatic Documents and Other Evidence*. Comp. by A. Rei, London, Boreas Publishing Co., 1948, pp. 40-41; and Swettenham, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31. J. Klesment in his statement confirms the authenticity of the texts as published in these books. English translation in appendix A, II, No. 6.

of new transports.⁶² At the beginning of June an estimated force of 40,000 Red Army troops were already stationed in bases on Estonian territory.⁶³

B. ADDITIONAL DEMANDS FOR BASES

Additional requests for more sites for bases and airfields were presented by the Soviets continuously up to the final destruction of Estonian independence in June 1940. Especially in the vicinity of Paldiski these new demands had to be satisfied, but this was also true in regard to the islands of Saaremaa and Hiiumaa, the region of Haapsalu and the harbor of Tallinn. Finally, in May 1940, the Soviets requested and got control of the island of Osmussaar in the Gulf of Finland and the coastal batteries of Aegna and Naissaare which protected the sea approaches to Tallinn.⁶⁴ The Estonian Government protested every violation, but the Soviets countered with the argument: "everything happens in the common interest of both Estonia and Soviet Russia."⁶⁵

C. SOVIET ATTEMPTS TO CONTROL RAILROADS

The futile attempt of the Soviets to get Estonian railroads under their control might well constitute a chapter by itself. In November 1939, a special group of Soviet officers and railroad men arrived, requesting permission to make a thorough inspection of all Estonian railroads and bridges on behalf of the commander of the Leningrad military district. Also, they attempted to appoint their railroad commanders at Estonian stations. These requests were flatly refused. They had, however, better success in taking over a number of storage rooms and other buildings at railway stations by the use of threats and force.⁶⁶

D. CONTEMPT FOR ESTONIAN SOVEREIGNTY

Among Estonians the Soviets during this period were referred to as "tenants," because under the provisions of the pact the territory for acquisition of bases and airfields was leased to the Soviet Union for a "due rental." The Soviets never paid any rent to the Estonian Government or damages to people who had to be evacuated from the sites of the bases.⁶⁷ This attitude is best illustrated by the words of a Soviet major who told the Estonian members of a mixed commission:

Do you really think that the Russians would pay rent to some Estonian Government? The Red Army knows only one government and that is the Government of the Soviet Union.⁶⁸

⁶² Statement of Col. E. Kasak. Colonel Kasak held for the years prior to 1939 and during 1939-40 the post of an executive director of Estonian railroads and was also attached to the office of General Traksmaa, who headed the Estonian liaison group with the Soviet military authorities.

⁶³ Statement of J. Klesment.

⁶⁴ Statement of E. Kasak. From these regions the Estonian population was evacuated and all local population excluded. Varma, op. cit., p. 38.

⁶⁵ Statement of J. Klesment. Testimony of Hon. Johannes Kaiv, acting consul general of Estonia in charge of Legation in the United States, in hearings before the Select Committee To Investigate the Incorporation of the Baltic States into the U. S. S. R. of the House of Representatives, 83d Cong., 1st sess., pt. I, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1954, p. 35 (hereafter quoted as hearings).

⁶⁶ Statement of E. Kasak.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Statement of Capt. Anton Saluste. Captain Saluste was in 1939-40 a member of a mixed Estonian-Soviet commission which handled the transfer of land and buildings to the Red army.

E. AIRFIELDS FOR BOMBING OF FINLAND

During the Soviet-Finnish war in 1939-40 the Soviet air force used airfields in Estonia for bombing Finland. This procedure was a direct and grave violation of the Mutual Assistance Pact. The Finnish Marshal Mannerheim wrote in his memoirs that Soviet bombers which attacked the Finnish capital, Helsinki, on the first day of the war, November 30, took off from airfields in Estonia, leased to the Soviet Union under the Mutual Assistance Pact.⁶⁹ This raid from Estonia bases was not the only one. Estonians could witness during the next months Soviet airplanes taking off for air raids against Finnish cities and settlements, and on several occasions crippled planes, returning from raids, had to make forced landings in Estonian fields. On occasions even propaganda material and bombs destined for Finland were dropped over Estonian territory.⁷⁰

The Mutual Assistance Pact provided that military operations were permissible only "in the event of direct aggression or threat of aggression on the part of a European Great Power against the maritime frontiers of the contracting parties in the Baltic Sea, or against their land frontiers across the territory of Latvia" (art. I), and this assistance "is rendered at the expressed desire of the other party" (confidential protocol, art. 3).

The Soviets did everything possible to cover up the operations of their aircraft from Estonian bases against Finland. The Estonian Foreign Minister protested verbally several times against these operations by the Soviet Air Force.⁷¹ The Soviet answer was—no answer at all.

F. ESTONIANS SYMPATHIZE WITH FINNS

It goes without saying that these actions by the Soviets were harmful to the relations of Estonia with Finland and Scandinavian countries who sympathized with Finland in its fight against the aggressive Soviet Union. When the Estonian Foreign Office protested to the Soviet Government, it did not only express the official position of the Government but the sentiment of the population at large as well.

Estonian sympathies rested wholly with Finland and its cause. Officially tied to the Soviet Union by the mutual assistance pact, Estonia was unable to express this sympathy publicly. Estonians witnessed the superior force of the Soviets but admired the heroic fight of their Finnish kinsmen against Red tyranny. Hundreds of young Estonians left the country to volunteer in the Finnish Army in its fight, to the great chagrin and irritation of the Soviet authorities.

The Estonian population ridiculed everything Soviet, and openly indicated its joy at Finnish military successes.

⁶⁹ Mannerheim, Carl Gustav Emil, *Minnen (Memoirs)*, vol. II, Stockholm, Norstedt, 1952, p. 117.

⁷⁰ Statement of Col. E. Kasak. He also reported that after the outbreak of Finnish-Soviet war the Soviets stepped up considerably the transport of munitions, bombs, and gasoline from Soviet Union to bases in Estonia; statement of Lt. Col. Eduard Reissaar, who was a wing commander in Estonian air force; statement of Maj. Andreas Ilves, the chief of the department of operations at the headquarters of Tallinn military district; statement of Paul Kompus, chief of detectives in the counties of Läänemaa and Saaremaa; statement of August Havi, a police officer; statement of Richard Kaups, a Baptist minister.

⁷¹ Statement of Johannes Klesment. Testimony of J. Kaiv, hearings, p. 35.

V. REPATRIATION OF GERMANS

One result of the Molotov-Ribbentrop secret agreements on September 28 was the resettlement in Germany of ethnic Germans from Estonia and Latvia at the end of 1939.

The confidential protocol between the two aggressors, supplementary to the treaty of September 28, 1939, stated:

The Government of the U. S. S. R. shall place no obstacles in the way of Reich nationals and other persons of German descent residing in the territories under its jurisdiction if they desire to migrate to Germany or to the territories under German jurisdiction. It agrees that such removals shall be carried out by agents of the Government of the Reich in cooperation with the competent local authorities and that the property rights of the emigrants shall be protected.

A corresponding obligation is assumed by the Government of the German Reich in respect to the persons of Ukrainian or White Russian descent residing in the territories under its jurisdiction.⁷²

When the Führer on October 5, 1939, "called home" all Germans residing in Estonia and Latvia, it came as a surprise to the local population, to the Germans themselves, and even to the Governments. At this time the Estonian Government had no information about the secret protocol of August 23 which had allotted Estonia to the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union nor of the agreement of September 28, 1939. Furthermore, Estonia had just concluded a mutual-assistance pact with the Soviet Union, so that the situation, at least for the moment, seemed stabilized. Thus, the call of Hitler for the return of the Germans to their homeland caused anxiety in Government circles and among the people.

The Germans in Estonia were mostly the descendants of the former upper social class of the country, the nobility, clergy, city burghers, and Germanized Estonians. Although numbering only 3 percent of the population up to World War I, they had played a leading part in the political, cultural, and economic life of the country. The emergence of an independent Estonian National State in 1918 had transformed the former ruling class into a national minority. The agrarian reform had abolished also their economic supremacy in the countryside. As a group, however, they enjoyed constitutionally guaranteed privileges in preserving and furthering their own cultural life.⁷³ Forefathers of many of them had lived in Estonia for almost 700 years, and their ties with the German Reich had been only cultural and racial. At no time did they have any direct and explicit political allegiance

⁷² Nazi Soviet Relations, op. cit., p. 100.

⁷³ The autonomous institutions of national minorities as operated under the Law on Cultural Autonomy of National Minorities of February 12, 1925 (RT 1925, 31/32, 9) was regarded by many foreign authors and scholars as the best solution of the minority problem. C. A. Macartney in: National States and National Minorities, London, Oxford University Press, 1934, p. 408, wrote: "According to the reported statements of minorities and majorities alike it has proved a brilliant success." See also, R. Comland, The Future of India: the third part of a report on the constitutional problem in India submitted to the warden and fellows of Nuffield College, Oxford, London, Oxford University Press, 1943, pp. 56-57; Wilhelm Grewe, Die Bestimmung der Volkszugehörigkeit im Recht der europäischen Staaten, Essen, 1938; H. J. Raehlf, Het Selbstbestimmingsrecht der Nationaliteiten (Le droit des nations de disposer d'elles-mêmes), S. Gravenhage, 1951; K. Ann, On the Spirit of the Estonian Minorities Law, In Apophoreta Tartuensia, Stockholm, 1949.

It is noteworthy that Germans and Estonians were both satisfied with the working of the cultural autonomy; see H. Koch, Fünf Jahre deutsche Kulturbesitzverwaltung in Estland, in Nation und Staat (Vienna), vol. 4, No. 4 (January 1931), pp. 239-243; Eugen Maddison, Die Erfahrungen mit der Kulturautonomie in Estland, in Nation und Staat (Vienna), vol. 4, No. 6 (March 1931), pp. 385-394; Werner Hinselblatt, Hat sich die Kulturautonomie in Estland bewährt? in Nation und Staat (Vienna), vol. 4, No. 7 (April 1931), pp. 441-449; Werner Hinselblatt, Kulturautonomie; ein Erinnerungsblatt für Prof. Rudolf Laun, in Festschrift zu Ehren von Professor Dr. jur. Rudolf Laun, Hamburg, 1948, pp. 32-25; Hellmuth Weisk, Das Volksgruppenrecht in Estland vor dem zweiten Weltkrieg, in Zeitschrift für Ostforschung (Marburg), vol. 1, No. 2 (1952), pp. 253-256; Oskar Angelus, Die Kulturautonomie in Estland, Detmold, Estnisches Zentralkomitee für Westdeutschland, 1951.

to the Reich. In the census of 1934 the number of ethnic Germans in Estonia was given as 16,000. Of these about 12,000 left the country under provisions of a special protocol between Estonia and Germany concluded on October 15, 1939.⁷⁴

All persons of German ethnic origin were released from Estonian citizenship if they expressed the wish to emigrate. They could take along with them a limited amount of property and money; the rest was transferred to the management of a special German trust board.⁷⁵

The evacuation of Germans aroused some suspicion as to the intent of the Soviet Union in its relations with Estonia. It was generally accepted that Germany needed more inhabitants to colonize regions annexed from Poland. For Estonia, this transfer meant the removal of a minority which, at times, had caused difficulties in internal as well as in foreign relations. The economic life of Estonia was not disrupted by their departure, for they had already lost their predominant economic position. Their departure, however, filled the political atmosphere with signs which pointed to more difficulties in the future.

VI. THE PRECARIOUS BALANCE

A. ESTONIAN CABINET REORGANIZED

Once the Estonian Government had ratified the Mutual Assistance Pact, it was determined, in contrast to the Soviet attitude, to live up to its provisions both in letter and spirit. In fact, the Estonian Government went so far as to reorganize its Cabinet to make it more amenable to the Kremlin in recognition of the criticism which had been directed at it by Stalin in his conversations with the Estonian delegation in Moscow. The hope was to strengthen the coalition without sacrificing any more Estonian sovereignty and thus placate the Kremlin so as to avoid further encroachment on Estonian independence. The new Cabinet under the premiership of Professor Uluots included also opposition leaders (i. e., Foreign Minister Professor Piip). Only the Socialists decided not to participate.

The main task of this coalition Cabinet was to guide Estonia through the prevailing stormy international situation. Their objectives were: to preserve the country's neutrality; to fulfill the obligations under the pact with the Soviet Union; and to maintain economic, social, and political stability in domestic affairs.⁷⁶

B. PRINCIPLES OF ESTONIAN POLICY

Estonia continued to adhere to its policy of neutrality. On April 17, 1940, Foreign Minister Piip stated in reference to Estonia's foreign policy:

The Government firmly intends to continue its policy of neutrality, which it has pursued during the present European war. We, as a small nation, cannot and do not want to mix in the quarrels of great powers, and the aim of our foreign

⁷⁴ Riigi Teataja II 1939, 17, 29.

⁷⁵ For more detailed account see Joseph B. Schechtman, "The Option Clause in the Reich's Treaties on the Transfer of Population," *American Journal of International Law*, 1944, vol. 38, pp. 356-374; and E. C. Helmreich, "Return of the Baltic Germans," *American Political Science Review*, 1942, pp. 711-716. In German: Hans Globke, *Die Staatsangehörigkeit der volksdeutschen Umsiedler aus Ost- und Südosteuropa* (The Nationality of Resettlers of German Descent from Eastern and Southeastern Europe), *Zeitschrift für osteuropäisches Recht* n. F. (Breslau), 1943, pp. 1-26.

⁷⁶ Johannes Klesment, *Reform of Estonian Constitution*, *Revue Baltique* (Tallinn), vol. I (February 1940), p. 65.

policy will remain as hitherto, to preserve the integrity and political independence of our country, and develop, with this aim in mind, friendly relations with all countries, equally in the field of politics, economics, and culture. Quite naturally our great eastern neighbor, with whom we created stable relation on the basis of the Mutual Assistance Pact, signed in Moscow 6 months ago, assumes a particularly prominent place.⁷⁷

Such had been the Estonian position since the signing of the pact. Sometimes there were, of course, grave doubts in government circles as to the sincerity of the Soviet Union. Already at his first closed conference with newspaper editors on October 12, 1939 the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister could not convince the journalists that they really believed that the Soviet Union had no further aggressive aims.⁷⁸

Officially, it was always denied that the Soviet Union had acquired more rights than were provided for in the pact. It was thought better not to aggravate a precarious situation. The Estonian Government always placed special emphasis upon Estonia's part in the fulfillment of the pact. Characteristic were the remarks of General Laidoner who said on May 2, 1940:

We have executed the pact honorably and we firmly wish to continue to do so in the future.⁷⁹

C. MOLOTOV'S ASSURANCES

One of the basic stipulations in the Mutual Assistance Pact provided that there should be no interference with the internal affairs of Estonia by the Soviet Union. And Molotov, the Soviet Prime Minister and Commissar for Foreign Affairs, elaborated this principle in his report to the fifth extraordinary session of the Supreme Soviet on October 31, 1939:

The special character of these Mutual Assistance Pacts in no way implies any interference of the Soviet Union in the affairs of Estonia, Latvia, or Lithuania, as some foreign newspapers are trying to make out. On the contrary, all these Pacts of Mutual Assistance *strictly stipulate the inviolability of the sovereignty of the signatory States and the principle of non-interference in each other's affairs. These pacts are based on mutual respect for the political, social, and economic structure of the contracting parties and are designed to strengthen the bases for peaceful neighbourly co-operation between our peoples.* We stand for the scrupulous and punctilious observance of the Pacts on the basis of complete reciprocity, and we declare that all the spreading of the nonsense about Sovietizing the Baltic countries is only to the interest of enemies of our common cause, and of all anti-Soviet provocateurs.⁸⁰ [Italics furnished.]

D. THE SOVIETS' FIRST STEP TOWARD CONQUEST

At the same time, however, the Soviets and the Communist Party started the infiltration of Estonia in preparation for the final conquest which was to come only 8 months later. The conclusion of a Mutual Assistance Pact with Estonia had been only a tactical move by the Soviet Union to disguise its true objectives. Soviet officers and officials, who came in touch with Estonians during the months immediately after the conclusion of the pact, did not conceal their belief that the present situation was only the first step. The pact was termed

⁷⁷ Views on Surmounting War Time Difficulties in Estonia, *Revue Baltique*, vol. I, No. 2 (June 1940), pp. 289-290.

⁷⁸ Statement of Jaan Kitzberg. Mr. J. Kitzberg was the editor in chief of the Estonian daily newspaper *Postimees* in Tartu.

⁷⁹ Views on surmounting wartime difficulties in Estonia. P. 288.

⁸⁰ *Pravda* No. 303 of November 1, 1939. English text in V. Molotov, *Soviet Peace Policy*, with a foreword by D. N. Pritt. London, Lawrence & Wishart for the Anglo-Russian News Bulletin, 1941, pp. 27-46. Also found as exhibit 4-G in hearings, pp. 534-535.

by Soviet military men as "the work of stupid diplomacy"⁸¹ and as "only a political move, but in fact you will be a part of the Soviet Union too, pretty soon. The Red army will never leave when it has entered once, and also you will experience it."⁸² The Soviet Army personnel resisted any restrictions imposed upon their movements and agreed only on orders from Moscow. In their eyes the entire country belonged to them.⁸³ The Estonian Government was well aware of remarks of this kind.

The intention of the Soviet Government to sovietize the Baltic States was, of course, inherent in the secret protocols to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of August 23, 1939; but this intention was further supported in a communication from the Soviet People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs to the German Ambassador in Moscow dated September 21, 1940, which stated:

* * * the Soviet Government deems it necessary to declare that *the measures it took in regard to the Baltic States and in Bessarabia* [Military occupation and absorption of these states] *were entirely in accord with the Soviet-German Treaty* * * *

The Soviet Government not only informed the Government of the German Reich in advance regarding the measures it intended to take in the Baltic States, especially in Lithuania, but even received from the Government of the German Reich on June 17 of this year a communication stating that the measures taken by the Soviet Government in those countries were regarded by Germany *as measures which concerned solely the Soviet Union and those countries*. Such a declaration from the Government of the German Reich was *entirely comprehensible to the Soviet Government*, as Germany had as recently as August 1939 recognized the special interests of the Soviet Union in respect to the Baltic States, *and the measures which the Soviet Union had taken regarding those states, especially Lithuania, in no way went beyond the scope of the Soviet-German Pact of August 23, 1939.*⁸⁴ [Italics furnished.]

E. "FOUNDATION OF AN EASTERN FRONT"

The Soviet justification for its grand strategy in the Baltic was based upon the alleged necessity for an "Eastern front" against German aggression. In their answer to the official United States Department of State publication, Soviet-Nazi Relations, they contended that the occupation of the eastern part of Poland and the stationing of Red army in the Baltic States, as well as the war against Finland, were necessary for building up the "Eastern" front. The ultimate occupation of the Baltic States was carried out only for the purpose of strengthening this front. In *Falsifiers of History*,⁸⁵ the official position of the Soviet Union was stated as follows:

Thus the defence of the U. S. S. R. against Hitler aggression was strengthened also in the north, in the Leningrad area, where the defence line was shifted to a distance of 150 kilometers north of Leningrad up to and including Viborg.

But this did not mean that the formation of an "Eastern" front from the Baltic to the Black Sea had been completed. Pacts had been concluded with the Baltic States, but there were as yet no Soviet troops capable of holding the defences. * * * In the middle of June 1940 Soviet troops entered Estonia,

⁸¹ Statement of E. Kasak.

⁸² Statement of A. Saluste.

⁸³ Soon after the entry of Soviet troops onto the bases, a small group of Soviet officers arrived from Leningrad to conduct a survey of the Estonian western coast to determine suitable bases for their seaplanes. When Estonian officers drew their attention to the fact that the region they wanted to survey was not allocated for bases, they answered that this would be decided in Moscow and so far as they knew the entire Baltic seacoast to Königsberg belonged to the Soviet Union. Statement of A. Saluste.

⁸⁴ The People's Commissariat of the Soviet Union to the German Embassy in the Soviet Union, September 21, 1940. *Nazi-Soviet Relations*, p. 193.

⁸⁵ *Falsifiers of History*, pp. 47, 48 ff.

Latvia, Lithuania. On June 27 of the same year Soviet troops entered Bukovina and Moldavia, * * *

In this way the formation of an "Eastern" front against Hitler aggression from the Baltic to the Black Sea was completed. * * * [Italics furnished.]

They [the British and French "ruling circles"] did not realize that it was not a question of infringing upon the national rights of Finland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, or Poland, but of preventing the conversion of these countries into downtrodden colonies of Hitler Germany by organizing victory over the Nazis.

The aim of Soviet diplomacy in concluding the nonaggression pact with Germany had been, according to the admission of the Soviet's own official statement, the establishment of a forward defence line in the west against possible German attack. Moreover, the argument continued: "* * * the Soviet Union did not doubt for a moment that sooner or later Hitler would attack it."⁸⁶

And when the agreement with Germany was achieved on the division of the spheres of influence, "the first task of the Soviet Government was to create an 'Eastern' front against Hitler aggression." The Baltic States were included in the region the Soviet Union needed for its "Eastern" front and the establishment of naval bases and airfields there was only the first step. "*In this way the foundation was laid for an 'Eastern' front,*" the report continued.⁸⁷

Thus, the ultimate aim of the Soviet Union, according to its own official testimony, was the complete inclusion of the Baltic States within their defense system. The establishment of bases under the terms of mutual assistance pacts was called only the laying of a "foundation" for their "Eastern" front, and only after the complete military occupation of these countries in June 1940 was the "Eastern" front completed.⁸⁸

F. COMMUNIST PARTY BEGINS INFILTRATION

The Soviets now established their contacts with the few Estonian Communists, a number of whom had been granted amnesty in 1938 after having served prison terms for espionage. The Communist Party had been outlawed in Estonia since 1918, and its successors, which had existed under a number of "front" organizations since 1925, had never commanded any degree of support among the population. Estimates placed the number of party underground members in the spring of 1940 at 300.⁸⁹

The first target fixed for infiltration in the fall of 1939 was the labor unions.⁹⁰ Two leftist members of Parliament, Maxim Unt and Neeme Ruus, who were also active in the labor movement, maintained close relations with the Soviet Legation. Only in two unions, the textile and metal workers, did the Communist succeed in establishing themselves in leading positions. Of course, they did not declare

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 42.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 43.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 47.

⁸⁹ Klesment, Johannes, *The Communist Movement in Estonia*, p. 8. This is a survey submitted to the Baltic Committee.

⁹⁰ The activities of Communists in labor unions are based on a survey compiled by Erich Joonas, a leading figure in the Estonian labor movement and former member of Parliament. According to Soviet sources, the union of textile workers organized on October 9, 1939, the sending of greetings to the Soviet Union, the Red Army, and Stalin. The chairman of the metal workers union and the organizer of the construction workers union had "conducted negotiations with the Trade Representation of the Soviet Union." *Ulevaade saksa fašistlikust okupatsioonist Eestis* (Survey of the German fascist occupation in Estonia), p. 40. In: *Saksa fašistlik okupatsioon Eestis aastal 1941-44* (German Fascist Occupation in Estonia in 1941-1944). Tallinn, RK "Politiline Kirjandus," 1947, pp. 28-82.

themselves openly to be Communists. In other unions, they organized mostly secret cells. In May 1940, an attempt was made to get all the labor unions and the Workers Medical and Hospitalization Fund in Tallinn under their control, but the Communists suffered defeat and decided to await future events.

By infiltration and intimidation the Communists spread rumors about the inevitability of the coming of the Soviet system to Estonia. Although the population in general grew more and more immune to any kind of Communist propaganda, the spread of these rumors had its effect on the morale of the workers.

In numerous cases the Soviets had turned to persons who were known to be liquor addicts or criminals and hired them as agents.⁹¹ In the spring of 1940, these agents openly associated with the members of various Soviet missions.⁹²

Despite these efforts the Communists did not succeed in winning converts among Estonians in any appreciable number. When a show of their strength was most needed—in the demonstrations on June 21, 1940—they failed completely and only the guns of Soviet tanks helped to keep some workers in the fold.

G. SOVIETS EMPHASIZE "FRIENDLY" RELATIONS

For its propaganda benefit abroad the Soviets tried to emphasize its friendly relations with the Baltic States. The Soviet press published friendly articles about Baltic States and noted Estonian national holidays and reported speeches by Estonian Government leaders.⁹³

One indication of friendly relations was supposed to be the visit to Moscow of the Estonian Commander in Chief, General Laidoner. The invitation had been accepted in order not to offend the Soviets. The 3 days' visit, starting on December 7, 1939, was filled with special attentions accorded him by high Soviet Government officials, including Stalin himself. The Commissar of War, Marshal Voroshilov, gave him two white horses. At receptions Stalin toasted the health of General Laidoner and President Päts. Half a year later Laidoner as well as Päts both were arrested on orders from Moscow and deported to the Soviet Union. There, they disappeared without leaving any trace.⁹⁴

VII. BALTIC COOPERATION

During the era of the mutual assistance pacts with the Soviet Union, the Baltic States continued their mutual cooperation along political, economic, and cultural lines. The basis of the Baltic entente was that the Treaty of Cooperation and Friendship of 1934 against which the Soviet Union had raised no objections during the negotiations preceding the conclusion of mutual assistance pacts.

⁹¹ Statement of E. Kasak.

⁹² Statement of Albert Kilvar, an agent in the intelligence department of Estonian police. Statement of P. Kompus.

⁹³ *Izvestia* No. 228 of October 2, 1939, reporting the speech of Estonian President, *ibid.*, No. 229 of October 4, 1939, bringing excerpts from Estonian press: visit of General Laidoner reported in *Pravda* on December 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, and 17, 1939; the 50th birthday of Estonian Minister of War (General Reek) in *Pravda* No. 33 of February 3, 1940, excerpts from the Estonian press on the occasion of the anniversary of the Peace Treaty of Tartu in *Pravda* No. 33 of February 3, 1940; the 22d anniversary of Estonian state in *Pravda* No. 54 of February 24, 1940.

⁹⁴ For the visit of General Laidoner to Moscow see also the *New York Times* of December 9, p. 4: 7; 12, p. 4: 2; 13, p. 12: 5; 14, p. 2: 6; and 17, p. 32: 5.

⁹⁵ Statement of J. Klesment.

The periodic conferences of Foreign Ministers of the Baltic States continued under this 1934 Treaty. The 10th conference was held in Tallinn on December 6-8, 1939, and the 11th conference in Riga on March 14-16, 1940. These conferences strengthened cooperation among the three states, particularly in the economic and cultural fields. For instance, the communique of the December conference stated:

The Conference decided to coordinate the activities of the three states in regard to the problems resulting from the economic war and to ask governmental agencies to render mutual support in their efforts to secure the procurement of raw materials and consumer goods for all three states.⁹⁶

Of course, some political problems were also touched upon at these conferences, particularly the effects of the mutual assistance pacts upon the declared neutrality of the Baltic States. Under private discussion in December was "the matter of abstaining from voting at Geneva on the question of the expulsion of the Soviet Union from the League of Nations." The agreement which was reached by the three Ministers not to vote on this question was not put in writing. The latter decision was considered as a "lack of independence to these states in matters of foreign policy," by the American Minister to Latvia and Estonia.⁹⁶

These conferences were in no way directed against the Soviet Union, German observers reported:

Since the conclusion of the Soviet Mutual Assistant Pact with the Baltic countries in September-October 1939 there has been no closer cooperation in an anti-Russian sense among the Baltic States. In view of the occupation of their countries by Soviet Russian troops, the three Baltic Governments were aware of the danger of such a policy.⁹⁷

In the joint communique published after the 11th conference, the foreign policy of the three states was summed up in the following manner:

The experience up to the present time has led the Ministers of the three countries to the conclusion that the policy of practical neutrality of the Baltic States, as well as international agreements concluded by these states, and, in general, the attitude they have taken in view of the problems of the international situation has actually raised are in complete agreement with their firm resolution to stay out of armed conflicts and to guarantee their independence and their security.

They equally favor all initiative directed at the establishment of a just and lasting peace between the nations and will make their contributions for attainment of this goal within the limits of their means. In the same spirit, the three Ministers have accepted with satisfaction the reestablishment of peaceful relations between Finland and the U. S. S. R.⁹⁸

Satisfaction was also expressed for the growing cooperation in economic and cultural fields. As a common enterprise a publication, *Revue Baltique*, had been founded by the Bureau for Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian Cooperation, a private organization. It was intended to be "an expression of social cooperation." Close contact among representatives of the three countries had resulted in several

⁹⁶ *Revue Baltique* (Tallinn), vol. 1, No. 1, February 1940, p. 140.

⁹⁷ The Minister in Latvia (Wiley) to the Secretary of State, December 22, 1939, No. 602. *Foreign Relations*, p. 984.

⁹⁸ The German Foreign Office to the Reich Foreign Minister, June 17, 1940. *Nazi-Soviet Relations*, p. 152.

⁹⁹ *Revue Baltique* (Tallinn), vol. 1, No. 2, June 1940, p. 280; the *New York Times*, March 17, 1940, p. 28:3.

smaller gatherings, and in April a conference of cooperatives of the three countries was held in Riga.⁹⁹

It is significant that Pravda¹ carried a short report on the 11th conference of the Baltic Foreign Ministers.

VIII. SIGNS OF APPROACHING DANGER

A. SOME ACTS OF VIOLENCE

Tensions multiplied in Estonian-Soviet relations during the winter and spring of 1939-40. The restraint exercised by the Estonian Government in its relations with the Soviet Union often helped to smooth imminent friction. Thus, even incidents such as the sinking of an Estonian merchantman by a Soviet ship in the Gulf of Finland on December 10, 1939 and the firing upon an Estonian airplane by Soviet warships on February 2, 1940 in Tallinn,² passed without seriously disrupting the normal course of relations.

B. PRO-BRITISH ATTITUDE CRITICIZED

One of the most striking indications of distress in Soviet-Estonian relations appeared in the form of an article in Pravda on May 28, 1940, in which that paper's special correspondent wrote from Tallinn that a certain "part of the intelligentsia preaches a loyal attitude toward England and expresses its hatred of Germany and everything German." The University of Tartu particularly was described as a hotbed of "pro-British propaganda." Similarly, in commercial circles the opinion was said to prevail that it would have been more profitable to trade with England than with Germany and that English goods were better than German. With reference to the "ruling circles" and the politicians, it was stated that they neither condemned nor praised Germany's actions but endeavored to remain neutral. Yet, their attitude, it was said, seemed to suggest their fear of England because of Estonia's commercial and political ties with the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union was, of course, operating under the influence of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact and the official attitude of the masters of the Kremlin toward England and its allies was, at least, mildly hostile. On the other hand, this Pravda article described accurately the feelings of Estonians who politically as well as economically had been looking for closer relations with the Anglo-American world.

In the same article Pravda charged the Estonian Government with failing to reveal the volume of its trade with the U. S. S. R.:

No facts—

complained Pravda—

concerning the trade between Estonia and the U. S. S. R. are published. In all these precautions there transpires the endeavor to tone down and conceal from public opinion the role of the U. S. S. R. with regard to Estonia and Estonia's fear of England in regard to its relations with the U. S. S. R.

The injustice of this charge was rendered particularly significant by the simple fact that the reason Estonia failed to reveal figures on

⁹⁹ Revue Baltique, No. 2, p. 301.

¹ Pravda, No. 75, of March 17, 1940.

² Statement of E. Kasak; Pravda, No. 35, of February 5, 1940.

Estonian trade with the Soviet Union was the request of the Soviet Government itself to keep these trade figures strictly confidential.³

More apprehensive signs of a troublesome future appeared in the beginning of June when kidnappings of Soviet soldiers in Lithuania were reported. These incidents were followed by Lithuanian-Soviet negotiations in Moscow, culminating finally on June 14, 1940 in the Soviet ultimatum to Lithuania.

C. ESTONIAN BOOK EXHIBITION IN MOSCOW

As a friendly gesture on the part of the Soviet Union, a Baltic book exhibition had been opened in Moscow on May 26, 1940. A special Estonian delegation attended and enjoyed during the first days, according to the Soviet standards, an emphatically friendly reception. But this attitude changed after the Pravda article. Soviet officials were now hostile. Entries made in the visitors' book at the exhibition which before had been laudatory and sympathetic now were insulting, sharply critical, and abusive. The Estonian delegation returned home ahead of schedule.⁴

IX. SOVIETS PREPARE FOR THE FINAL BLOW

On June 15, 1940, a Baltic Cultural Conference convened in Tallinn. A number of leading persons in public and cultural life in all three Baltic countries participated. But the conference was foreshadowed by the deterioration of Soviet-Lithuanian relations which began about the end of May. There were other signs that the Soviet Union was preparing for a new move in its relations with the Baltic States.

During this fateful day reports came in that the Soviet Union had presented an ultimatum to Lithuania and that the Soviet Navy once more sealed up Estonia from the outside world. Estonian merchantmen had been stopped and searched by Soviet warships. Strange preparations and concentrations of troops were reported taking place on Soviet bases in Estonia.

A. AIRLINER SHOT DOWN BY SOVIET PLANES

Then, in the early afternoon hours of June 15, 1940, an airliner, on its way from Tallinn to Helsinki (Finland), was shot down by two Soviet fighter planes over the sea north of Tallinn. The plane had been attacked without warning. Its crew and passengers were killed. The presence of a Soviet submarine at the scene lent strength to the report that the attack had been planned well in advance. Estonian fishing boats went immediately to the scene and picked up mailbags and other items from the plane. The Soviet submarine stopped the fishermen and seized what the fishermen had found. The Soviet submarine officers showed particular interest in the mailbags which reportedly also contained some diplomatic correspondence.⁵

³ Statement of J. Klesment.

⁴ The statement of Juhan Vasar. Prof. Juhan Vasar, the Director of the Department of Science and Fine Arts in the Ministry of Education at that time, headed the Estonian delegation to Moscow.

⁵ The statements of Evald Lilleste, Isak Puuström, and Heinart Sumberg. The mailbags were picked out from the sea by a fisherman, H. L., who stated that the submarine crew took the life preservers he had picked up from him but threw these overboard a little later. E. Lilleste was the owner and master of a small sailboat which was on its way from Võsu to Tallinn. I. Puuström and H. Sumberg were fishermen. Also statements of Harald Mang and Jüri Lepik. H. Mang watched the incidents from the lighthouse of Keri where he was stationed.

B. SOVIET GARRISONS ALERTED

Final preparations for action on Soviet bases were started around June 10, 1940, 1 week before the actual invasion. The work of the mixed military commissions had been interrupted on June 10. No telephone connection with the Soviet commands on Estonian bases could be established. A few days later concentrations of Soviet troops along the railroad Paldiski-Keila (about 30 miles west of Tallinn) were reported. All Soviet bases had been alerted for several days, and the troops were given indoctrination lectures. They were told that the Estonian people want to join the Red army.⁶

Soviet Army units started to move toward the Estonian capital in the early hours of June 17 and occupied the city.

At the same time new Soviet troop concentrations behind the Estonian border were observed. All these troops were in battle order, and their strength was estimated at least at 90,000 men.⁷

X. THE SOVIET ULTIMATUM TO ESTONIA JUNE 16, 1940

A. ESTONIA'S TURN

On June 16, 1940, the Soviet press agency Tass reported that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania had concluded a military alliance.⁸ Immediately the Estonian Minister in Moscow was directed to inform the Soviet Government that no such alliance had been concluded and that the relations between the three Baltic States were still based on treaties concluded before the signing of the mutual assistance pact with the Soviet Union.⁹

There was no longer any doubt, in view of the ultimatum presented to Lithuania 2 days before, that the Kremlin was preparing for the complete seizure of the Baltic States. For Estonia, as for Lithuania, this came in the form of an ultimatum.

The text of the note Molotov handed to the Estonian Minister, A. Rei, in Kremlin at 2:30 p. m. contained demands for replacement of the present Estonian Cabinet and for admission into Estonia of additional Soviet troops.¹⁰

In effect, the Kremlin told Estonia what government it should have. These demands were backed by Molotov's oral statement which declared that—

in the event no answer indicating acceptance of the ultimatum was received by the stated time, the Red Army units concentrated at the boundary of the Estonian Republic would be ordered to march into the country, suppressing all resistance by armed force.¹¹

The ultimatum was to be accepted or rejected within 8½ hours. The answer was due in the Kremlin at 11 p. m.

⁶ Statement of E. Kasak. Statement of J. Klesment.

⁷ Statement of Lt. Col. Eduard Reissaar. Colonel Reissaar was ordered on June 6-8, 1940, to Kingissepa (Soviet Union) to accept airplanes purchased from the Soviets. There he saw that the region between Narva and Kingissepa was full of Soviet troops and transports. Statement of Maj. M. Mullart. Statement of Capt. S. Maripuu in regard to troop concentrations against Estonia's southeastern border.

⁸ This allegation was included in the ultimatum presented by the Soviet Government to Lithuania on June 14 and published in Pravda No. 166 of June 16, 1940. English translation in hearings, pp. 539-540.

⁹ Statement of J. Klesment.

¹⁰ Pravda No. 167 of June 17, 1940. For the text, see the appendix A, II, No. 10.

¹¹ Statement of J. Klesment. For the text, see appendix A, II, No. 9.

B. THE ULTIMATUM

The Soviet ultimatum, which charged Estonia with violating the mutual-assistance pact and with constituting a menace to the security of the Soviet Union, demanded that—

(1) A government be established in Estonia without delay that would be capable and willing to warrant the honest execution of the Soviet-Estonian Mutual Assistance Pact;

(2) Free passage be promptly ensured to Soviet troops which are to be stationed in sufficient numbers in the most important centers of Estonia in order to guarantee the realization of the Soviet-Estonian Mutual Assistance Pact and to prevent possible acts of provocation against Soviet garrisons in Estonia.

Acceptance of the Soviet ultimatum meant military occupation of Estonia.

C. DESTRUCTION OR SURRENDER

On the same afternoon the Estonian Cabinet hurriedly gathered to consider the text of the ultimatum from the Minister in Moscow. From military leaders the cabinet heard reports about the Soviet troop concentrations along the Estonian border and the preparations taking place on the Soviet bases in Estonia. "It was clear to us," wrote one of the participants in this meeting—

that the Soviet Union had brutally begun to break the treaty and the solemn promises therein in a moment when we stood absolutely alone, unable to resist Soviet demands made under the threat of force. We had no alternative but to accept the ultimatum, hoping that in the development of world events we would one day be able to claim our rights. After a short discussion the Cabinet decided to accept the Soviet ultimatum, though some Cabinet members believed that it was based on misunderstanding and suggested open diplomatic discussion on the matter. However, there was no time for diplomatic discussion because an answer was due in a very few hours and the Soviet military attack, which might bring even worse results than surrender, had to be avoided.¹²

Accordingly, acceptance of the ultimatum was relayed to the Kremlin. The next day Pravda published a short notice together with the text of the ultimatum. The notice stated:

Yesterday Mr. Rei (Estonian Minister in Moscow) transmitted the answer of the Estonian Government on the compliance with the demands of the Soviet Government.

D. MOSCOW ALLEGES SECRET BALTIC ALLIANCE¹³

The Soviet ultimatum contended that "the Estonian Government has grossly violated the Soviet-Estonian Mutual Assistance Pact." It sought desperately to justify its aggression on this alleged violation. The Soviet Government specifically accused the Estonian Government of not only failing to dissolve the Estonian-Latvian military alliance signed in 1923, but of extending it to include Lithuania, and employing it against the Soviet Union. Secondly, it charged that secret conferences had been held in December 1939 and March 1940 between the three Baltic States and, thirdly, that as an organ of the military alliance the periodical, *Revue Baltique*, had been published under the auspices of the general staffs of the three countries.

¹² Statement of J. Klesment.

¹³ Pravda No. 167 of June 17, 1940.

E. INVENTED ACCUSATIONS : FACTS AND FICTION

1. Estonian-Latvian defense pact

The military defense pact between Estonia and Latvia signed in 1923 had been in force since February 21, 1924.¹⁴ This pact was a purely defensive alliance. The treaty was not secret and was well known to the Soviet Government. When the Estonian delegation in September 1939 conducted negotiations in Moscow for the conclusion of the mutual assistance pact, it raised the question of the Estonian-Latvian defense alliance. Section 4 of the mutual assistance pact, in the draft as well as in the final form, provided that the "Contracting parties may not conclude alliances or enter into coalitions with other states which are directed against one of the contracting parties." No objections against the Estonian-Latvian alliance was raised by either Stalin or Molotov. It was understood that this treaty did not fall under the restriction of section 4.¹⁵ Neither had the Soviet Union during the ensuing months ever expressed any objections to the continuation of this alliance nor did they term it incompatible with the provisions or spirit of the mutual assistance pact.

To the Estonian Government it was clear that the question of the Estonian-Latvian defense alliance had been advanced by the Soviets only as a pretext. Evidence of the pretext was accentuated once the charges against Estonia in regard to the inclusion of Lithuania in the military alliance were considered. This charge had been advanced by the Soviets prior to the ultimatum. On the morning of June 16 the Soviet press agency Tass had released a report in which it was alleged that a secret military pact had been concluded between the three Baltic States against the Soviet Union. As it developed, this allegation constituted only a prelude to the ultimatum itself in which these charges were repeated.

2. Baltic cooperation

Cooperation existed between the three Baltic States in foreign policy and in the cultural field. Political cooperation was based on the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation of September 12, 1934, which provided for regular conferences of the Foreign Ministers of the three states. The aim was to coordinate foreign policies and participation in the activities of the League of Nations. This treaty also had been known to the Soviet Union. At the conclusion of the mutual assistance pact no objections against its provisions or existence had been advanced by the Soviets. Conferences of the Foreign Ministers were held periodically and no secrecy whatever clouded them. The

¹⁴ Published in League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. 23 (1924), pp. 81-85.

¹⁵ According to the official Estonian record Stalin and Molotov said on September 28, 1939, in reference to the Latvian-Estonian defense alliance when this question was raised by the Estonian delegation: "We are not against it. The present pact does not affect the Estonian-Latvian treaty of alliance. The treaty can remain in force. As the present text of the pact speaks about future treaties, there is no need to make reservations with a special clause in regard to the Estonian-Latvian treaty" (p. 9).

And now in their ultimatum the same men wrote: "Prior to the signing of the Soviet-Estonian Mutual Assistance Pact in the autumn of 1939, the Soviet Government was still able to close its eyes to the existence of such a military alliance, although in its essence it was inconsistent with the previously concluded Soviet-Estonian Nonaggression Pact. However, after the conclusion of the Soviet-Estonian Mutual Assistance Pact, the Soviet Government considers a military alliance between Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania, which is directed against the Soviet Union, not only inadmissible and intolerable, but even extremely dangerous and menacing to the security of the frontiers of the Soviet Union."

domestic as well as the foreign press had been always informed and communiques had been released after every conference.¹⁶ The conferences of Foreign Ministers held in December 1939 and March 1940 did not differ from earlier conferences and no new obligations outside of the scope of the existing treaty were taken by any of the participants.

As in the case of the charges with reference to the secret military alliance, the charges alleging secret cooperation and coordination between the general staffs of the three countries were completely unfounded.¹⁷ The most incredulous of these charges was the one labeling the magazine *Revue Baltique*, an "organ of the Baltic military entente." This periodical had been founded in 1939. Two issues were published up to June 1940—one in February and one in June. The periodical represented the results of common efforts for closer cooperation among the three Baltic nations in the cultural field. This publication was on sale everywhere.¹⁸

The Soviet Union never tried to substantiate its accusations.¹⁹ Even after the occupation of the Baltic States when all archives of the Foreign Ministry were seized by the Soviets, they never contended even at that time that there had existed a secret military alliance among the Baltic States. On the contrary, the Soviet Union in its later attempts to justify aggression in the Baltic States only advanced strategic reasons. An official Soviet statement declared:²⁰

When concluding the pact of nonaggression with Germany in August 1939, the Soviet Union did not doubt for a moment that sooner or later Hitler would attack it. This certainty was based on the fundamental policies and military line of the Hitlerites. It was borne out by the practical activities of the Hitler government throughout the prewar period.

That was why the first task of the Soviet Government was to create an "Eastern" front against Hitler aggression, to build up a defence line along the western frontiers of the Byelorussian and Ukrainian territories and thus set up a barrier to prevent an unhindered advance of the German troops eastward. For this it was necessary to reunite Western Byelorussia and the Western Ukraine * * *, with Soviet Byelorussia and the Soviet Ukraine, and to move Soviet troops into these territories. * * *

A few days later the Soviet Government signed pacts of mutual assistance with the Baltic States, providing for the stationing of Soviet Army garrisons, the organization of Soviet airfields and the establishment of naval bases on the territories of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

In this way the foundation was laid for an "eastern" front. * * *

On March 12, 1940, the Soviet-Finnish Peace Treaty was signed.

Thus the defence of the U. S. S. R. against Hitler aggression was strengthened also in the north, in the Leningrad area, where the defence line was shifted to a distance of 150 kilometres north of Leningrad up to and including Viborg.

But this did not mean that the formation of an "Eastern" front from the Baltic to the Black Sea had been completed. Pacts had been concluded with the Baltic States, but there were as yet no Soviet troops there capable of holding the defences. Moldavia and Bukovina had formally been reunited with the U. S. S. R., but there were no Soviet troops capable of holding the defenses there either. In the middle of June 1940 Soviet troops entered Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania. On June 27 of the same year Soviet troops entered Bukovina and Moldavia, the latter of which had been severed by Rumania from the U. S. S. R. after the October revolution.

¹⁶ See above, pp. 239-241.

¹⁷ "There were meetings of general staffs other than those under the provisions of the same treaty (Treaty of Cooperation and Friendship of 1934) where the texts of the new treaties to be concluded with the Soviet Union for implementation of the Mutual Assistance Pact in regard to military bases were under discussion," wrote J. Klesment, the legal adviser of the Estonian Government.

¹⁸ The magazine is available in the Library of Congress.

¹⁹ Statement of J. Klesment.

²⁰ *Falsifiers of History*, pp. 42, 43.

In this way the formation of an "Eastern" front against Hitler aggression from the Baltic to the Black Sea was completed. * * *

They [the British and French "ruling circles"] did not realize that it was not a question of infringing upon the national rights of Finland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, or Poland, but of preventing the conversion of those countries into downtrodden colonies of Hitler Germany by organizing victory over the Nazis. * * *

Only enemies of democracy or people who had lost their senses could qualify these actions of the Soviet Government as aggression.

3. Molotov contradicts himself

Soviet accusations charging that Estonia violated the mutual assistance pact provide an excellent example of Molotov contradicting himself. For as late as March 29, 1940, Molotov, reporting to the Supreme Soviet, found the mutual assistance pacts with all the Baltic countries, "being carried out in a satisfactory manner." He said, speaking from the loftiest and the most solemn podium in the Soviet Empire:

Our experience during the 6 months that has elapsed since these pacts of mutual assistance were concluded has enabled us to draw very definite positive conclusions concerning these treaties with the Baltic countries. It is quite clear that the treaties concluded by the Soviet Union with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have served to strengthen the international position both of the Soviet Union and of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

In spite of the scare raised by imperialist circles hostile to Soviet Union, the state and political independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania has not suffered in any way, while economic intercourse between these countries and the Soviet Union has begun to increase markedly. *The pacts with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are being carried out in a satisfactory manner* and this creates premises for a further improvement in relations between the Soviet Union and these countries.²¹ [Italics furnished.]

At no time since October 1939 had the Soviet Union presented any charges of violations of the pact by the Estonian Government.²² On May 15, an additional protocol, transferring to the Soviet two islands for bases, had been signed. Up to this time the Soviets seemed to have been well pleased with the Estonian performance and attitude. The Soviet Government even tried to show friendliness toward Estonia. But then in June 1940 Molotov put himself in the position of contradicting these earlier statements as it will be shown below.

F. SOVIET LEGAL POSITION WITHOUT FOUNDATION

The Soviet Union could advance no legal argument, or provisions of international agreements or law for justification of its ultimatum. To the contrary, by presentation of its ultimatum to Estonia the Soviet Union practically violated each one of the treaties which it had concluded with Estonia during the preceding 20 years.

The use of force was outlawed in Soviet-Estonian relations by article 1 of the treaty of nonaggression and peaceful settlement of disputes of May 4, 1932. This article stipulated:

Each of the High Contracting Parties * * * undertakes to refrain from any act of aggression or any violent measures directed against the integrity and violability of the territory or against the political independence of the other Contracting Party, whether such acts of aggression or such violent measures are undertaken separately or in conjunction with other Powers, with or without declaration of war.²³

²¹ Pravda No. 89 of March 30, 1940. English in Molotov Soviet Peace Policy, op. cit., p. 64. Extract also printed as exhibit 4-G in hearings, p. 535.

²² Testimony of J. Kalv. hearings, p. 34.

²³ Hearings, pp. 528-529.

Moreover, aggression was further defined in the Convention for the Definition of Aggression of July 3, 1933²⁴ which had been ratified by both the Soviet Union and Estonia. According to article II of this convention:

* * * the aggressor in an international conflict shall, subject to the agreements in force between the parties to the dispute, be considered to be that State which is the first to commit any of the following actions:

- (1) Declaration of war upon another State;
- (2) Invasion by its armed forces, with or without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State;
- (3) Attack by its land, naval, or air forces, with or without a declaration of war, on the territory, vessels, or aircraft of another State;
- (4) Naval blockade of the coasts or ports of another State; * * *

Furthermore, it was stated in article III of the same convention that "No political, military, economic, or other considerations may serve as an excuse or justification for the aggression referred to in article II."

In addition, both states had agreed "to submit all disputes, whatever their nature or origin, which may arise between them subsequent to the coming into force of the present Treaty, and which it may not have been possible to settle within a reasonable time through the ordinary diplomatic channel, to a procedure of conciliation in a mixed Conciliation Commission" (art. IV of the nonaggression treaty).²⁵

Accordingly, the first step in settling disputes between the Soviet Union and Estonia had to be ordinary diplomatic negotiations, and after these had failed, the special Conciliation Commission. In presenting the ultimatum, the Soviet Union disregarded all these provisions and did not attempt to initiate negotiations. Even the time designated for acceptance of the ultimatum was so short that Estonia was unable to call for the execution of those instruments of conciliation.

The Soviet Union had ignored all possibilities for a peaceful settlement and committed a grave violation of international law as established by agreements between these two states.

Thus, the ultimatum in form and contents ignored all instruments of conciliation.²⁶ One of the demands of the Soviet Government was the reorganization of the Estonian Government. In the peace treaty of February 2, 1920²⁷ the Soviet Union voluntarily agreed to recognize "the independence and autonomy of the State of Estonia, and renounces voluntarily and forever all rights of sovereignty formerly held by Russia over the Estonian people and territory by virtue of the former legal situation (art. 1).

The peace treaty of 1920 had been characterized as "the unshakeable foundation of their mutual relations and obligations" (Preamble of the Nonaggression Treaty) and both parties agreed also "to refrain from any act of aggression or any violent measures directed against the political independence of the other Contracting Party" (art. 1).

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 508-510.

²⁵ A special Conciliation Convention between Estonia and the Soviet Union was concluded on June 16, 1932 (LNTS v. 131, pp. 309-321). This set up the machinery for handling the disputes.

²⁶ See N. Kaasik, "L'Ultimatum Soviétique à l'Estonie." 1 *The Baltic Review* (Stockholm), 1946-47: 204-211; also on the legal aspects of Estonian-Soviet relations, Johannes Klesment, "The Crime. The Seizure and Forced 'Incorporation.'" *The Baltic Review* (New York), 1953, No. 1: 5-14.

²⁷ Hearings, pp. 510-519.

The mutual-assistance pact confirmed this principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of the other party.²⁸ Article V provided that:

The enforcement of the present Pact may in no way impair the sovereign rights of the Contracting Parties, or, more especially, their economic system or political structure.

Yet, the Soviet Union now not only demanded that the present Estonian Government resign but also insisted that "a government should be established * * * that would be capable, and willing to warrant the honest execution of the Soviet-Estonian Mutual Assistance Pact." This procedure would have definitely further impaired the sovereignty of Estonia and would have imposed upon Estonia a government appointed by the Soviet Union which took its orders from the Kremlin and did not represent the Estonian people.

Moreover, the demand to station Soviet troops all over Estonia meant complete military occupation of the country. This request had been advanced in violation of all previous agreements; it would have made Estonia a conquered province of the Soviet Union.

G. NO CHOICE FOR ESTONIA

Acceptance of the Soviet ultimatum by the Estonian Government on June 16, 1940, did not mean that Estonia approved the accusations which had been advanced against it in the ultimatum. There was no time for explanations or rebuttals.

Massed along the Estonian border²⁹ and inside Estonia on bases leased to the Soviet Union under the mutual assistance pact, the Red army stood waiting.³⁰ The garrisons which Stalin and Molotov solemnly promised again and again would do nothing to impair Estonian national sovereignty³¹ were now, 8½ months later, the first to participate in the destruction of Estonian independence.

When the Estonian Government conveyed to the Kremlin its compliance with the demands in the ultimatum, it was done only in submission to superior force and did not mean the acceptance of the validity of the ultimatum itself or the charges it contained. The Soviet Union did not need Estonian acceptance, which was for them only a formality. The Red army crossed the Estonian border as soon as the Kremlin received the Estonian answer. They did not wait for settlement of technical problems. When the Estonian commander in chief, General Laidoner, arrived in Narva on the morning of June 17 to discuss the military details of the entry of Soviet troops, the invasion of the Soviet Army had already begun.

H. SOVIET INVASION AND MILITARY OCCUPATION

Soviet troops crossed the Estonian border in force and in full battle order in the early hours of June 17, 1940.³² During the night Estonian border guards and army units had been informed, on the orders from Foreign Ministry, that the Soviet troops should be per-

²⁸ See above, p. 226.

²⁹ Statement of Johannes Mertsina, a border guard officer commanding a border post in the district of Irboska, at the Soviet-Estonian border.

³⁰ Statement of Maj. Kurt Matson, the adjutant to the Minister of Interior.

³¹ Minutes, p. 14.

³² Statement of S. Maripuu.

mitted to enter without opposition. There were no formalities as the Red army moved on Estonian highways toward their destination. Soviet troops were being dispatched by sea to regions along the Estonian coastal fortifications, and some units were landed in the morning on the Estonian side of the coast of the Peipsi Lake.³³

Simultaneously with the entry of Soviet troops across the Estonian-Soviet border, Soviet troops started toward Tallinn from bases in western Estonia where they arrived in the early morning hours.³⁴ Thus, the capital of Estonia became the first principal city to be occupied by the foreign invader.

I. DICTATE FOLLOWS ULTIMATUM

On the morning of June 17 the Estonian commander in chief was scheduled to meet with Soviet military representatives at Narva to discuss troop movements and locations. General Meretskov headed the Soviet delegation.³⁵

But no negotiations or discussions whatsoever took place at Narva. Instead, the Estonian commander in chief was presented with prepared drafts and demands, and no counterproposals were accepted. The Soviets informed him that 5 infantry divisions, in addition to troops already situated on bases leased under the terms of the mutual-assistance pact, would be brought to Estonia (about 90,000 men) and the location of these troops had already been determined. Only technical details were to be worked out between Soviet and Estonian staff officers.

Soviet pressure continued unabated. They presented new demands. They requested their acceptance without delay. The main request was to disarm all persons in Estonia not members of the armed forces within 48 hours. Other demands required that telephone exchanges were to be placed under Soviet military control. Authorization was demanded for Soviet quartermasters to purchase food locally. The Estonian delegation acceded to the last two demands but the collection of arms from civilians, they contended, was beyond their authority. On the request of General Meretskov an oral authorization was obtained from the President by telephone and the agreement, as dictated by the Soviets, was finally signed at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

The entire proceedings of that meeting humiliated the Estonian delegation. One of the Estonian participants described it as follows:

The behavior of the Soviet Union delegation lacked correctness and was extremely humiliating to us. For instance, entering the parlor car of Meretskov, the Estonian delegation was not offered seats but had to listen standing to whatever the chief of the delegation of the Soviet Union had to tell us. We had to listen to threats and insults. In the agreement General Laidoner was given the rank of a division general which did not correspond to the rank of the chief of our delegation. An attempt to correct this demotion had no effect.³⁶

The demand to disarm the civilian population of Estonia within a very short period of time demonstrated that beginning with the crossing of Soviet troops the night of June 16-17, the Estonian Government

³³ Statements of Lt. Col. Alfred Luts and Lt. Col. J. Labidas.

³⁴ Statement of E. Kasak.

³⁵ The negotiations at Narva were reconstructed on the basis of the statement of Col. A. Luts. Colonel Luts served at that time as the chief of the operations department of Estonian General Staff and accompanied the commander in chief on his trip to Narva and participated in these negotiations personally.

³⁶ Statement of A. Luts.

had lost its freedom of action. The dictate of Soviet representatives had to be accepted. No objections were considered. The Estonian request for extending the time limit to 72 hours for collection of arms from civilians was rejected without discussion. Thus was effected the disarmament of the Estonian civilian defense organization "Kaitseliit" (Home Guard) which constituted a ready and trained reserve for Estonia's small regular armed forces.

J. SOVIETS AND THE ESTONIAN PEOPLE

During June 17 and the days following, the Red army completed its occupation of Estonia. Barracks, camps, airfields, and other installations of the Estonian Army were taken over by the Soviets, while Estonian units were quartered in remaining available buildings, such as schoolhouses, etc.³⁷

The population of Estonia remained grimly resigned but stoically restrained. On the request of the invaders all public meetings had been prohibited. Photography was forbidden in the open.³⁸ Soviet newspapers reported that the population of Estonia had greeted the Red army with joy.³⁹ These descriptions had no basis in fact.⁴⁰ But there were no attacks on Soviet personnel. In some border districts the local Russian population did greet the Red army.⁴¹

When the disarming of the civilian population and the Kaitseliit had been completed, the Soviets felt safe. This procedure was carried out by order of the Estonian commander in chief.⁴² The Kaitseliit had come into existence during the years of 1917-18, and during the war of liberation it formed the nucleus for Estonia's armed forces. After the Communists had attempted a coup d'état in 1924, it was reorganized. During the 15 years' existence of the Kaitseliit, it had grown to an organization which had taken a definite place in Estonian community life. It united all patriotic citizens and through its women's, boys', and girls' auxiliaries reached into every level of civic and social activity. Members of the organization kept in their possession rifles, pistols, and other arms. In this organization, therefore, the Soviets saw potential danger.

What seemed to baffle the Moscow authorities more than any other detail of the free and republican form of the Estonian Government was its sublime faith in the loyalty of the Estonian people. It was unthinkable to the Soviet officials from Moscow that everyone in the civilian population was permitted to possess arms which he could, at any moment, turn against the Government itself. Even to the Soviet soldiery the plainly visible fact that almost every home in the Estonian countryside had its rifle plainly fastened to the wall and that arms likewise were possessed freely by the citizens in the cities, must have seemed unbelievable. Perhaps to them it was incredible evidence of a custom undreamed of in the police state under which they lived.

General Meretskov told the Estonian delegation at Narva that the Soviet troops, veterans of the Soviet-Finnish War, were used to seeing

³⁷ Statement of E. Kasak.

³⁸ Riigi Teataja 1940, 51, 479, and 480.

³⁹ Izvestia, No. 139, of June 18, 1940, and also during the next days.

⁴⁰ A German observer remarked that the Estonian population "rejected the Russian marching in." See the statement of Hansjochen Kubitz, submitted to the Military Court No. IV in Nürnberg. Printed in H. G. Seraphim, Die deutsch-russischen Beziehungen, 1939-41, Hamburg, Nölke, 1949, p. 84.

⁴¹ Statements of J. Labidas and E. Kasak.

⁴² Riigi Teataja 1940, 51, 478.

enemies behind every bush. Therefore, for the security of his troops and to avoid unnecessary bloodshed, it was inconceivable that civilians should be armed, he said.⁴³

XI. SOVIETS TAKE OVER ESTONIAN GOVERNMENT

A. ZHDANOV ON THE SCENE

In accordance with the terms of the Soviet ultimatum the Cabinet of Professor Uluots resigned on the evening of June 16, 1940. Pending the appointment of a new Cabinet, the current one acted as a caretaker Cabinet.

With the formation of a new Cabinet the first chapter in the creation of a Soviet Estonia began. The occupation of Estonia had been carried out before the eyes of the whole world, and now the Kremlin proceeded to "prove" that everything done in Estonia was in accordance with the "will of the people." The Soviet Union now proceeded to stage a most remarkable fraud.

Moscow had decided to send one of its ablest emissaries, Aleksei Aleksandrovich Zhdanov,⁴⁴ to stage this deception. He traveled in an armored railroad car and arrived in Tallinn on the morning of June 19. In Tallinn, his headquarters were in the Soviet Legation. Unusual security measures were taken for his protection. The station and the streets to the Soviet Legation were closed for all traffic, and Soviet soldiers lined his route of passage. All houses along his path and in the neighborhood of the Legation were searched. Armed sentries were posted in these houses during Zhdanov's stay.⁴⁵

Waiting at the station to meet Zhdanov was the senior aide-de-camp of the President, Colonel Grabbi, who conveyed to Zhdanov, the President's wish and readiness for an early conference. This request was ignored by Zhdanov. He drove immediately to the Soviet Legation.⁴⁶

The day before the arrival of Zhdanov the director of the police department in the Ministry of the Interior was called to the Soviet Legation and was told that he personally would be held responsible for Zhdanov's security. However, the Soviet authorities took over complete arrangements.⁴⁷

B. ZHDANOV DICTATES TO PÄTS

At noon the same day Zhdanov paid a visit to President Päts. The Estonian President explained that the old government had resigned and that he would like to know the Soviet views before appointing a new Cabinet. The ultimatum of June 16 had requested a government friendly to the Soviet Union. Under the Estonian Constitution the appointment of the Cabinet was a presidential prerogative. President

⁴³ Statement of A. Luts.

⁴⁴ A. A. Zhdanov at this time occupied the post of the Communist Party secretary in the Leningrad region and was a member of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet and its foreign affairs committee. A short survey of the events in Estonia during this period has been recently published in German by Boris Meissner, *Die Kommunistische Machtübernahme in den Baltischen Staaten, Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* (Stuttgart, Germany), January 1954, pp. 95-114.

⁴⁵ Statements of J. Klesment, Elmar Tambek, E. Kasak, and Erich Paul Tõnisson. Mr. E. Tambek was the chief of President's chancery; Tõnisson, a pharmacist, lived in Tallinn across the street from Soviet Legation.

⁴⁶ Ilmar Raudma, op. cit. Mr. Raudma was in 1940 the chief of the press department in the Ministry of Information.

⁴⁷ Statement of J. Klesment.

Päts said that he had considered A. Rei, the Estonian Minister in Moscow, as the new Prime Minister. Zhdanov answered abruptly, saying that the Soviet Government would not approve him. The President responded that he did not wish to be obstinate and mentioned Mihkel Pung as a candidate for the premiership. Pung was president of the state council, chairman of the Soviet-Estonian Chamber of Commerce, a member of the Soviet-Estonian Friendship Association, and had been for a long time legal adviser to the Soviet Legation. Zhdanov only answered that he did not know Pung.

President Päts then asked who was to appoint the Cabinet, he or the Soviet Government. Zhdanov answered that, of course, the President could do it under the provisions of the Estonian Constitution, but that he would inquire in Moscow as to the acceptability of candidates.⁴⁸

C. ESTONIAN COMMUNISTS BECOME ACTIVE

The reason for the Soviet delay in appointing a new government became clear during the next days. The technique called for creating the impression that the change of government contemplated by the Soviets accorded with the wishes of the population and was not the dictate of Moscow. For this purpose they needed mass demonstrations and a display of popular enthusiasm.⁴⁹

Up to this time the small force of Communist agents and their fellow travelers had been, however, unable to organize anything resembling an "insurrection" of the people.

Zhdanov had definite orders from Moscow, and the Soviet plan began unfolding after the Zhdanov interview with Päts. Where agitation failed, intimidation was to be employed. The Red Army, occupying the country, stood ready to give support to every move of the Communist Party, whose leaders, emerging from the underground, had their ranks supplemented by experts from the Soviet Union.

One of the first acts of the Communists was the seizure of the Central Organization of Labor Unions (the Central League of Labor Unions—Ametiühingute Keskkliit). On the night of June 20, 1940, Communists, led by Neeme Ruus and Maxim Unt, two leftist members of the Estonian Parliament, broke into the rooms of the league, forced open cabinets and drawers, declared the board of the league dismissed, and formed their own board, the members of which were all Communists.⁵⁰

This new board arrogated authority to itself over Estonian workers without any legal validity. The same evening a meeting of labor representatives had been called which, however, was attended only by the Communists and a few of their sympathizers. At this meeting plans

⁴⁸ Statements of A. Rei, J. Klesment, and E. Tambek. It is reported in a story of a former Soviet official who allegedly accompanied Zhdanov to Tallinn [The Murder of a Nation; reminiscences of a former major of state security of the U. S. S. R., *Lithuanian Bulletin* (New York), vol. VIII, No. 7-12, pp. 10-14 (July-December 1950)], that Zhdanov had a talk with Vares, the Soviet choice to Estonian premiership, upon his arrival and before his meeting with President Päts. The story contains, however, many inaccuracies in regard to the time and the sequence of events and thus it cannot be stated with finality that Zhdanov-Vares talk actually took place in the morning of June 19, 1940.

⁴⁹ See *Ibid.*, p. 12, where a conversation between Zhdanov and Karl Säre, the secretary of Estonian Communist Party, is reported. The author reports that Zhdanov told Säre: " * * * it is necessary to create an illusion of a spontaneous movement of the people and democracy. This means that the Communists, constituting the vanguard mobile force of the revolution, must keep in the shade, hide behind a screen of Socialists and Liberals."

⁵⁰ Statements of Erich Joonas and J. Klesment.

were drawn for demonstrations the next day in which all workers in Tallinn were supposed to participate and present their "requests" to the Government.⁵¹

The Soviet authorities in Tallinn directed that these demonstrations were to be permitted without any interference from Estonian authorities. The Soviet Legation had warned the Estonian Minister of the Interior, Jürima, against hindering any gatherings of "workers." During his interrogation at the Soviet Legation, which lasted for hours, Jürima was directed not to let the police interfere. Jürima asked the Soviet Legation how it knew the intentions of the Estonian workers. The reply was reported to have been very rude.⁵²

To add weight to their enterprise, the Communists held some meetings in larger factories. Here they adopted resolutions containing, supposedly, the demands of the Estonian working masses. Actually, meetings were attended by a communistically inclined minority. The resolutions adopted had been written in advance by higher Communist authorities. No signatures or the number of participants at the meetings were noted on the resolutions received the next morning at the President's chancery.⁵³

The organization of meetings and gatherings was in direct defiance of Estonian legitimate authorities and local law. Upon the entry of Soviet troops on June 17, the commander in chief, in using his emergency powers, had imposed an overall ban on all public meetings to avoid any incidents with the Red Army.⁵⁴ A similar measure, together with a ban against photographing outdoor scenes and censorship on telegraph, telephone, and mail, had been imposed in October 1939 on the demand of the Soviets when their troops entered Estonia.⁵⁵

D. SOVIET TANKS AND BAYONETS "EXPRESS" ESTONIAN POPULAR WILL

The next day soldiers with fixed bayonets, and accompanied by tanks of the Soviet Army, marched down Estonian streets. During the early hours of the morning Communist agitators were trying, without much success, to bring out the workers en masse. In some factories where demands were backed up by a show of Soviet guns and tanks, the agitators succeeded in assembling workers in larger numbers. However, on their way to the meeting place in Liberty Square, most of the workers used every chance to leave the columns and join the onlookers.⁵⁶

At the meeting in Liberty Square the crowd listened to speeches demanding the dismissal of the "capitalist government" and the appointment of a government "friendly to the Soviet Union." Several Communist leaders appeared for the first time in public, while others had been sent to other cities to organize similar demonstrations. The last speaker was a man in Soviet Army uniform who, speaking in Russian, gave the promise that "the glorious and victorious Soviet

⁵¹ Statements of E. Tambeek, E. Joons, and Richard Kaups, a Baptist minister in Tallinn who personally attended the meeting. Statement of Oskar Mänd, an editor of the daily *Pleevnõit* who also was present at the meeting.

⁵² Statements of Konstantin Kasep and J. Klesment. I Raudma, op. cit. Col. K. Kanep was the commandant of the Toompea Castle, the seat of the Parliament and Cabinet. Also the statement of Maj. Kurt Matson.

⁵³ Statement of E. Tambeek.

⁵⁴ Riigi Teataja 1940, 51, 470.

⁵⁵ Riigi Teataja, 1939, 92, 709, and 710.

⁵⁶ Statements of E. Joons, E. Tambeek, and Jaan Elsmann. J. Elsmann was a businessman in Tallinn.

people will assist the Estonian working masses in their great revolution against the Estonian reactionary government.”⁵⁷

Anticipating failure in bringing workers out to demonstrations, even with the use of threat and force, the Communist Party and Soviet authorities brought to Tallinn hundreds of Soviet citizens disguised as Estonian workers.⁵⁸

Witnesses to the demonstrations in Tallinn on June 21 stated that the core of the participants in the demonstrations was formed by Soviet citizens who sang songs in Russian, many of which were new Soviet songs and could have been known only to persons from the Soviet Union. These demonstrators were, it developed, Soviet workers who had been brought to Estonia for construction work on Soviet bases, and only the day before had been transported to Tallinn.⁵⁹

It was also reported that Soviet military personnel in civilian clothes participated in the demonstrations as well as hundreds of Estonians of Russian descent who had been transported to Tallinn from border districts inhabited by Russians.⁶⁰ This group and their few Estonian sympathizers were the “masses of Estonian working people” rising against their Government in favor of Soviet domination.

The demonstrators marched from Liberty Square to the office of the Prime Minister in the Toompea castle, then to the residence of the President, and finally to the central prison to set free Communists who had been convicted for espionage and other acts directed against the Estonian Government. At all times the columns of demonstrators were accompanied by Soviet tanks.⁶¹ On their way to the President's residence in Kadriorg their diminished ranks were supplemented by a score of armed Soviet soldiers.

In front of the Prime Minister's office the demonstrators demanded the appointment of a new government and release of political prisoners. Their singing of the Communist song, the Internationale, was, however, surpassed by the Estonian anthem sung by people who had gathered to watch the demonstration.⁶²

In Zhdanov's plan so far violence was not scheduled. When the demonstrators in front of the President's castle threatened to force their way in, a detachment of Soviet sailors appeared on the scene who held back the mob. Some delegates of the representatives, among them Kadakas and Arbon, later high Communist functionaries, were received by the President, who refused their demand for release of political prisoners, stating that this could be done only in procedures prescribed by law.⁶³

In fact, no political prisoners were held in Estonian jails. Persons whose release was demanded were a small group of hard-core Communists who had not been granted amnesty in 1938 because they had refused to sign promises to refrain from activities against the Estonian state. None of them had been sentenced for political activity.

⁵⁷ Statement of William Tomingas. W. Tomingas was the chief of news department in Estonian Broadcasting Co.

⁵⁸ Statements of E. Tambek, A. Rel, R. Kaups, and Ants Kalluvee.

⁵⁹ Statements of E. Tambek, A. Rel, Reim Pedaste, and A. Kilvar.

⁶⁰ Statements of E. Tambek, J. Labidas, J. Klesment, and Viktor Roovere. Mr. Roovere was the police commissioner in the District of Valga—Tartu.

⁶¹ Statements of W. Tomingas, E. Tambek, J. Klesment, A. Rel, K. Kanep, and Paul Hansar, a detective of the police force. Statement of A. Kilvar. Statement of R. Kaups. Statement of Aleksander Peel who as a newsreel cameraman took movies of these events.

⁶² Statement of Minda Meikup. Mrs. Meikup was a former stenographer of the Estonian Parliament, and in 1939-40 was an administrative assistant in the Ministry of Information.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, statement of E. Tambek.

Charged against these Communists were crimes relating to the security of the state.

After the demonstrators had shouted down the President, who tried to make a speech, they went to the central prison and demanded the release of political prisoners. When their demands had been backed up by Soviet tanks and armored cars, the prisoners of their choice were released.⁶⁴

E. RED ARMY PROTECTS AND DIRECTS COMMUNIST ARMED MOB

On the night of June 21, 1940, the Communist mob was free on the streets of Estonia; excitement and tension increased notably. From the stores of the home guard and from the Red army, the Communist mob secured arms. They broke into police precincts and approached Estonian Army units stationed in schoolhouses and other public buildings with demands to surrender their weapons. In some instances, supported by detachments of the Red army, the mobs achieved their objectives.⁶⁵ In one case, however, a battle ensued. The communications battalion of the Estonian Army, which had been evicted from its barracks a few days earlier to make room for the units of the occupying Red army, and which was now occupying a schoolhouse in Tallinn, refused to surrender their arms. The Communist mob thereupon opened fire, which was returned. An exchange of fire increased until it was broken up by orders from the newly appointed Government and the appearance of Soviet tanks.⁶⁶

One group of Communists had entered the seat of government, the Toompea castle, disarmed the guard and hoisted a red flag in place of the Estonian colors. The next morning, however, the Estonian flag was returned;⁶⁷ the mob, apparently, had taken a step not yet scheduled by Zhdanov.

F. KREMLIN APPOINTS ESTONIAN CABINET

With the list of the new Cabinet ready, Zhdanov paid a visit to the President in the afternoon of June 21, after the Communist-staged demonstrations had quieted down.⁶⁸ His candidate for the premier-

⁶⁴ Statements of A. Rei, K. Kanep, Rudolf Söber. R. Söber was at this time the warden of the Pärnu prison. Also the statement of A. Kaljuvee.

⁶⁵ Statements of K. Kanep, P. Hansar, and A. Kilvar.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Statement of M. Melkup.

⁶⁸ B. Meissner is in error [Die kommunistische Machtübernahme in den baltischen Staaten. Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte (Stuttgart), January 1954, p. 97] when he states that President Päts refused for 4 days to appoint the cabinet according to the list which had been submitted to him. Meissner apparently follows the story of a former Soviet major who allegedly accompanied Zhdanov to Tallinn during the latter's visit in June (see Murder of a Nation, pp. 11-14). According to the information available, the eyewitnesses' accounts by A. Rei, J. Klesment, E. Tambek, and others, Zhdanov arrived in Tallinn on June 19, 1940. He had a talk then with President Päts, listened to Päts' proposals for candidates for the premiership but did not advance his own candidates. Only A. Rei in his statement to the House Baltic Committee leaves the impression that Zhdanov at this time already mentioned the name of Vares as the Prime Minister acceptable to the Soviet Union. E. Tambek, the Chief of President's Chancery, and J. Klesment, the legal adviser of the government, both insist that Vares' name was not submitted to the President before Zhdanov's second meeting with the President on June 21. This version is also supported by the account of events given in a book published in Estonia in 1943—Eesti Rahva Kannatuste aasta (The Year of Sufferings for Estonian People), Tallinn, 1943, pp. 25-26. This book was based on recollections and stories of eyewitnesses, as well as documents, not now all available. All Estonian witnesses and publications (in addition to those mentioned above, also an account by Ilmar Raudma, the chief of press department in the Ministry of Information, in the Estonian newspaper Eesti Rada, Augsburg, Germany, No. 49 of June 19, 1948) agree that the list of ministers was presented to President Päts in the afternoon of June 21 by Vares whom Zhdanov just a few hours earlier had named as the Prime Minister acceptable to the Soviet Union.

ship was Johannes Vares, a physician and poet. Zhdanov notified President Päts that the candidates he had mentioned were unacceptable to the Kremlin.⁶⁹

Thereupon, the President called Prime-Minister-designate Vares who presented the list of his Cabinet. Some minor changes in this list seemed advisable to the President, but Vares said he could make no changes without the consent of the Soviet legation. He was ready, however, to discuss the proposed changes with the Soviet representatives and to inform the President later of the results.⁷⁰

After several hours, at 9 p. m., Vares appeared again at the President's residence and declared that no changes in the list presented by him earlier were possible.⁷¹

President Päts, helpless to do otherwise, appointed the new Cabinet as dictated by the Kremlin.⁷² Vares gave the oath of office on the spot and returned to the Soviet legation.

G. WHO WERE THESE MEN ?

To the surprise of the President and other governmental leaders the new Cabinet, as proposed by the Kremlin, contained only a few individuals with definite Communist inclinations. The majority of the new Ministers were political unknowns, but among them were found several persons who could not be suspected as Communists or fellow travelers. This move of the Kremlin was perhaps the shrewdest and most Machiavellian of all. The Prime Minister and other appointees had been selected so as to leave the impression that only a normal Cabinet change had happened in Estonia. In reality, however, every move and act of the new Cabinet had been prescribed and the threat of Soviet force loomed constantly overhead. It could be safely assumed, however, that several members of the new Cabinet were not aware of the real plans of the Kremlin.

The new Prime Minister, Johannes Vares, was known by the pen name of Barbarus. Never before had he been in political life. He was, however, known by his acquaintances as a person of weak character. He was later released from this post when the first full fledged Communist government was formed and given the titular post of the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. In 1946, he died, after having returned to Estonia from the Soviet Union in 1944.

The most widely known person in the Cabinet was the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Information, Prof. Hans Kruus. During 1917-21 he had been active politically in the Social Revolutionary Party and had been elected to the Estonian National Council, the Constituent Assembly, and the National Assembly. Thereafter, he had left politics and entered into an academic career, becoming a professor of history at the University of Tartu. In August 1940, he was dropped from the Cabinet and appointed rector of the university. In 1941, he fled to the Soviet Union and after returning in 1944 held the positions of Foreign Minister and President of the Soviet Estonian Academy of Sciences. In 1950, he was denounced officially as a bourgeois nationalist and purged.

⁶⁹ Statements of E. Tambek and J. Klesment.

⁷⁰ Statements of E. Tambek, J. Klesment, and A. Rel.

⁷¹ Statements of E. Tambek, J. Klesment, and A. Rel.

⁷² Ibid.

Among the Ministers there were three leftwing Socialists—the Minister of Interior, Maxim Unt; the Minister of Agriculture, Aleksander Jõeäär, and the Minister of Welfare, Neeme Ruus. Unt and Ruus had been active in the labor movement, and were known, at least, as Communist sympathizers who followed the Kremlin line. They occupied high government posts, also, in later Communist administrations. Ruus became a secretary of the central committee of the Estonian Communist Party. M. Unt was liquidated by the Communists in the spring of 1941, although in June–July 1940 he was the Kremlin's secret informer in the Estonian Cabinet.⁷³ Ruus was captured by Germans in 1941, and Jõeäär fled to the Soviet Union. After returning to Estonia Jõeäär held several Government posts, until he was purged as a bourgeois nationalist in 1950.

In the same category with these three belonged Nigol Andresen, the Foreign Minister. Later he became the People's Commissar for Education and Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. In 1950, he was purged as a "bourgeois nationalist."

For a few days the post of Minister of Justice was held by Boris Sepp, a lawyer disbarred because of alcoholism. On June 28, he was replaced by Friedrich Niggol, a justice in the appellate court without any political connections. B. Sepp was long believed to have been a Soviet agent.

Short-lived also was the Cabinet career of the nonpolitical Orest Kärm, the Minister of Communications.

The Minister of Education was Johannes Semper, a literary critic and an admirer of French culture. He had been formerly associated with leftwing Socialist movements but had not participated in active politics since the 1920's. He held high administrative positions during the second Soviet occupation. He, too, was purged together with other "bourgeois nationalists" in the 1950's.

The Minister of Economy and the Minister of War, Johannes Nihtig and Gen. Tõnis Rotberg, were well known persons without any political connections. Nihtig was a successful businessman, and General Rotberg an active army officer. Both were dropped and disappeared from public life after Estonia's formal annexation by the Soviet Union. They were later deported by the Communists.

XII. THE NEW GOVERNMENT: MOSCOW'S PUPPET

A. SOVIET LEGATION DIRECTS NEW PRIME MINISTER

The new Government of Estonia had been appointed by the Soviet Union. Confirmation by the President had been only a formality carried out under the threat of Soviet military occupation and in a vain hope to save for Estonia some semblance of independence. All subsequent acts of the Government were also prescribed and directed by the Soviets. The Soviet Legation in Tallinn was the center for all orders henceforth shaping life in Estonia.

The new Government announced its program. This, too, was prepared in the Soviet Legation where the new Prime Minister had

⁷³ Statement of Aleksander Kaelns. A. Kaelns was employed in the Estonian Ministry for Social Welfare as chief labor inspector and subsequently served in the People's Commissariat for Labor and in the Central Council of Trade Unions in the same capacity.

gone after his confirmation. The Soviet Legation called the Tallinn radio station and informed them that the new Prime Minister was going to make a declaration over the radio. From the Soviet Legation Prime Minister Vares ordered the radio station to send somebody to pick up his declaration. Finally, Vares arrived at the radio station in the car of the Soviet Legation to deliver the declaration of the Government which was made in the presence of the Soviet Minister Nikitin and other Soviet officials on the night of June 21, 1940.⁷⁴

B. ZHDANOV RECALLS A DOCUMENT

The declaration of the new Estonian Government, like the first announcement of the new Prime Minister, was not a document of the Cabinet, but a directive from the Soviet Legation. On the morning of June 22 the new Minister of Information, Hans Kruus, had given the text of the declaration to the information department for release and distribution. Hardly before other copies had been made, Kruus, obviously upset, returned hurriedly and requested a retraction of all copies. With these he hastened to the Prime Minister. They both returned and made a search for every copy. This text was never distributed because Zhdanov already had his own text prepared. Inadvertently, the new Cabinet had written its own program, and the Prime Minister reported it to Zhdanov. Since it had not been cleared with him, Zhdanov ordered it to be recalled and replaced by a new one which bore the usual evidences of having been translated from the Russian. The only privilege the Government had was the "privilege" of being the first to know its contents after transmittal from Zhdanov.⁷⁵

C. THE CABINET OBEYS ITS MASTER

All orders to the Estonian Government came from the Soviet Legation. Tested Communists were appointed to serve as deputy ministers. The men in this echelon actually ran the departments according to Soviet orders.

Zhdanov completely controlled the Government, a "puppet" government he, himself, even distrusted. It was not permitted to make its own decisions. Cabinet members were required to deliver reports to the Soviet Legation several times each day. Zhdanov personally checked all speeches delivered by Cabinet members, Government declarations, and other documents. No Cabinet decision could be made without prior approval by the Soviet Legation. No decision could be put into effect without special permission. As a result the Cabinet meetings were dull and short, since there was nothing to discuss. Zhdanov's orders were read, and the legal adviser of the Government had then to edit them in order to have them conform to the Estonian Constitution. The idea was to convey the impression that the decisions came from the Estonian Government and followed constitutional procedures.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Statement of W. Tomingas.

⁷⁵ Raudma, I, op. cit.

⁷⁶ Statement of J. Klesment.

XIII. THE GREAT DECEPTION

A. DECLARATION OF THE "PUPPET" GOVERNMENT

The program of the new Government was laid down in a declaration which was prepared by Zhdanov⁷⁷ and read over the radio on June 22, 1940 by Prime Minister Vares.⁷⁸ This program outlined the future activities of the Government in the field of foreign and domestic policies.

The Government pledged itself to maintain and cultivate normal relations with all states, and, in particular, would insure that the mutual assistance pact with the Soviet Union would be scrupulously and effectively observed. It would cultivate sincere and friendly relations with the Soviet Union on the basis of a firm alliance with that country. The Government program then went on to state that it was possible on that basis alone to guarantee the independence of Estonia and the security of the country.

In the field of domestic policy general assurances were given to guarantee the rights of the people and particularly those of national minorities, to introduce social legislation, and to rid the administration of inefficiency. Of immediate significance was the planned dissolution of the Parliament and the holding of new elections coupled with reform of local government. Political prisoners were to be given amnesty.

In conclusion this program, on paper, left the existing political and economic system unchanged and said nothing about incorporation into the Soviet Union. The relations with the Soviet occupants of the country were to be founded on an alliance which would guarantee the independence of the country.

B. PROMISE TO MAINTAIN INDEPENDENCE

The declaration of the Government explicitly promised preservation of Estonian independence. This was in line with the Kremlin's general policy to create the impression that the Soviet Union was not trying to run Estonia. At the meeting of the Cabinet on June 22 the question had been raised whether it should not be clearly stated that the Republic of Estonia and its constitution both would be maintained. Prime Minister Vares stated then that this had been a strict requirement of the Soviet Legation. Since, ostensibly, there existed no intention to liquidate the Estonian state, special reference to it was omitted.⁷⁹

The same theme was repeatedly emphasized during the following days. Foreign Minister Andresen declared on June 24:

But we should not close our eyes to the fact that the Red army did not attempt to seize power in Estonia. Management of our affairs in Estonia will now and in the future be our own concern. I am emphasizing all this to refute rumors which are willfully spread that from now on only the benevolence and good will of the Red army are the determining factors.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Raudma, I., *op. cit.*

⁷⁸ Printed in *Izvestia* No. 143 of June 23, 1940; for translation see appendix A, II, No. 11.

⁷⁹ Statement of J. Klesment.

⁸⁰ Quoted from *Kannatuste aasta* (The Year of Suffering), vol. I. Tallinn: Eesti Kirjastus, 1943, pp. 35-36.

But, the foreign press took a different view. The end of Estonian independence was reported everywhere. Thus, the New York Times reported on June 23, 1940:

* * * the general impression of most observers is that the new governments in the three countries [Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania] are merely transition regimes and that the weight of half a million Russian soldiers in the Baltics will inevitably entail a gradual Sovietization of these countries.

C. GOVERNMENT DENIES SOVIETIZATION PLANNED

The main task of the Cabinet members and other new functionaries was to assure the people that with the exception of minor changes and reforms, life in Estonia would go on as before. It was emphasized that the Government had come into office according to the constitution. The new Government had promised to uphold the constitution: "And if necessary the laws, including the constitution, will be changed in accordance with constitutional procedures," the Foreign Minister Andresen was quoted as having said.⁸¹

The maintenance and development of normal relations with other states was promised. This new "eastern orientation," however, resulted in the denunciation of the Estonian-Latvian defense treaty, and the Lithuanian-Latvian-Estonian Friendship and Cooperation Treaty, on June 28 and 30, 1940, respectively.

Assurances had to be given to allay public fear. Rumors about nationalization of properties and farms were current, and the Government refuted them. "There is no doubt about the inviolability of honestly earned private property," declared Deputy Prime Minister Kruus on June 25. Citizens may rest assured, he said, because this was considered as "self-evident" by the Government.⁸² The Minister of Agriculture Jõeäär termed as an "intentional lie" all rumors that farms and other property was going to be taken away from farmers and smallholders.⁸³ Prime Minister J. Vares gave assurances to the same effect.⁸⁴

The first task for the Minister of Economic Affairs was "to keep production intact" and to secure sufficient raw materials for industry. There was talk of developing export markets for manufactured goods and agricultural products. He even expressed hope that the trade agreement, concluded with the Soviet Union in September 1939, could be expanded.⁸⁵

Up to the session of the Communist Chamber of Deputies on July 21, the Government was trying to maintain an outward appearance of legitimacy in its activities. It declared on several occasions that the constitution was the basis of its activities and that its leaders were following existing laws. Under this disguise, however, a systematic destruction of public and private institutions and organizations, and the subjugation of the population under the rule of a police state were carried out.

The press and radio were brought under Communist control. All other channels of free expression were strangled. Freedom of assembly and association existed only for Communists and their sym-

⁸¹ Quoted from *Kannatuste aasta*, p. 36. Statement of J. Klesment. Rel, August. Have the Baltic countries voluntarily renounced their freedom? An exposé based on documentary evidence. New York, World Association of Estonians, 1944, p. 32.

⁸² Quoted from *Kannatuste aasta*, p. 38. Statement of J. Klesment.
⁸³ *Kannatuste aasta*, p. 38. Statement of J. Klesment. Also testimony of Aleksander Klitt, hearings, p. 173.

⁸⁴ Statement of Tõnis Kint, the executive director of the chamber of agriculture.

⁸⁵ *Kannatuste aasta*, p. 37. Statement of J. Klesment.

pathizers. No public meetings could be held except by Communists. Patriotic organizations were closed, dispersed, or simply taken under control by agents of the Communist Party. In fact, typewriters in offices were locked up for the night in order to prevent their use for anti-Government purposes.

The dissolution of the *Kaitseliit* (Home Guard) was ordered by decree on June 27, and all civilians were prohibited to possess munitions of any kind according to a decree of June 29.⁸⁶ All auxiliary organizations of the Home Guard (women and youth) were ordered dissolved.

A new type of "democratization" was introduced in the army. The institute of political leaders (commissars) was created, and councils of soldiers and officers were ordered to be elected in all military units.

Governmental organization remained at first the same. Changes were made only in personnel. Most of the higher officials were dismissed sooner or later and replaced by trustworthy Communists. Especially hated were police officers who after dismissal were always liable to arrest. Several known personalities in public and civic life committed suicide to escape certain arrest and death in NKVD (Soviet Secret Police) jails. Among them was former Minister of Interior Theodor Rõnk and Deputy Minister of Interior Tuulse.

All professional organizations were liquidated, among them the Chamber of Workers.

From the very beginning of the occupation the NKVD started its activities on Estonian territory. Arrests continued without interruptions, and soon all prisons were overcrowded. Police operations were under the jurisdiction of Maxim Unt, the Minister of Interior, who at a Cabinet meeting asked that all Government automobiles be placed at his disposal, so that he could cope with the arrests.

On July 2, the Estonian Communist Party, which had existed underground since 1918,⁸⁷ appeared officially on the scene; and 2 days later the Minister of Interior gave it legal recognition.⁸⁸

D. SEIZURE OF INFORMATION MEDIA

Censorship held a foremost place in the Communist plan. Correct information about the staged demonstrations on June 20 and 21 had to be withheld from the public at large and the foreign press as well. Consequently, one of the first steps, even before the Communist Government had been formally announced, was to take control of the newspapers and the radio. The same pattern of seizure was followed in every case. Armed mobs entered the offices of the newspapers and of the Estonian Broadcasting Co. They ordered the employees to stay on their posts but directed them to publish or broadcast only what had been approved by representatives of the Communist Party.⁸⁹ When the Communists took over the newspaper offices, they threatened

⁸⁶ In compliance with the Soviet demands of June 17 the Home Guard members had already surrendered their arms.

⁸⁷ The Communist Party during the years of 1919-24 operated through "front" organizations under various names, i. e., "The United Front of the Working People" since 1922. Organizations, serving as a "front" for the Communist Party and designed to overthrow the existing government, were outlawed by the law of February 12, 1925 (RT 1925, 29/30, 7. Also the orders of the Minister of Interior, Nos. 389, 391, and 392, published in RT 1925, 37/38).

⁸⁸ Pravda No. 187 of July 7, 1940.

⁸⁹ Statements by Jaan Kitzberg (editor in chief of the newspaper "Postimees" in Tartu), Harald Raudsepp (editor of the newspaper "Uus Eesti" in Tallinn), and William Tomingas (chief of the news department in Estonian State Broadcasting Co.).

reluctant editors with action from the Red army in case of noncompliance.⁹⁰ Red Army officers participated actively in the seizure of the radio station in Tallinn. Soviet officers in this case pointed meaningfully to Soviet tanks surrounding the building and advised the official in charge of the station to comply with the demands of the "revolutionary masses," for the sake of his "health" and that of his "family." The officers then remained in the offices, together with Estonian Communist Party agents, to keep watch over the program.⁹¹

In newspaper editorial offices the former editors were kept at their jobs, but they were under constant surveillance by armed Communists. Their names were still used in the masthead, but they had no control whatsoever over the contents of the paper. Only news articles were printed which had been approved by the Communist Party.⁹²

From June 21, 1940, the press and radio in Estonia became the mouthpiece of the Communist Party. Employees and editors were gradually dismissed and replaced by persons faithful to the Communist regime. No resignations were permitted, and everybody had to wait until dismissal.

XIV. MOSCOW ORDERS ELECTIONS

A. WHAT MOSCOW CALLED THE "DEMOCRATIC FRANCHISE"

The People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, V. M. Molotov, in his report to the VII session of the Supreme Soviet on August 1, 1940, stated that "free parliamentary elections based on the democratic franchise" had been carried out in the Baltic States. He said that:

the peoples of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania voted solidly for their deputies who unanimously decided in favor of introducing the Soviet system in, and the incorporation of, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia into the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.⁹³

Such was the official view of the Government of the Soviet Union. It has been repeated many times since then. An Estonian writer who made an analysis of the elections on July 14 and 15, 1940, in Estonia asked:

How is this thesis tenable? Can the "decisions of Parliament," according to which the Baltic States were absorbed in the Soviet Union, claim to have any binding power whatsoever, either legally or morally? Is there any justification for the allegation that these Parliaments were freely elected according to the democratic franchise? Can their decisions consequently be regarded as expressing the will of the people? Were these Parliaments at all qualified to take such decisions on behalf of and in the name of their peoples?⁹⁴

The answer to these questions is the substantive story of the Soviet seizure of Estonia.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ Statement of J. Kitzberg.

⁹¹ Statement of W. Tomingas.

⁹² Statements of J. Kitzberg and H. Raudsepp.

⁹³ Pravda, No. 213, of August 2, 1940.

⁹⁴ *Rel*, op. cit., p. 7.

⁹⁵ Dr. Arnold Soom, former director of the city archives of Narva and at that time the director of the state archive in Tallinn, compiled in 1942 an exhaustive survey of the elections in Estonia on July 14-15, 1940, which was based on original source materials: records of the election committees, statements of election officials, etc. This survey, which supports the facts and inferences presented in this study, is in manuscript form (in Estonian) and was made available for the present study by the author.

B. ZHDANOV BRINGS NEW INSTRUCTIONS

The term "Baltic elections" has its established place in the terminology of government and law. It was the forerunner of fraudulent and arbitrary election procedures under Communist rule. The term was coined in the summer of 1940. Then, under the auspices of the Soviet "puppet" governments, supported by the might of the Red army, the population of the three Baltic nations—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—were compelled to go to the polls. They were given the choice of voting for the destroyers and usurpers of their own Government and country or exposing themselves to the ruthless terror of the Communist regime. The term conveys the connotation of the method by which the election returns were fabricated in the inner chambers of the Communist Party. This fabrication was done without taking into consideration the participation of the voters or the ballots cast.

In Estonia the entire fraudulent procedure began on the morning of July 3, 1940, upon the return of the Kremlin emissary, Andrei Zhdanov, to Tallinn, the Estonian capital. With fresh instructions from Moscow, Zhdanov started to unfold the technique by which the Soviet Union proposed to deceive the Western World. Zhdanov ordered elections to the Chamber of Deputies to be held in the shortest possible time. The order was received by Minister of Interior Unt, who acted as the liaison between the Estonian Government and the Soviet Legation, or Zhdanov, as the occasion required.⁹⁰ Estonian election law required an interval of at least 35 days between the proclamation of new elections and the voting. Unt explained this to Zhdanov, but without effect. Legal advisers of the Government could not help either. Only a law passed by the Parliament could constitutionally shorten the election dates. Zhdanov, however, frowned upon calling the Estonian Parliament back into session.

The following day, July 4, a cabinet meeting was held. Unt declared that the elections should take place on July 14, the date he apparently received from Zhdanov when, with Andresen, the Foreign Minister, they visited Zhdanov at midnight, July 3. To hold elections on this date was legally impossible. It was decided, therefore, to ask the President to come to the capital from his summer residence. Vares, Unt, and some other Cabinet members again went to consult with Zhdanov.

From this meeting with Zhdanov was produced a sheet of paper on which, in green ink, the following orders were written: (1) Elections should be held on July 14 and 15; (2) no appeals to courts were to be allowed; (3) the central election committee should consist of 2 members appointed by the Minister of Interior, 2 representatives of the Communist Party, 1 representative from the labor unions, and 1 representative of the Central Statistical Bureau.

The next day, on July 5, the President of the Republic presided at the Cabinet meeting. When informed of the pending elections, he asked why the hurry. The Prime Minister answered that it was the order of Zhdanov. The President then signed the resolution dissolving the Parliament which read:

For reasons of state I proclaim elections of a new Chamber of Deputies and formation of a new State Council.

⁹⁰ The elections are described by J. Klesment in his testimony before the committee. Klesment participated in Cabinet meetings as legal adviser to the Government. See hearings, pp. 47-50.

The Government of the Republic shall make the necessary arrangements for a speedy conduct of elections to the Chamber of Deputies.⁹⁷

On the same day the Government published its regulations amending the election law to conform to the dictates of Zhdanov. Thus, the machinery for elections of a new Chamber of Deputies was set in motion. However, the Estonian Parliament was bicameral. The lower chamber—the Chamber of Deputies—was elected directly by majority vote in single constituencies; the upper chamber—the State Council—was a body which consisted of representatives elected by local government councils and professional organizations, ex officio members, and 10 persons appointed by the President. The two bodies together constituted the State Assembly, the legislature of the country. The Government reported itself ready to call together a new State Council, but, apparently, Zhdanov considering it too risky, did not give his approval.

C. ELECTION LAW AMENDED AND THE CONSTITUTION VIOLATED

The order from Zhdanov to hold elections on July 14–15, 1940, and to make certain changes in the election procedure confronted the Government with necessary amendments in the election law. The only way to change it was by an act of Parliament. To call the old Parliament into session was out of question. The President also refused to make any changes by decree and so it fell to the Government itself to enact the necessary changes.

This was done by a Cabinet order of July 5⁹⁸ which set the election days on July 14 and 15 and made changes in a number of sections of the law on elections to the Chamber of Deputies of August 17, 1937.⁹⁹ Altogether 31 sections out of a total of 78 were changed. Four sections were repealed completely; two sections partially; the others were changed to conform with the demands of Zhdanov.

Under the Estonian Constitution the State Assembly, a bicameral parliament, was vested with the power to enact laws. Some emergency powers to enact laws by decree during the recess of the Parliament were given to the President, but his authority was strictly limited. The Constitution specified the limits by a definite list. The election laws were included in this list as not subject to decree. Thus, the only legal way to amend or change the election laws was by normal parliamentary procedures: Adoption by both houses of the State Assembly and confirmation by the President. Or, in case of a Presidential veto, passage of the bill by a qualified majority in both houses. The Government of the Republic, as the executive agency, had no legislative powers whatsoever. It was only authorized to issue regulations under the law which meant that the Government was authorized to enact orders which specifically executed or explained the provisions of a law but did not change its meaning.

When the Government of the Republic under the chairmanship of Vares and under directions from the Soviet Legation changed the election law, it violated a score of constitutional provisions. Thus,

⁹⁷ Riigi Teataja 1940, 60, 565.

⁹⁸ Riigi Teataja 1940, 60, 566. English translations of the amendments to the election law and of the amended sections of the old law appear in appendix A, II, Nos. 13 and 19. The amendment to the election law as well as a number of other documents pertaining to these elections is found in German translation in Meissner, op. cit., 106–114.

⁹⁹ Riigi Teataja 1937, 71, 592.

the Government collectively, and its members individually, violated their oath of office. They had solemnly promised "to be faithful to the Republic of Estonia and its constitution and to dedicate" all their strength to "securing the welfare and future of the Republic of Estonia and the Estonian people" (Government Organization Act, sec. 4).

The Government not only violated the constitutional provisions on the enactment of laws, but it also changed some constitutional provisions such as one that required voters to have lived for 1 year in 1 place (sec. 67) in order to become eligible to vote.

D. THE GOVERNMENT EXPLAINS

The Government was aware that in decreeing and publishing the amendments to the election law by Cabinet order it had grossly violated the constitution. The policy of the Soviets was, however, to preserve the appearance of legality. Therefore, the Prime Minister in his broadcast on July 6, 1940, said:

The rapidly developing political events require a speedy election of a new popular representation. The dates set for normal times cannot be applied in the present extraordinary times. Therefore the Government of the Republic decided to proclaim the elections of a new Chamber of Deputies for July 14 and 15 of this year. To facilitate the speedy holding of elections a new election procedure, providing for shorter timetables and other necessary changes and one not so unwieldy and time consuming will be put into effect. * * * The new Government of the Republic as a popular government cannot rule alone. It is important for us that a true popular representation, as soon as possible, should join us and cooperate with us. The opinion and the decision of the people is important for us. Our task is to enable all honestly working citizens and fellow fighters to participate in the work of the Government aimed at the reorganization and creation of our real Republic.¹

A declaration was issued also by the President. He appealed to the sober minds of his fellow countrymen in order to avoid national catastrophe. He said:

I hope that all citizens will * * * fulfill their citizens' duty. * * *

E. SOVIET MOTIVES FOR VIOLATING THE CONSTITUTION

The changes in the elections law were made with three principal objectives:

1. To eliminate judicial control over electoral procedures and counting of votes;
2. To bring the election authorities under complete control of the Government and the Communist Party;
3. To facilitate falsifications in election returns and fraud in voting.

The courts in Estonia had not yet been brought under the control of the Communist Party. It was imperative for the new government to divest them of the right to decide appeals from the decisions of the electoral agencies. Under the old law:

The decisions of the Supreme Election Committee on invalidation of nominating petitions of candidates and on compilation of election results may be appealed * * * to the Administrative Department of the State Court of Justice (sec. 16, par. 1).

¹ In *Kannatuste aasta*, p. 49. Statement of J. Klesment.

² *Ibid.*, p. 50. Statement of J. Klesment.

The Soviet dictate made the decisions of the Supreme Election Committee final: "and there shall be no appeal from them." Another constitutional provision, which put under judicial review the decisions of administrative agencies in regard to the voters' lists, was simply repealed (sec. 25). The voters now had no right to challenge the correctness or validity of the lists of eligible voters. Lost was the right even to complain to the agency which was in charge of these lists.

In order to manipulate the elections the Soviets found it necessary to make changes in the membership of the elections committees. The elections were carried out under the general direction and supervision of a special Supreme Election Committee by 13 district committees and hundreds of precinct commissions.

The Supreme Election Committee consisted of six members: the Chancellor of Justice as chairman, the chairman or vice chairman of the Tallinn Circuit Court, the mayor of Tallinn, the chairman of Harjumaa (Harrien) County Board, the chief of state chancery, and one appointee of the Minister of Interior (sec. 13). This arrangement was abandoned and all members, now 7 instead of 6, were made appointees of the Government.

The Minister of Justice, Friedrich Niggol, was appointed chairman. Other members were: Harald Habermann, the Deputy Minister of Interior; Hugo Reiman, the representative of the Central Bureau of Statistics; Andres Murro and Edgar Petre as representatives of the Communist Party; Evald Priks and Aleksander Pirson representing the Central League of Labor Unions.³

The district committees were appointed by the Supreme Election Committee⁴ and the precinct commissions by district committees. Once the Soviets had the power to appoint the members of the supreme committee there was no need to change the provisions concerning the other committees.

The elections law contained a provision that every voter must personally hand his ballot to an election clerk (sec. 40). This section was repealed. The special voters' certificates for identification were discarded (secs. 48, 49, 59) so that the way was opened for voting by proxy.

The number of sponsoring signatures on a nominating petition of a candidate was lowered from 150 to 50, and the requirement was dropped whereby these signatures had to be verified by local Government agencies (sec. 31).

Residence requirement of 1 year in a certain election precinct or administrative subdivision was abolished, and everybody could be entered on the voters' list up to the closing time of the polls (secs. 22, 26).

A number of functions of the Supreme Election Committee were transferred to the district committees. A central control over the printing of election materials (ballots, etc.), and the stamping of ballot envelopes was thus abolished (secs. 45, 46, 14, par. 6; and sec. 18, par. 5). In addition, the district committees now accepted the nominating petitions of candidates (sec. 18, par. 3), the deposits (sec. 31), and decided upon the validity of nominating petitions (sec. 38). Also

³ Decision of the Cabinet of July 5, 1940 (RT 1940, pp. 60, 567). See also, Pravda No. 187 of July 7, 1940.

⁴ The Decision of the Supreme Election Committee of July 7, 1940 in RT 1940, pp. 62, 586.

a number of more technical functions was taken care of by the district committees under the Communist system.

All provisions concerning various dates were changed. The constitutional requirement that elections could not be held earlier than 35 days after their proclamation was simply repealed (sec. 27). In accordance with this repeal other dates were shortened. The nominations of candidates had to be submitted 5 days (formerly 28 days) prior to the first election day (sec. 31), and the ballots were sent to the voters only 1 day before elections (formerly 3 days (sec. 49)).

If there was only one candidate in an election district, then no elections were held, and this candidate was declared elected by a decision of the supreme election committee (sec. 71). This provision was repealed, and thus the way was opened for holding elections in cases where only one candidate had been nominated. With the abolition of the voters' certificates it became impossible to check the number of ballots cast with the number of persons who presented themselves to the election commission. The only possible check now was the voters' list where persons having cast their votes had been checked (sec. 61). This, of course, afforded no reliable control.

The district committee counted the ballots, and the supreme election committee announced the results. No appeal from its decision was possible (sec. 69).

All these changes eased controls on the election procedure and simplified the processes of fraud.

XV. PREPARATIONS FOR ONE-PARTY ELECTIONS

A. COMMUNIST FRONT

No sooner had the elections been proclaimed and the amendments to the election law promulgated than the Communist Party came out with its own organization for elections. On July 6, the newspapers, now completely controlled by the Communist Party, published the election platform of the "Estonian Working People's League."⁵

This organization was supposed to unite all labor organizations and civic groups around a common list of candidates for a joint electoral program. Among others, the Central Council of Labor Unions, Central Union of Estonian Smallholders, and the Estonian Communist Party were represented. Actually these organizations represented only the Communist Party. Since June 21, 1940, all these organizations had been taken over by Communists and served as various disguises for party activities. "The union members were never told about the preparation of agitation literature that was published prior to the elections," reported E. Joonas, a labor leader. He said several of the union boards "discovered their organization's name under articles they had never seen before."⁶

The central committee of the newly organized league consisted of only tested Communists. All five members of it, Aleksander Aben, Johannes Lauristin, Karl Säre, Neeme Ruus, and Paul Kærdo were leading Estonian Communists. Säre and Ruus were also secretaries of the central committee of the Estonian Communist Party. Loyal Com-

⁵ Pravda, No. 187, of July 7, 1940. English translation in the appendix A, II, No. 14.

⁶ Statement of E. Joonas.

munists ruled the district committees. In each of the 13 districts, corresponding to the number of district election committees, the organizer was the local Communist Party secretary or some other leading Communist.⁷

After the elections, the Communists themselves admitted that no distinction existed between the Communist Party and the league. Pravda wrote that—

the brilliant victory of the Estonian Working People's League in the elections * * * is a victory of the Estonian Communist Party * * *. This victory shows that the entire Estonian people is for the Communist Party.⁸

B. ELECTION COMMITTEES UNDER COMMUNIST CONTROL

All members of the supreme election committee were appointed by the Government. Minister of Justice F. Niggol acted as chairman. The Communist Party had 2 representatives and the labor unions also had 2. In addition the Deputy Minister of Interior, H. Habermann, and the director of the statistical bureau were members.⁹ All were either members of Communist Party or who took orders from it with the exception of the director of the statistical bureau.¹⁰

The supreme election committee appointed to district committees new local functionaries who guaranteed that all decisions were made in accordance with the party line.

The supreme election committee gave instructions to district committees concerning the carrying out of the elections. But, the overall authority came from the Communist Party. The district committees, in rejecting the opposition candidates, acted in accordance with directives received from party sources.¹¹

Thus, the whole election machinery was brought under the control of the Communist Party.

C. UNEXPECTED OPPOSITION CANDIDATES

Three and a half days were designated for the nomination of candidates. All patriotic groups and political parties joined forces, determined to frustrate Communist election frauds. They nominated one candidate in every district in opposition to the candidate of the Estonian Working People's League. In some districts even 3 candidates were nominated.¹²

This proceeding disturbed the designers of the Communist election technique. They had hoped that with these short deadlines in the majority of the districts no opposition candidates would be nominated. It was now evident that all political parties intended to stand up against the Communists.

The Government began to reach for other methods. First, a campaign was started to intimidate the patriotic candidates and frighten them into withdrawing their candidacies. Hidden and open threats were used but without avail. Finally, when threats of actual physical

⁷ Pravda, No. 189, of July 9, 1940.

⁸ Ibid., No. 199, of July 19, 1940.

⁹ Riigi Teataja 1940, 60, 567.

¹⁰ Statement of Artur Mägi. A. Mägi was the secretary (clerk) of the State Council, the upper chamber of the Parliament and served also as secretary-general of the supreme election committee.

¹¹ Ibid., Soom. A., op. cit., pp. 50-51.

¹² Statement of A. Mägi. Statement of Heinrich Mark who organized the nomination of national candidates and was himself a candidate in election district No. 77.

violence against the person of the candidate, or against members of his family were made, a few withdrew. The majority remained in the running.¹³

Secondly, the Government now insisted that every candidate had to submit his political or election platform. It was intended to issue this directive through the supreme election committee. At the committee meeting on July 9 Deputy Minister of Interior Habermann proposed that the committee should pass such a resolution. Unexpectedly, however, the chairman of the committee, Minister of Justice Niggol, who was not a Communist, refused. He contended that the committee lacked the power to issue such an order which actually amounted to an amendment of the election law. The Communist majority in the committee tried persuasion but found him adamant. The problem was referred to the Cabinet.

D. SOVIETS "LEGALIZE" THE FRAUD

The Cabinet acted promptly. It issued a supplement to section 31 of the election law which contained a new paragraph 8 that read:

To prevent exploitation of the elections to the Chamber of Deputies for aims detrimental to the Republic of Estonia and the Estonian people, the representatives for the nominating petitions of candidates shall submit to the District Committees at 14 o'clock of July 10, 1940, at the latest, the candidate's election platform. Failure to submit an election platform shall result in annulment of the nominating petition of the respective candidate by the District Committee.¹⁴

This order, put into force immediately was transmitted by telegraph, and it was the duty of the district committees to notify the candidates of the new requirement. In most cases the non-Communist opposition candidates had only a few hours to comply. In spite of the technical difficulties the majority of opposition candidates filed their programs in time. "The plan to exclude these candidates from the election on the excuse that they had not presented their political programs, had thus failed," stated the executive secretary of the supreme election committee.¹⁵

Like all other changes in the election procedure, this one also had been dictated by Zhdanov. At the Cabinet meeting Zhdanov's order was read. The participation of the Cabinet was limited to translating it from Russian into Estonian.¹⁶

E. ARBITRARY REMOVAL OF NON-COMMUNIST CANDIDATES

Although the opposition candidates in most cases had only an hour or two to meet the deadline for filing their election platform, only four failed to make it.¹⁷ In general, they purported to conform by following in their programs the line of policy presented by the Government in its declaration.

But the one-party elections were still in danger. The Kremlin had ordered that no opposition candidates should be permitted. The

¹³ Statements of Martin Pommer and J. Elsmann. M. Pommer was a farmer in the county of Pärnumaa. The Minister of Interior, M. Unt, personally threatened Albert Suurkivi, a candidate in the county of Järvamaa; see statement of A. Suurkivi, a farmer and local government office holder. Statement of H. Mark.

¹⁴ Riigi Teataja 1940, 64, 627.

¹⁵ Statement of A. Mägi.

¹⁶ Testimony of J. Klesment, hearings, p. 50.

¹⁷ Statement of H. Mark; A. Rei, op. cit., p. 25.

district election committees, which accepted the nominations of candidates, received orders to invalidate the nominating letters of all opposition candidates who had refused to withdraw. By direct pressure and threats, 17 candidates were pressed into withdrawing their candidacies.¹⁸ The methods used are described by one of the candidates, Villem Maaker, who was nominated in an election district in Läänemaa county. Maaker wrote:

I was summoned to Haapsalu (the county seat) by Mr. Scheer, later the secretary of the Communist Party of Läänemaa (Wiek), and under threats asked to withdraw my candidature. As this demand had no effect upon me, a Russian major (Politrak), present on the occasion, intervened, pointing out that if I refused to withdraw the wife and child of Mr. E. Hallik, the sponsor of my candidacy, would be exposed to penalties. Under similar circumstances, Mr. E. Hallik, the sponsor of my candidacy, announced the withdrawal of the application * * *.¹⁹

It should be noted that the supreme election committee did not issue any instructions for the interpretation of the new Cabinet order on election platforms. The district committees received these orders from the Communist Party and acted accordingly.²⁰ The candidacies of all opposition candidates were invalidated, for it was revealed upon closer investigation that they were "dirty bourgeois figures,"²¹ enemies of the working people, and persons who were trying to mislead the people by their election platforms. The district committee of Tartu explained its decision to annul the candidacies of four known non-Communists in this manner:

Their declarations were made in general terms without indicating the practical means and possibilities of carrying through their programs. Moreover, it is known of these candidates that they have been enemies of the U. S. S. R. and have approved of the foreign policy of the Cabinet of Prof. Uluots, which made it impossible to fulfill the Pact of Mutual Assistance between Estonia and the U. S. S. R. Furthermore, these persons have had no contact with workers' organizations and, although they declare that they are willing to work on a similar basis as given in the Working People's League Program, their activity could only destroy the united front of the working people and damage the present internal peace.²²

The other election committees did not bother to explain. In the case of the candidacy of Johannes Sikkar (district No. 9) the Tartumaa County district election committee stated that his "election programme embraces too few lines, is too general and, with regard to his political past, this programme is obviously intended to lead the electors astray."²³

In some cases the district committees had received their orders too late and had accepted the opposition candidates. The Viljandimaa (Fellin) County election committee had officially reported to the su-

¹⁸ Statements of A. Mägi, H. Mark, T. Kint, and Karl Mäe, a police officer. Statement of Mrs. Maria Luiga. She was the wife of Col. Oskar Luiga who was nominated as an opposition candidate and later arrested and murdered by the Communists. Statement of Rudolf Panksepp who organized the nomination of opposition candidates in the county of Tartumaa. Such candidates were provided the return of their deposits. See appendix A, II No. 21.

¹⁹ Extract from a Memorandum of the Rejected Election Candidates of the 1940 Elections in Soviet Occupied Estonia. Annexation of the Baltic States. Stockholm: the Baltic Humanitarian Association, 1946, pp. 35-36. Hereafter quoted as extract.

²⁰ Statement of A. Mägi.

²¹ Pravda No. 197 of July 17, 1940.

²² Rahva Hääli (newspaper in Tallinn) No. 19 of July 11, 1940; quoted from extract, p. 36.

²³ Extract, p. 35. See also the statement of Martin Pommer.

preme elections committee the acceptance of opposition candidates. Subsequently, they had to change their decision and invalidate the nominations.²⁴

In 79 election districts only 1 candidate remained—the Communist candidate. In 1 district, 2 candidates remained, obviously on party orders. At long last the way was open for elections “Communist style.” The newspaper *Rahva Hääl* could boast on July 14:

The overwhelming majority of the people and all workers have adhered to the League, which tomorrow will give the finishing blow to Reaction.²⁵

F. THE ELECTION PROGRAM AND SLOGANS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE'S LEAGUE

The official election platform of the Estonia's Working People's League and the slogans accompanying it were an amplification of the great deception which started with the Government's declaration.²⁶ Their purpose was to emphasize again and again all previous accusations made against the former republican government and to repeat in more detail planned internal reforms. All reference to the real intentions of the Communist Party and the Soviet Union were carefully avoided. The impression was created that no radical changes would happen.

The old Government was accused of having “pushed the country into the disaster of war, into destruction and catastrophe.” It was charged with having “grossly violated the mutual assistance pact * * * and directly menaced the security, inviolability and independence of the Estonian State.”

A better future was promised. No mention was made of sovietization or nationalization or incorporation into the Soviet Union. “A close and indestructible alliance and friendship between Estonia and the great Soviet Union”, and “brotherhood of Estonian and Soviet peoples” would form the basis for “a happy and free life” for Estonia and its people, they said.

The program called for a new domestic policy expressed in broad and meaningless terms: “fight against unemployment”; “real relief for farmers in regard to their indebtedness”; “liquidation of national inequality”; “democratization of the army.”

Special assurances were given to the farmers. Collectivization of agriculture was termed as a “provocative invention and slander.” It was asserted that “nobody has the right to infringe upon the property rights of the peasants or to force the peasants to join collective farms.”

The guaranty of the independence of Estonia had been dropped from the platform and no longer appeared in the slogans. Instead it was alleged that the former Government had violated the Mutual Assistance Pact, and thus placed the independence and security of the country in jeopardy.

²⁴ Statement of A. Mägi. Statement of H. Mark, appendixes No. 7 and 9. Statements of Ferdinand Hans Kool, a newspaper editor in Viljandi, and Erich Kuus.

²⁵ Quoted from A. Rei, op. cit., p. 29. Statement of Endel Kulk who organized the nomination of national candidates in Imavere, County Viljandimaa.

²⁶ The election platform was published in *Pravda* No. 187 of July 7, 1940, and the election slogans of No. 192 in July 12, 1940. English translations in appendix A, II, Nos. 14 and 22.

Post election announcements clarified some of the phrases in the platform like the following one:

* * * the Estonian people must go to the ballot boxes united as never before. They must be firmly convinced that the basis for a happy and free life for the Estonian state and people is in a *close and indestructible alliance and friendship between Estonia and the great Soviet Union, and in the brotherhood of Estonian and Soviet peoples who henceforth will walk hand in hand* and will fight with enthusiasm for peace and prosperity of the peoples of the Estonian Republic and the Soviet Union. [Italics furnished.]

G. ELECTION CAMPAIGN

An intensive election campaign, Communist-style, was conducted by the "Working People's League." Only the candidates of the Communist Party were in the field. All propaganda media was fully used. Counterpropaganda was impossible, because all information media was in the hands of the Soviet authorities. "The intensity of the election campaign in the face of the fact that the 'Working People's Bloc' is bound to capture all seats in the new Parliaments is due to its effort to roll up as large a vote as possible in order to claim overwhelmingly popular support for what it is proposed to do," wrote the correspondent of the New York Times.²⁷

Thus, the main objective was to get the people to the polls. From the beginning it was indicated that only enemies of the people would abstain, and open threats were used. The newspaper *Rahva Hääl* on the eve of elections editorialized:

Shirking the elections would be a very imprudent step to take. In the present situation passivity could be viewed by us as hostility towards the working people; only those opposed to the working people will remain passive.²⁸

Meetings were held all over the country, and the slogans endlessly repeated.

XVI. THE FARCE OF ELECTIONS

A. VOTERS FORCED TO THE POLLS

Agitation, intimidation, and threats were employed by the Communists to get the people to the polls on July 14 and 15.

"Under the protection of the Red Army, whose overwhelming numbers assured order, but in a visibly grim spirit," wrote an American newspaperman, "the population of the three Baltic States—Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, went to the polls today * * *"²⁹

The great majority of voters did not consider it their "sacred duty" to go to the polls as *Pravda* claimed.³⁰ Preparations had been made to take ballot boxes to persons who were unable to go to the polling places. Balloting time was extended on the second day of elections from 4 p. m. to 10 p. m.³¹

²⁷ July 14, 1940, p. 26: 1.

²⁸ In *Rel. op. cit.*, p. 29.

²⁹ Otto D. Tolischus in the *New York Times*, July 15, 1940, p. 1: 7. Statement of Philip Selli, a veterinarian, who voted in Narva. A. Soom, *op. cit.*, p. 43. Statement of Peeter Arge, who voted in community Salme (County Saaremaa). Statement of Mrs. Lils Lätti, member of election board at Klooga, County Harjumaa. Statement of August Nilt, member of a precinct election board in Tallinn.

³⁰ No. 197 of July 17, 1940.

³¹ Amendment to the Order on Elections to the Chamber of Deputies of July 9, 1940 (*Riigi Teataja* 1940, 64, 627). Translation in appendix A, II, No. 15.

On election day special groups were organized to check the homes of persons who had not voted and to compel them to cast their ballot. In numerous instances the Communists dropped into the ballot box the ballot of an absentee without his or her consent.³²

To swell the returns all military units were forced to vote. Under the Estonian Constitution and election laws enlisted men on active military service could not participate in elections if they were under compulsory military training.³³ Now, without any formal changes in the laws, all military units received orders that officers, noncommissioned officers, and enlisted personnel were required to go to the polls.³⁴

B. ALL RULES VIOLATED, EVEN THEIR OWN

The Communist Party was not content with the one-party elections. The passive resistance of the population endangered the buildup of the campaign. The election commissions and committees under the amended laws were able to determine the results before the balloting started, but even this proved not wholly satisfactory. The Communists did not feel bound by provisions they themselves enacted. When necessary, these were ignored. Bringing ballot boxes to voters and getting enlisted men to vote were violations of their own regulations.

Requirements for personal balloting had been annulled. The Supreme Election Committee gave the order that every qualified voter should be included in the list up to the closing of the polls if he could prove that he had been living in the election precinct during the time when the lists had been supplemented, i. e., prior to July 9. He needed only two witnesses to prove it.³⁵ No voters' certificates were issued, and on July 9 it was decreed that an identification card or some other "official" certificate would serve for identification purposes at the polls.³⁶

These provisions opened the polls for everybody. No check was possible and none was desired. A. Rei observed:

During the elections the committee sent a telegram creating new, extremely convenient opportunities of falsification: * * * the electoral committees were ordered to allow even those to vote who had no document of identification whatever. Some of the committee members had simply to declare that they knew the voter personally. This made it possible for Communist agents to vote under false names in several districts in collusion with the Communist members of the committees.³⁷

The use of booths at the polling places was discouraged. Open threats were made against persons who used the booths to put the ballot into the envelope.³⁸ This violation of the secret ballot was an

³² Statements of Harald Holm, August Hänni, Jüri Soorsk, and T. Kint. H. Holm was a forest ranger in the county of Järvamaa; A. Hänni, a farmer in County Läänemaa; and J. Soorsk, a sailor. The order of the supreme election committee to organize mobile ballot boxes is given in appendix A, II, No. 20; statement of H. Mark, app. No. 12; Soom, op. cit., p. 36.

³³ Statement of P. Arge. Statement of David Kuusk, a farmer.

³⁴ Par. 4, sec. 37, of the constitution and sec. 9 of the Law on Elections to the Chamber of Deputies.

³⁵ Statements of Voldemar Issako, August Tõnissoo, Juhan Aab, Hugo Vari, and Teodor Kalberg. Lt. Col. T. Kalberg was the quartermaster of the second division in Tartu; Capt. V. Issako held a position in the Army Technological Institute; A. Tõnissoo was an administrative noncommissioned officer in the headquarters of the military district in Voru; and J. Aab, a staff sergeant in Estonian tank regiment. H. Vari, an artillery officer, was stationed in Camp Jägala, 20 miles east of Tallinn.

³⁶ Decision of the Supreme Election Committee of July 9, 1940 (Riigi Teataja, 1940, 65, 640), English translation in appendix A, II, No. 17.

³⁷ Decision of the Supreme Election Committee of July 19, 1940 (Riigi Teataja 1940, 65, 641), English translation in appendix A, II, No. 18.

³⁸ Rei, A., op. cit., p. 33. Statement of A. Mägi.

³⁹ Statements of Jüri Soorsk and J. Eismann. Soom, A., op. cit., p. 42. Statement of R. Pedaste. Statement of August Voldemar Poll: rural community Vara, county of Tartumaa.

attempt to reduce the number of mutilated and spoiled ballots which a closed booth would have encouraged. Actually there was no need to use the booth since only one candidate was on the ballot.

Counting ballots produced an occasion for another fraud. This was done behind closed doors in the presence of Communist agents.³⁹ Often armed members of the Communist Party stood guard in front of this room. The entire procedure was carried out in contradiction to the election law which required a public count of the ballots. Despite all precautionary measures a great number of ballots had been invalidated because voters had written anti-Communist slogans on them and because candidates names had been stricken out. This, however, did not prevent the precinct commissions from declaring these ballots valid.⁴⁰ It was reported that ballot boxes were taken immediately after the closing of polls from precinct stations to the district electoral committee where they were opened.⁴¹

Thus the election committees were able to tamper with the tabulations.⁴²

C. ELECTION RETURNS "ADJUSTED"

The final official count of the votes in the elections on July 14 and 15 showed that 84.1 percent of all eligible voters had cast their ballots and that 92.8 percent voted for the candidates of the "Estonian Working People's League."⁴³ The abnormality of this result proved the tabulation to have been a fraud. It was, of course, acclaimed as an "unprecedented victory for the working people."⁴⁴

The election returns had been falsified at every level. The precinct commissions in isolated cases transmitted correct figures to the district committees. As a rule these local commissions reported figures which failed to conform to the actual number of ballots cast. For example, in one polling place only 17 persons out of 78 eligible voters cast their ballots for Government candidates. But it was announced that in this precinct 82 percent of all voters had so voted.⁴⁵

Furthermore, the local commissions received orders to show the participation in elections at 90 percent.⁴⁶ In the countryside, where it was easier for people to abstain from voting, often only 40-60 percent of voters went to the polls.⁴⁷

The district election committees (one for each county and for the cities of Tallinn and Tartu) provided the most abundant field for falsified election arithmetic. In cases where the precinct commissions had reported the truthful balloting figures, the district committee "adjusted" the numbers upward. Thus, many precincts ended with a participation of 100 percent, although actually only 50-60 percent of voters had appeared at the polls. When the final results were published on the next morning, they showed that 81.6 percent of the voters

³⁹ Statement of Annus Estra, former organizer of the organization "Patriotic Union" in County Saaremaa. Soom, A., op. cit., p. 49. Statement of Mrs. Liis Lätti.

⁴⁰ Statements of Nikolai Romanov and J. Elsmann. N. Romanov was a sailor by profession. He resided in the county of Läänemaa. Statement of Henrik Kirik, at the county board of Viljandi.

⁴¹ Statement of August Hänni.

⁴² Statement of Helmut Ulbo, a farmer from county Pärnumaa. Statement of Endel Kulk, who witnessed the addition of blank ballots in Imavere, County Viljandinaa.

⁴³ Pravda, No. 199, of July 19, 1940.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Statement of Paul Riiner.

⁴⁶ Statement of M. Pommer.

⁴⁷ Statement of Hans Leis.

had participated. Of these 92.9 percent, Communists officials said, had voted for Communist candidates.⁴⁸

The computation of votes was done by the central committee of the Estonian Communist Party and not by the Supreme Election Committee as provided by law. The Press Department of the Ministry of Information, which was headed by Johannes Lauristin, later secretary of the party's central committee and the chairman of the council of people's commissars, was ready on the night of July 15 to tabulate the election returns as they came in from all over the country. Time passed on, but no returns came in. Then, Comrade Lauristin explained that Comrade Säre, the first secretary of the Communist Party, was to tabulate the election returns himself. Apparently, the results, as reported by district committees, were not to the liking of the party, and they had to be "edited."⁴⁹

But a participation of 81.6 percent failed to satisfy the Communists who demanded a still better showing. The Supreme Election Committee was required to discover new methods. How this was done was described by the former secretary general of the committee, A. Mägi:⁵⁰

Hugo Reiman, the representative of the central bureau of statistics in the Supreme Election Committee, in order to overcome that difficulty, found a way of improving the results by stating that the number of citizens entitled to vote in all probability was smaller than had been officially calculated. Though the Supreme Election Committee knew not a single case where electoral lists had contained names of citizens who were not entitled to vote, and though the members of the Supreme Election Committee were well aware of that, nevertheless persons who were not inscribed on the lists of electors had been allowed to vote—yet the Supreme Election Committee now decided to reduce the estimate of the total number of citizens entitled to vote by 3 percent in all constituencies. This brought about an "increase" of the percentage of voters by about 3 percent * * *. These manipulations were published in the press as official results of the elections.

Thus, participation of the voters, estimated to be 84.1 percent, was achieved and officially announced as the final results. No explanations to the public for the difference between the returns as published on July 17 and 18 were given. Only Prime Minister Vares indicated a change in the 81.6 percent number when he declared on July 17 that "the percentage is still going to rise, as the votes of persons who were on travel have not been taken into account."⁵¹ He forgot that the election law did not provide for any kind of balloting after the polls were closed at 10 p. m. on July 15.

XVII. SOVIETIZATION AND INCORPORATION

A. NEW SLOGAN: INCORPORATION INTO THE SOVIET UNION

Demands for a radical change in the form of government and for the incorporation of Estonia into the Soviet Union were advanced promptly after the elections. Up to the time of the elections all Communist proclamations, speeches, and announcements had conspicuously avoided the theme of joining the Soviet Union or the sovietiza-

⁴⁸ Pravda, No. 197, of July 17, 1940.

⁴⁹ Raudma, *op. cit.*

⁵⁰ Statement of A. Mägi. Also A. Soom, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-53. A. Soom quotes from the statement of V. Jõgi, clerk of the Supreme Election Committee, who had been threatened with a pistol by Izmetev, the press attaché of Soviet Legation, to support the latter's request for change of the number of voters. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁵¹ Päävaleht (newspaper in Tallinn) of July 17, 1940. In Reil, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

tion of Estonian life. On the contrary, the preservation of independence had been emphasized directly and indirectly since June 21.

On July 13, 1940, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in answer to an inquiry from the Estonian Consul General in New York, specifically declared that joining the Soviet Union was not an election issue. It was also explicitly denied that a referendum was being held on the question of joining the Soviet Union. On July 12, 1940, the Consul General of Estonia in New York sent the following telegram to Tallinn: ⁵²

MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TALLINN (ESTONIA).

According to press reports elections and a plebiscite to join Russia will be held in Estonia on the 15th. Please cable what voting, under which authority and procedure.

CONSULATE GENERAL.

The next day the following answer was received: ⁵³

TALLINN, July 13, 1940.

Legation NY (Consulate Genl Estonia, 9 Rockefeller Plaza).—*There is no plebiscite, only elections to the Chamber of Deputies according to the Constitution. Rumors about joining without foundation.* [Italics furnished.]

MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

In a letter, dated July 1, 1940, Foreign Minister Andresen gave the same confirmation to the Estonian Minister in London, A. Torma. With reference to Soviet-Estonian relations in the future he wrote:

All tales about protectorate and other rumors to this effect are self-evidently not permitted as they are intrigues directed against the pact. [The Mutual Assistance Pact]. In spite of its experiencing far-reaching changes in domestic policy and social structure, Estonia will still remain an independent state whose sovereignty has been guaranteed by the Soviet Union. ⁵⁴

On July 17, 1940, the Estonian people were faced with the reality of a situation heretofore disguised from their view. A big meeting was held in Liberty Square in Tallinn. The Communist Party secretary, Säre, declared:

In giving such a big vote to the candidates of the Estonian Working People's League the Estonian people has expressed its greatest confidence in the land of socialism, the Soviet Union, and in the great Stalin, the leader of the peoples of the Soviet Union and of the working people of the whole world. * * * It wishes to live together with the peoples of the Soviet Union, under guidance of the great Stalin, a life of peace, freedom, and happiness. We see today here at the meeting slogans which have been advanced by workers. These demand that Estonia should join as a member of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. * * * ⁵⁵

The press took up this theme. All speeches and writings tried to show that incorporation into the Soviet Union was the desire of the Estonian people. It was this they had been voting for, so the propaganda went.

A hint of this new development was made in Pravda on July 17. In this issue an interview with the secretary of the Central Council of Estonian Labor Unions, Aleksander Resev, was published in which he said in reference to the elections:

It is completely obvious in the light of the electoral campaign that the bourgeois-democratic forms of government no longer hold the trust of the masses.

⁵² Archives of the Consulate General of Estonia in New York (N. Y.), hearings, p. 535.

⁵³ Archives of the Consulate General of Estonia in New York (N. Y.), hearings, p. 536.

⁵⁴ Torma, A., *Diplomaatiliselt rindelt; lühimärkmeld tegevusväljalit Londonis* (On the Diplomatic Front. Short Notes on Activities in London), in *Tulimuld* (Lund, Sweden), 1953, No. 1, p. 12.

⁵⁵ In *Kannatuste aasta*, p. 58. Statement of J. Klesment.

No one believes any longer in bourgeois parliamentarism—not even those interests which would force Estonian workers to believe in it. The masses demand true democracy and a complete reorganization of the governmental apparatus.

The Pravda correspondent, describing the interview, added:

During the period of preparation for the elections throughout the whole of Estonia, from one end to the other, there grew the demand for the attainment of a more elaborate form of accord with the Soviet Union than was made possible by the present mutual assistance pact.⁵⁶

The new demands were then unmistakably spelled out in Rahva Hääl on July 18, 1940:⁵⁷

The victory of the workers, working peasantry, and intelligentsia, and the defeat of the enemies of the people in the elections created a completely new political situation. It is clear that we have ahead of us the task of a fundamental reorganization of the country in political as well as in its economic aspects. Demonstrations which took place on July 17 in the entire country, and which in their extent surpassed the great preelection meetings, put forward new political demands—the formation of Workers' Soviets, the transformation of the bourgeois Estonian Republic into an Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic, entry of Estonia into the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Soviet policy of aggression and aggrandizement was fast approaching fulfillment.

A correspondent for the New York Times wrote on July 19, 1940:

Obviously at a signal from a higher authority and in preparation for assembly of the newly elected Baltic Parliament the entire Baltic press today began a campaign for incorporation of the three Baltic States, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, into Soviet Russia.⁵⁸

On the evening of July 16, Zhdanov told Prime Minister Vares that Estonia was too weak as an independent state, and the new Chamber of Deputies should, therefore, consider the question of joining the Soviet Union. At any rate, he added, the Parliament should take up the question of the constitution.⁵⁹

All three Moscow emissaries in the Baltic States, Zhdanov, Vyshinski, and Dekanozov, met on July 17 in Tallinn. Presumably, they synchronized their plan, although no reliable information is available on what transpired except in the light of subsequent developments.

In the evening of the same day the Prime Minister was called to the Soviet Legation for an interview with Zhdanov. He was told that Estonia would have to join the Soviet Union. Zhdanov directed that a resolution to this effect be passed by the new Parliament which was to convene July 21. This early date had been set because the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union was to meet on August 1. Zhdanov told Vares that Estonia would be allowed some privileges in contrast with other constituent republics. One of these privileges would be the preservation of the principle of private property.⁶⁰

Along these lines a draft was then prepared by Government lawyers.

B. NEW SOVIET ENVOY "STRENGTHENS FRIENDLY RELATIONS"

At the time when Pravda published in Moscow a report about pending changes in Estonia's governmental and economic structure, the Soviet Envoy to Estonia, Bochkarev, assured the President of

⁵⁶ Pravda, No. 197, of July 17, 1940.

⁵⁷ Pravda, No. 199, of July 19, 1940.

⁵⁸ The New York Times, July 20, 1940, p. 2: 6.

⁵⁹ Statement of J. Klesment.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

the Estonian Republic on July 17 that he had come to "strengthen friendly relations" between the two states.

Bochkarev's predecessor, K. N. Nikitin, had been recalled on June 29. But Bochkarev waited until the elections were over before presenting his credentials.⁶¹

Bochkarev, as the former counselor of the Soviet Legation, had taken an active part in undermining Estonia's independence. Estonians were quick to see the irony of his statement that the "solid foundation for friendly relations between both nations was laid with the Peace Treaty of Tartu on February 2, 1920." In this treaty the Soviet Union had unconditionally recognized the independence and sovereignty of Estonia. Upon presenting his credentials, Bochkarev said:⁶²

Mr. President: I have the honor to present to you the letter of recall of my predecessor, the plenipotentiary of the U. S. S. R. in Estonia, K. N. Nikitin, together with the credentials in which the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. has accredited me to you as the plenipotentiary of the Soviet Union.

The securing of friendly and good neighborly relations between the people of the U. S. S. R. and the people of Estonia have always received special care and attention on the part of my government.

A solid foundation to the friendly relations of both nations was laid with the Peace Treaty of Tartu on February 2, 1920.

The subsequent factor in the development of the good neighborly relations between the U. S. S. R. and the Republic of Estonia is the Mutual Assistance Pact concluded on September 28, 1939. It bears an extraordinarily great importance not only to the problem of strengthening the mutual security of both countries, but also to preserving and strengthening peace in the Baltic countries, especially under the conditions of the present European war.

The economic and cultural relations between the U. S. S. R. and Estonia have been developing and strengthening, paralleling the development of political relations.

The atmosphere of mutual trust which has grown between our two countries has also found expression in the friendly contacts of the armies of the Soviet Union and the Republic of Estonia.

Being aware of the importance and responsibility of the task entrusted to me I am applying all my efforts, Mr. President, toward strengthening and developing friendly relations between the U. S. S. R. and the Republic of Estonia, influencing by all means their fruitful cooperation in the interest of the preservation of peace and in the problem of the security of both countries.

I dare to hope, Mr. President, that I shall find your honorable help and that of the Government of the Estonian Republic in carrying out the task entrusted to me by my government.

President Päts answered that Estonia was willing to develop its political, economic, and cultural relations with the Soviet Union on the basis of the peace treaty and the mutual assistance pact.

C. ESTONIAN PEOPLE EXPRESS OPPOSITION

For the Soviet leaders the march of events leading to Estonia's complete subjugation was marred during the week of July 15-21 by spontaneous anti-Communist patriotic demonstrations on the part of Estonian people.

After the Communist meeting on July 17 in Liberty Square, since renamed Victory Square, the participants were paraded past the Soviet Legation where Zhdanov, Vyshinski, and Dekanosov in the company

⁶¹ Statement of J. Klesment.

⁶² *Ia Kannatuste aasta*, pp. 56-57. The accuracy of Bochkarev's speech is confirmed by the statement of J. Klesment. See also the statement of E. Tambek.

with Estonian Communists greeted the demonstrators from the balcony. One group carried an Estonian flag. The Red militia tried to seize the flag. A battle between the militia and Estonian patriots ensued. With the help of Red army guns, the militia took the upper hand. But the population had shown before the very eyes of Zhdanov that their spirit was not broken, and they bowed only before superior force.⁶³

The next day, July 18, a soccer match was played in Tallinn between Estonian and Latvian teams. This event grew into a huge patriotic demonstration. Patriotic songs were sung. Estonian flags were distributed, and the Red militia were ignored and defied. The Communist Government was able to restore order only with the help of Soviet armored cars and guns.⁶⁴

As a result of these demonstrations arrests among the population increased. Hundreds and thousands of innocent persons, including many teen-age pupils, were thrown into the cells of the NKVD.

D. COMMUNIST PARLIAMENT DESTROYS ESTONIAN INDEPENDENCE

On the morning of July 21, 1940, the castle of Toompea, seat of the Estonian Parliament, and the immediate neighborhood were placed under a heavy Red army guard. Tanks and armored cars rumbled through the area. The rooms of Parliament were guarded by Soviet soldiers. They were reenforced by members of the "People's Self-Defense," an organization which had been formed after June 21.⁶⁵ This was an auxiliary militia recruited from Communists and criminal elements. As the Estonian abbreviation for its name was RO (Rahva Omakaitse), the population called them "Robbers Among Themselves" (Estonian: Röövlid Omavahel).

This was the occasion which the Communists later called the "historic day of the Estonian people." On this day the illegally elected Chamber of Deputies convened to complete the destruction of Estonia's national independence.

The Communist Parliament was in session for 3 days, July 21-23, 1940. Insisting that it was speaking in the name of the Estonian people and that it alone had "the sovereign power", it passed four resolutions which transformed Estonia into a Soviet state and formally ended its independence.

The first resolution, passed on July 21 and which established the Soviet regime in Estonia,⁶⁶ declared:

Expressing the free and unanimous will of the Estonian working people the Chamber of Deputies proclaims the Soviet regime to be effective in the entire territory of Estonia.

Estonia is proclaimed a Soviet Socialist Republic.

Henceforth all power in the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic belongs to the working people of town and country represented by Councils of Working People's Deputies.

The next day, July 22, 1940, came the declaration which claimed to express "the will of the Estonian people * * * to establish a firm

⁶³ Raudma, op. cit.; statement of Eduard Vallaste, a newspaperman.

⁶⁴ Statement of Voldemar Ōun, p. 2. V. Ōun was employed as executive secretary in the office of the Chancellor of Justice. Statement of R. Kaups.

⁶⁵ Testimony of J. Klesment, hearings, pp. 51-52.

⁶⁶ Riigi Teataja 1940, 74, 733; Pravda, No. 202, of July 22, 1940. English translation in appendix A, II, No. 25.

union and indestructible friendship between the Republic of Estonia and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics" and gave to this will the necessary "legislative confirmation." Full expression of this "will of the people," as interpreted by the Communists, required the entry of Estonia into the Soviet Union, and accordingly a resolution⁶⁷ was passed which read in part:

On the basis of the unanimous will of the Estonian people, the Chamber of Deputies resolve:

To petition the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to admit the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic into the Soviet Union as a constituent republic on the same basis as the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, and other constituent republics.

On the last day of its session the "puppet" Parliament passed two more resolutions which instituted the nationalization and expropriation of land and economic enterprises. In the declaration proclaiming all the land public property⁶⁸ it was said:

In their endeavour to further the true interests of the working peasants and in expressing the will of all workers, the Chamber of Deputies has decided to proclaim as public property, that is as the property of the State, all the land, together with all natural deposits, all forests, lakes, and rivers.

The maximum area of land allowed to each farmer is henceforth fixed at 30 hectares. * * * *

Land at present held by working peasants, as well as land apportioned by the State to landless peasants and those holding insufficient land, shall be held in perpetual tenure.

The last of these declarations⁷⁰ stated:

Complying with these just demands of the people, and in order to abolish the exploitation of one human being by another, and forever to crush the power of parasites, industrialists, factory owners, and bankers over the working population, the Chamber of Deputies hereby proclaims the nationalization of all banks and large industrial enterprises in the territory of Estonia.

Henceforth all banks, together with their assets, all large industrial enterprises, mines, and means of transportation are declared public property, the property of the State.

These resolutions had been preceded by violent speeches on the failure and wrongs of the former Estonian governments. The "International" was played and all meetings were interspersed with shouts of "Long live Stalin." Delegations of selected workers in the presence of Red army units appeared to present demands.⁷¹

After these resolutions were passed the deputies elected a committee of 24 to work out a draft of a new constitution. They appointed a delegation to present the petition to the Kremlin.⁷²

E. ILLEGAL PARLIAMENT ISSUES ILLEGAL ENACTMENTS

The resolutions of the Chamber of Deputies of July 21-23, 1940, had no foundation in Estonian constitutional law. The elections to

⁶⁷ Riigi Teataja 1940, 76, 743; Pravda, No. 203, of July 23, 1940. English translation in appendix A, II, No. 26.

⁶⁸ Riigi Teataja 1940, 77, 744; Pravda, No. 204, of July 24, 1940. An English translation is available in Endel Kareda, *Technique of Economic Sovietization (East and West, Facts From Behind the Iron Curtain, No. 3)*. London, Boreas Publishing Co., Ltd., 1947, pp. 19-20, and in Swettenham, op. cit., pp. 75-76. See also appendix A, II, No. 31.

⁶⁹ One hectare is equivalent to 2.44 acres.

⁷⁰ Riigi Teataja 1940, 77, 745; Pravda, No. 204, of July 24, 1940. An English translation is available in Kareda, op. cit., p. 21, and in Swettenham, op. cit., pp. 76-78. See also appendix A, II, No. 30.

⁷¹ Statement of Mrs. M. Melkup. Mrs. Melkup attended the session as a stenographer.

⁷² Pravda, No. 205, of July 25, 1940.

this body were without validity, as the New York Times commented editorially, "a travesty of democracy."⁷³

The Estonian Parliament, or National Assembly, consisted of two houses: the Chamber of Deputies and the State Council. All legislative power was exercised jointly by these two houses. To become effective every act had to be passed by both chambers and then confirmed by the President. The Chamber of Deputies alone and without concurrence from the State Council did not represent the legislature. This body could not pass resolutions binding on the Estonian people or their Government. Only through force, represented by the Soviet Army, could it impose its decisions upon the Estonian people.

The resolutions passed by this invalidly elected Parliament amounted in fact to constitutional amendments. These amendments, to become valid, were required to pass through specified procedures which were wholly bypassed, so that the flaw in the election of the Parliament was doubly compounded by its extraordinarily illegal enactments.⁷⁴

F. ESTONIAN DIPLOMATS ACT

With growing concern Estonian diplomatic representatives abroad had followed the rapid and catastrophic development of events in Estonia. The occupation of the country by the Red army had forewarned them to be on the alert. Thus the new Government appointed under Zhdanov's orders on June 21, 1940, was not recognized by them.⁷⁵ The elections on July 14 and 15 and the resolutions of the Communist Parliament on July 21-23 justified their judgment.

They considered the elections to have been conducted "under manifest foreign pressure"⁷⁶ and not "as a free expression of the will of the Estonian people."⁷⁷ Consequently, the members of the Chamber of Deputies elected in these elections could not be regarded "as lawful representatives of the population of Estonia * * *."⁷⁸ The elections in their eyes really were "a most cynical usurpation of the free will of the people."⁷⁹ On July 17, the acting Estonian consul general in charge of legation in New York, J. Kaiv, stated in his memorandum to the Secretary of State of the United States:

Consequently, the entering of armed forces of the U. S. S. R. into Estonia is to be regarded as an armed invasion in violation of the rules of International law and of existing Treaties.

The Acting Consul General has not been supplied with detailed information as to the nature of these elections. But in view of the shortness of time between the proclamation of elections and their date, it is self-evident that it is impossible for the Estonian people to organize into political parties or propose their candi-

⁷³ Editorial: "Democracy, Russian Style," in the New York Times, July 20, 1940, p. 14:2.

⁷⁴ Testimony of J. Kaiv, hearings, pp. 27-28.

⁷⁵ Johannes Kaiv, acting consul general of Estonia in charge of legation, United States of America, sent the following wire to Karl Selter, Estonian Minister to Switzerland: "No news from home. I do not recognize order imposed under duress. What is your position, Kaiv."

Mr. Selter's answer was brief:

"I do not recognize. Selter."

Archives of the consulate general of Estonia in New York, N. Y.

⁷⁶ Note of the Estonian Minister to Great Britain, August Torma, to the British Foreign Secretary on July 23, 1940. Archives of the consulate general of Estonia in New York, N. Y.

⁷⁷ Press bulletin of the Estonian Legation in London on July 23, 1940. Archives of the consulate general of Estonia in New York, N. Y.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ The memorandum by the acting consul general of Estonia to the Secretary of State of the United States on July 23, 1940. Archives of the consulate general of Estonia in New York, N. Y.

dates or to conduct election campaigns in the spirit set down in the Constitution. Secondly, it is self-evident that it is impossible to conduct elections if the country is occupied by the armed forces of another country.⁸⁰

In accordance with their doubts about the legality of the Zhdanov-directed elections, Estonian representatives abroad sensed further destructive moves by the Communist Government and refused flatly to accept the results of the elections or the acts passed by the new body. In the above-mentioned memorandum the Consul General in New York stated:

In view of the above the Acting Consul General, having been appointed by the former constitutional Government of Estonia, reserves the right not to recognize the results of these elections and the acts emanating therefrom.⁸¹

The moves anticipated by Kaiv were realized on July 21-23 and were confirmed in a telegram from the Minister of Foreign Affairs on July 22:

LEGATION (CONSULATE GENERAL OF ESTONIA),
New York (Room 1421, 9 Rockefeller Plaza).

887. The Chamber of Deputies has decided to request the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. to accept Estonia into the U. S. S. R. as a constituent Republic. Under consideration a proclamation to the effect that the land belongs to the people, that means preservation of small land holdings, state subsidies, granting of land to the landless and small landowners. Nationalization of large industries and banks under way.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.⁸²

On the basis of this information the Consul General now informed the United States Department of State that he regarded all these acts void and asked the United States Government to withhold recognition from the Estonian Soviet Republic. In his memorandum of July 23, 1940, Consul General Kaiv wrote:

* * * the fact of invasion persists, as persists the fact of occupation by armed forces.

In such a state it is impossible for the Estonian people to exercise its free will as regards the Government of the country, and it is evident at the same time that it has been made impossible for the Estonian institutions to function in accordance with the Constitution and Law for the benefit of the Estonian people.

Under pressure and threats by the aggressor's authorities the newly established puppet Government has had to act as dictated from Moscow.

As the latest information shows, no means were left to the Estonian people to express its will at these elections. * * *

On this occasion I would point out that according to the Estonian Constitution Estonia is an independent and sovereign Republic wherein the supreme power of the State is held by the people (art. 1). Consequently the union with any other country can be decided only in the way set for the amendment of the Constitution, as foreseen in Chapter XIV of the Constitution. That has not been the case.

Being appointed by the former constitutional Government as senior Representative in this country, I regard the above mentioned elections as null and void, as well as all acts passed by this unconstitutionally elected Chamber of Deputies, in particular the decision about the union with the U. S. S. R.⁸³

The Estonian Minister in London, A. Torma, also filed a protest with the British Foreign Office in which he said:

* * * The decision to surrender the independence of the country has, therefore, quite obviously been arrived at under duress and it cannot be considered to be a free and genuine expression of the will of the overwhelming majority of the Estonian people.

⁸⁰ Note by the Acting Consul General of Estonia in charge of legation to the Secretary of State on July 17, 1940. Archives of the Consulate General of Estonia in New York, N. Y. Full text in appendix A, II, No. 24.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Archives of the Consulate General of Estonia in New York, N. Y.

⁸³ *Ibid.* Full text in appendix A, II, No. 28.

Under these circumstances, I am unable to regard the decision mentioned above as valid, neither can I consider as binding any decision or act emanating from a Government which no longer represents the free Estonian nation but acts under foreign control and pressure.⁸⁴

The new puppet government was well aware that Estonian diplomats abroad would defy it. In order to replace them with persons of their own choosing, envoys to foreign governments were recalled. Except for ministers in Latvia and Lithuania, countries also occupied by and incorporated into the Soviet Union, all other diplomatic representatives ignored the orders of the Government to return home and remained at their posts. As far as the circumstances in individual countries allowed, they continued to represent the legitimate Estonian Government and refused to recognize the new regime set up by the Soviet Union or the subsequent incorporation of Estonia by the Soviet Union.

G. NONRECOGNITION DOCTRINE OF THE UNITED STATES

The illegal character of all governmental acts in Estonia, after the occupation of the country by Soviet military forces, was understood and officially noted by other governments, most explicitly by the Government of the United States. On July 23, 1940, the Under Secretary of State, Sumner Welles, made known to the world the position of the United States in regard to Soviet actions in the Baltic States. In a statement⁸⁵ he said that the independence and territorial integrity of the Baltic States were "deliberately annihilated" by "devious processes." He went on:

The policy of this Government is universally known. The people of the United States are opposed to predatory activities no matter whether they are carried on by the use of force or by threat of force. They are likewise opposed to any form of intervention on the part of one state, however powerful, in the domestic concerns of any other sovereign state, however weak.

The United States will continue to stand by these principles, because of the conviction of the American people that unless the doctrine in which these principles are inherent once again governs the relations between nations, the rule of reason, of justice, and of law—in other words, in the basis of modern civilization itself—cannot be preserved.

On the basis of these principles the United States continued to recognize the Acting Estonian Consul General in Charge of Legation in New York as the diplomatic representative of the Republic of Estonia and refused to recognize the forcible annexation of Estonia by the Soviet Union.

H. PRESIDENT PÄTS DEPORTED BY SOVIETS

The President of the Republic of Estonia, who had been under house arrest since the Communist government took over, was prevented from resigning at his own will. In the evening of July 21, 1940, after the "puppet" parliament had declared Estonia a Soviet state, Deputy Prime Minister Kruus approached President Päts and asked him to resign. The President signed an order accordingly declaring that Prime Minister Vares would be the acting President as his successor, as provided by the constitution.

⁸⁴ Note to the British Foreign Secretary on July 23, 1940. Archives of the Consulate General of Estonia in New York, N. Y. Full text in appendix A, II, No. 29.

⁸⁵ Statement on the Baltic Republics by the Acting Secretary of State, Welles, July 23, 1940, in Department of State Bulletin, vol. 3, July 27, 1940, p. 48; also the New York Times, July 24, 1940, p. 1: 7. In appendix A, I, No. 6.

This presidential order never was promulgated. It was printed in the Official Gazette (Riigi Teataja); but before it could be distributed, the order came to destroy this issue.⁸⁶ Zhdanov gave this order because he wanted the Parliament to dispose of the President, a proceeding which took place on July 23 when the Parliament "accepted" the President's resignation and appointed Vares to take his place temporarily.⁸⁷ Although Estonia had been declared a Soviet state, for some reason the Communists wanted to keep the Presidency under the Estonian Constitution.

President Päts was soon deported to the Soviet Union and has not been heard from since.

I. THE DREAM OF OUTER MONGOLIAN STATUS

During the period from June 21 to July 21, 1940, the Estonian Communists toyed with the idea that Estonia be given special status within the Soviet orbit, that is to say, something similar to the status of Outer Mongolia. Deputy Prime Minister Kruus had expressed himself to this effect already in the early days of July.⁸⁸ Thus, on the eve of the first session of the "puppet" parliament a draft resolution along these lines was drawn up which envisaged for Estonia an autonomous status with its own currency, consular representation, army, and local legislation. The idea was based on Zhdanov's words. He had told Vares on July 17 that Estonia would be given some kind of special treatment when it submitted its petition for incorporation into the Soviet Union.⁸⁹

Zhdanov forwarded this plan, conceived in the first instance on his own suggestion, to Moscow. But Moscow frowned on the idea and turned it down, apparently, preemptorily. Zhdanov now held his Estonian Communist advisers responsible for having embarrassed him with his high-level superiors in the Kremlin and released a furious blast at the Estonian Communist leaders, ordering them to forego all such nonsense in the future.⁹⁰ On July 21, the Latvian and Lithuanian "puppet" parliaments had accepted the resolutions for joining the Soviet Union. But the Outer Mongolian episode delayed the action of the Estonian Communist Parliament. However, the resolution for incorporation with the Soviet Union was passed in the form required by Zhdanov on July 22, 1940.

J. THE 16TH CONSTITUENT SOVIET REPUBLIC

The final destruction of Estonian national independence by the Soviet Union was staged on August 6, 1940, in Moscow. A group of 21 Estonian Communists, pretending to speak in the name of the Estonian people, asked the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union to admit Estonia into the Soviet Union as a constituent republic. And the Supreme Soviet, nominally the highest governmental authority in the Soviet Union, did not deny this plea. On the same day it passed a law which made Estonia the 16th Soviet Republic. Lithuania and Latvia had been admitted to the Soviet Union a few days earlier.

⁸⁶ Statement of J. Klesment.

⁸⁷ Riigi Teataja 1940, 77, 746.

⁸⁸ Statement of J. Kitzberg.

⁸⁹ Statement of J. Klesment. See also Raudma, op. cit.

⁹⁰ Statement of J. Klesment.

The law making Estonia the 16th Soviet Republic stated in part:⁸¹

After having heard the statement of the plenipotentiary delegation of the Chamber of Deputies of Estonia, the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics resolves:

1. To approve the petition of the Chamber of Deputies of Estonia and to incorporate the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a constituent Soviet Socialist Republic with equal rights.

The passage of this law in the Kremlin was preceded by a number of speeches by the Estonian Communist delegates who denounced vigorously the "sufferings" of the Estonian people under the "capitalist" regime. They reported the "yearning of the people," who had been "suppressed" for many years, to be united with the peoples of the Soviet Union. In the end the intention was to show that only the Soviet regime was able to bring happiness to the Estonian people.⁸²

In his opening report to the Supreme Soviet on August 1, 1940, Molotov said:

There is not the slightest doubt that the affiliation of these Republics with the Soviet Union will assure their rapid economic development and the flourish of their national culture in every way; their entry into the Soviet Union will, moreover, greatly enhance their strength and assure their security, and, at the same time, still further increase the might of the great Soviet Union.

The fact that the frontier of the Soviet Union will now be shifted to the Baltic coast is of first-rate importance for our country. At the same time we shall now have ice-free ports in the Baltic of which we stand so much in need.⁸³

Thus it was that the Estonian people, after enjoying two decades of national independence, lost sovereignty over their own land and their own destinies. Compelled at first to accept humiliating terms for existence from an aggressive power whose designs of aggrandizement have a universal scope, they were at last subjugated by this ruthless Soviet power and absorbed into its empire.

⁸¹ *Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR* (Official Gazette of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R.), 1940, No. 28 of August 22, 1940. English translation in appendix A, II, No. 33.

⁸² The speeches are printed in *Sed'mala sessiia Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR 1 avgusta-7 avgusta 1940 g. Stenograficheskii otchet*. (The 7th session of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. from August 1 to August 7, 1940. Stenographic report.) Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo "Politicheskaya Literatura," 1940, pp. 122-146.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28. English translation available in Molotov, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-77. See also appendix A, II, No. 32.

CHAPTER V

PART II—LATVIA

I. LATVIAN-SOVIET RELATIONS AFTER OCTOBER 5, 1939

After the conclusion of the mutual assistance pact with the U. S. S. R., conditions were created which prepared the way for the termination of Latvian independence and sovereignty. Nonetheless, Soviet Russia maintained the fiction in the meantime that indicated just the contrary was the case. A communique issued jointly by the Latvian and Soviet Governments when the mutual assistance pact was concluded stated that—

both parties are unanimously of the opinion that the mutual trust which has been established during the many years of the existence of relations between the two states has been an essential factor in the successful conclusion of the present treaty.

The communique emphasized the basic importance of the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of the signatory countries and the unequivocal recognition of the sovereign rights of each, to which the contracting parties pledged themselves as follows:

Having established as the basis for the pact of mutual assistance the immutable terms of the Treaty of Peace and the Treaty of Non-Aggression both parties again affirm their unequivocal recognition of the sovereign rights of each state and the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of each other. *Having convinced themselves on the basis of the experience of many years that the differences in state systems between the two countries do not constitute an obstacle to "fruitful cooperation" each party has declared that under the new circumstances created by the pact of mutual assistance it will always be guided by respect for the state, social, and economic structure of the other party thereby strengthening the bases for peaceful, good, neighbourly cooperation between their respective peoples.*¹ [Italics furnished.]

The Latvian Foreign Minister, Vilhelms Munters, described the communique as a kind of political supplement to the treaty, containing a clearer formulation of principles connected with mutual confidence and the possibility of cooperation despite the different character of the regimes in the two countries.²

The official Soviet newspapers Pravda and Izvestiia commented extensively on October 6, 1939, about the pact. Both stated editorially that the recent agreements were the best evidence of the Soviet peace policy in that they assured an enduring peace in the Baltic Basin. Both organs emphasized the provisions for mutual noninterference in internal affairs. Izvestiia cited this as proof "that the Soviet Government has never used its advantage as a great and powerful country against little countries."^{2a} And Pravda stated:

At the basis of the pacts of mutual assistance are irremovable principles of treaties of peace and nonaggression. The contracting parties affirm once more

¹ U. S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1933-39, The Soviet Union. Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1952. n. 959.

² See footnote 40, p. 959. *Ibid.*

^{2a} Izvestia, October 6, 1939.

their unshaken desire to recognize the sovereign rights of each State as well as their firm desire not to interfere with the inner affairs of another country.^{2b}

Latvian Foreign Minister Munters told the press on October 9, 1939, that the pact was "an expression of the desire of both parties to maintain peace and the *status quo* in the Baltic," and that it "consolidates peace and security."³

Rits, the semiofficial Latvian newspaper, made it clear on October 18 that Latvia intended to keep faith with the obligations imposed by the treaty. It stressed the existence of mutual confidence between Latvia and the Soviet Union, and referring especially to the stationing of Soviet troops on Latvian soil, stated:

Latvia and the U. S. S. R. have common interests—to secure themselves against war. For this purpose, the Soviet Union considers it necessary to defend our naval bases. *And if we desire, in the event of war, to receive effective aid, we must have confidence in the Soviet troops, who will be in our midst exclusively for the purposes provided for in the Mutual Assistance Pact.*⁴ [Italics furnished.]

However, despite these professions of good will, it was clear that the Latvian Government had signed the treaty under duress. While the Foreign Minister was in Moscow, 16 Soviet divisions were concentrated along the Latvian-Soviet frontier. They could have invaded Latvia if its Government had refused to accept the mutual assistance treaty.⁵

Public opinion was by and large shocked by the conclusion of the pact. It was expected that a complete occupation would follow in due course.⁶ However, upon more mature reflection, the Latvian people held a slight hope that the Soviet Government would keep its promise of noninterference in their internal affairs. A number of times Soviet leaders restated their intention to respect the domestic concerns of the Baltic States. On October 31, 1939, Foreign Commissar Molotov made a statement along this line at the fifth session of the All-Union Supreme Soviet where he said:

The pacts with the Baltic States in no way imply the intrusion of the Soviet Union in the internal affairs of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, as some foreign interests are trying to make believe. * * * These pacts are inspired by mutual respect for the political, social, and economic structure of the contracting parties, and are designed to strengthen the basis for peaceful neighborly cooperation between our peoples. *We stand for scrupulous and punctilious observance of pacts on a basis of complete reciprocity, and we declare that all nonsense about sovietizing the Baltic countries is only to the interest of our common enemies and of all anti-Soviet provocateurs.*⁷ [Italics furnished.]

On March 29, 1940, Molotov gave these assurances in his speech before the sixth session of the All-Union Supreme Soviet:

"On the basis of a half year's experience, one can draw a completely definite, positive deduction about the treaties with the Baltic States," that these treaties " * * * contributed to the strengthening of the international position of the U. S. S. R., as well as of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania * * *," that " * * * contrary to the fears of imperialistic circles inimical to the U. S. S. R. the political independence and independent policy of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania has

^{2b} Pravda, October 6, 1939.

³ Coates, W. F. and Zeldi K., Russia, Finland, and the Baltic, London, Lawrence & Wishart, Ltd., 1940, p. 70.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

⁵ Bilmanis, Dr. Alfred. Baltic States in Postwar Europe, Latvian Legation, Washington, 1943, p. 50.

⁶ Spekke, Arnold. History of Latvia, Stockholm, 1951, p. 383.

⁷ For English text see Bilmanis, Dr. Alfred. Latvian-Russian Relations. Washington, Latvian Legation, 1944, p. 200. Pravda, No. 303, November 1, 1939.

not suffered * * * " and "that on the basis of these treaties one can expect the further amelioration of relations between the U. S. S. R. and the Baltic Republics."⁸

On October 13, 1939, a Soviet military delegation arrived at Riga headed by Admiral Isakov, Deputy People's Commissar for the Navy, and General Boldin, Chief of the Kalinin Military District.⁹ At an official dinner given by the Latvian Minister of Defense in honor of the Soviet delegation, Admiral Isakov, answering the speech of the Defense Minister emphasized that the pact of mutual assistance was based upon a mutual policy of noninterference in the political, economic, and social structure of both countries. He further declared that fears of any interference were groundless, as the U. S. S. R. had for 20 years given a practical demonstration of its meticulous observance of agreements.¹⁰ On October 23 an agreement was signed at Riga by a mixed military commission of Latvian and Soviet officers for the implementation of the pact, particularly as to the establishment of Soviet airbases and on the provisions of facilities for Red army ground forces.

In November the Soviet contingents agreed upon in the treaty entered Latvia, by land and sea, and occupied the new Soviet bases. Precautions were taken to prevent incidents between Soviet forces and the local population. Thirty thousand troops were stationed in the Liepaja and Ventspils districts, and others at Priekule, Auce, Vainode and Ezere, which were all located close to the Latvian frontier with Lithuania.¹¹ Among the troops were the Kirghiz and other Mongol peoples, who were "good soldiers and interested in nothing but soldiering and hence less susceptible to foreign surroundings."¹² During the early period, the Red army behaved well, obviously under orders from Moscow. Local Communists were directed by the Soviet Legation in Riga to avoid provocations.¹³

Disputes that arose were settled locally by supplementary agreements. For example, it was decided that Latvia would supply the Red army units garrisoned in the country with food, and that in return the Soviet Union would make payment mainly in gasoline, of which there was a shortage because of the Allied naval blockade.¹⁴

However, as time went on, Soviet pressures began to increase. The Soviet Legation distributed many propaganda films, and protested whenever the Latvian Government tried to regulate this distribution. A series of sporadic strikes was begun at Riga and Liepaja, probably looking to their broadening into a general strike. These were, however, unsuccessful in disrupting the economic and political life, as Latvian workers withheld their support.

Seeing that this scheme had failed, the Soviet Legation issued a statement, condemning "the activities of certain irresponsible wreckers of good neighborly relations' with every outward sign of sincerity."¹⁵

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 200. For original text, see Pravda No. 89, March 30, 1940.

⁹ Foreign Relations of the United States, 1933-49, The Soviet Union, p. 969, item 263.

¹⁰ The Bulletin of International Events, vol. XVI, No. 22, Nov. 4, 1939, as quoted by Sprudz. The Annexation of Latvia. Louvain, 1953, p. 35 (typewritten dissertation).

¹¹ Foreign Relations of the United States, The Soviet Union, p. 975, item 280, and p. 978, item 292.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 978, item 300.

¹³ Berzinsb, Alfred, I Saw Vishinsky Bolshevize Latvia, Washington, D. C. The Latvian Legation, 1948, p. 13.

¹⁴ Berzinsb, op. cit., p. 13.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-15.

II. EMERGENCY POWERS CONFERRED UPON ENVOY KARLIS ZARINS (MAY 17, 1940)

Despite Molotov's professions on March 29, 1940, at the sixth session of the All-Union Supreme Soviet that the Baltic States did not need to fear for their independence, the Soviet press published in April and May bitter attacks against the Lithuanian and Estonian Governments. In these attacks the Soviets charged them with non-observance of the pacts and with permitting the distribution of anti-Soviet propaganda. For tactical reasons Latvia was spared from these charges.¹⁶

However, especially after the Finnish surrender on March 12, 1940, the Latvian Government had no illusions about the future development of Soviet policy. On May 17, 1940, a secret decision was reached by the Latvian Government in order to provide for the political and constitutional continuity of the country. In event of emergency, the powers of the state authority abroad were to be conferred on Karlis Zarins, Latvian Minister, in London. Alfred Bilmanis, Latvian Minister to Washington, was designated as his substitute.¹⁷

The recognition of these special emergency powers by the United States Government, as well as by Spain and other countries, made it possible for Latvia to continue to be represented internationally by diplomatic and consular agents. By virtue of these emergency powers Minister Zarins has the right to appoint, to remove, and to transfer such representatives. He also has full authority to handle all Latvian state funds, as well as movable and immovable property at the disposal of Latvian diplomatic and consular missions; to give the missions binding orders; and to defend the interests of Latvia.

In conformance with these emergency powers, Minister Zarins appointed Jules Feldmans, former Latvian Minister to Switzerland, Chargé d'Affaires in the United States, to succeed the deceased Dr. Bilmanis. This appointment was accepted by the United States on June 28, 1949. After the death of Feldmans, Minister Zarins appointed Prof Arnolds Spekke, former Latvian Minister to Italy, Bulgaria, Greece, and Albania, as his successor. On March 5, 1954, Mr. Spekke was accepted by the United States Government as Latvian Chargé d'Affaires. Similarly, acting consuls were named in Canada and Australia. These were accepted by the respective government.¹⁸ Negotiations with the Spanish Government resulted in the appointment by Minister Zarins on February 20, 1953, of R. Kampus, counselor of the Latvian Legation in London, as diplomatic representative in charge of the protection of Latvian interests in Spain.¹⁹

Thus, an official representative of the last legitimate Government of the Republic of Latvia still exists in the free world, as well as a number of diplomatic and consular representatives, who all recognize the state emergency powers which had been conferred upon Minister Zarins.

¹⁶ Bilmanis, Dr. Alfred. *A History of Latvia*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1951, p. 393. Also Sprudz, op. cit., p. 37.

¹⁷ For full text of authorization see Bilmanis, *Latvian-Soviet Relations*, op. cit., pp. 201-202, reproduced in appendix P, 433, No. 13.

¹⁸ Sprudz, op. cit., pp. 59, 61-62.

¹⁹ Archives of the Latvian Legation in London, quoted by Sprudz, *ibid.*, p. 63.

III. SOVIET ULTIMATUM TO LATVIA

On the same day that the Soviet Army occupied Lithuania (June 15, 1940), Red units assaulted a frontier-guard cordon near Ritupe on the eastern border of Latvia. Two Latvian soldiers, a woman, and a child were killed; looting and burning of the barracks were carried out; and persons living on nearby farms were kidnaped.²⁰ At the request of the Latvian Government, the Soviet Union agreed to an official investigation of the incident, a promise that was never carried out. The presumption was that the incident had been staged to provide reason to accuse Latvia of violations of the Soviet frontier.

On June 16, hundreds of tanks, with strong artillery and mechanized infantry support, began assembling on Soviet territory, just beyond the frontier with Latvia. When the stage had thus been set, Molotov summoned the Latvian Minister to Moscow on June 16 and handed him at 2 p. m. an ultimatum that required an answer by 8 p. m. It was stated that if a reply were not received by that hour Soviet troops would march into Latvia and put down all resistance.

The ultimatum declared:

On the basis of the material facts at the disposal of the Soviet Government and also of the exchange of views which recently took place in Moscow between President Molotov of the Soviet of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union and Prime Minister Merkis of Lithuania, the Soviet Government considers it assured that not only has the Latvian Government failed to liquidate the military alliance with Estonia which was created before the conclusion of the Latvian-Soviet mutual assistance pact and was aimed against the Soviet Union, but has even extended this alliance by enticing into it Lithuania and is attempting to include in it also Finland. Until the conclusion of the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance in the Fall of 1939 the Soviet Government could view casually the existence of such a military alliance, although as a matter of fact it was contrary to the pact of nonaggression previously signed between the Soviet Union and Latvia. But, after the conclusion of the pact of mutual assistance the Soviet Government considers the existence of the military alliance between Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania and aimed against the Soviet Union not only unpermissible and unbearable, but also seriously dangerous and menacing to the security of the frontiers of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Government reckoned upon the withdrawal of Latvia from the military alliance with the other Baltic States after the conclusion of the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance and that in this manner the military alliance would be abolished. Instead Latvia together with other Baltic States has acted to revive and expand the above-mentioned military alliance, to which testify such facts as the convention of two secret conferences of the three Baltic States in December 1939, and March 1940, in order to develop formally the expanded military alliance with Estonia and Lithuania, the enhancement of relations between the general staffs of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania secretly from the Soviet Union, the creation in February 1940 of a special press organ of the military Baltic entente—the "Retue Ballique," which is published in Tallinn in English, French, and German, etc.

All these facts go to show that the Latvian Government has grossly violated the Latvian-Soviet Mutual Assistance Pact, which forbids both parties "to conclude any unions whatsoever or to participate in coalitions, which would be directed against one of the contracting parties." (Article 4 of the treaty.) This gross violation of the Latvian-Soviet mutual assistance pact on the part of the Latvian Government takes place at a time when the Soviet Union has conducted and continues to conduct a supremely favorable and definitely pro-Latvian policy, scrupulously observing all the requirements of the Latvian-Soviet mutual assistance pact. The Soviet Government finds that it can no longer suffer such a state of affairs.

The Soviet Government considers the following completely indispensable, and not to be postponed:

²⁰ Berzinsh, op. cit., p. 16.

1. *the establishment in Latvia immediately of a government capable of and ready to ensure the honest execution of the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance;*

2. *to ensure without delay the free entry of Soviet troops into Latvian territory, in order to place them in the most important centers of Latvia in such numbers as to secure the possibility of realizing the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance and to avoid possible provocative acts against Soviet garrisons in Latvia.*

The Soviet Government considers compliance with this demand to be the elementary stipulation without which it is impossible to achieve the honest and loyal execution of the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance.²¹ [Italics furnished.]

An identic ultimatum was handed to the Estonian Minister in Moscow about half an hour later.

The Soviet Government made the following 5 principal charges against Latvia: (1) conclusion of a secret military alliance with Estonia and Lithuania; (2) failure to denounce the military alliance treaty of November 1, 1923, with Estonia; (3) participation in 1939 and 1940 in 2 secret conferences of the foreign ministers of the Baltic States; (4) improvement of relations between their general staffs; and (5) establishment of a special press organ of the military Baltic Entente, *La Revue Baltique*.

(1) *Secret military alliance between the Baltic countries.*—This charge was untrue. There was no alliance, secret or otherwise. The Soviet Union, when it obtained access to the secret archives of the Baltic States after their complete occupation, was unable to prove the allegation. The Soviet Union must have known that it was false because it had available to it, in addition to its own intelligences, all information known to the German authorities. And a teletype memo sent by Von Grundherr of the political division in charge of the Baltic Affairs in the German Foreign Office to the German Foreign Minister on June 17, 1940, said:²²

The assertion, now made by Russia, that Lithuania had joined the Estonian-Latvian military pact, is, according to information available here, without any foundation. Because of the very similar economic structure of these countries, the economic cooperation between the three States, in spite of much effort during the last few years, made no appreciable progress. Since the conclusion of the Soviet Mutual Assistance Pacts with the Baltic countries in September-October 1939 there has been no closer cooperation in an anti-Russian sense among the Baltic States. In view of the occupation of their countries by Soviet Russian troops, the three Baltic Governments were aware of the danger of such a policy. [Italics furnished.]

(2) *Failure to denounce military alliance treaty with Estonia.*—This treaty of defensive alliance between Estonia and Latvia was published and registered with the League of Nations²³ and so was universally known. The Soviet Union did not protest when it was ratified on February 21, 1924, or later. It did not demand the abrogation of the treaty when the Latvian-Soviet Pact of Mutual Assistance was signed.

(3) *Participation in secret conferences of the Foreign Ministers of the Baltic States.*—The conferences held by the Baltic Foreign Ministers in December 1939 and March 1940 were part of a series of routine

²¹ Russian official text: *Izvestia*, No. 138 (7210), June 17, reprinted in the official edition (*Vneshniala Politika S. S. S. R. Sbornik Dokumentov*, Tom IV (1935)—Iюн 1941 g.), Moskva—1946 (Foreign Policy of the U. S. S. R., Collection of Documents, vol. IV (1935—June 1941, Moscow—1946) p. 512-513. English translation in Bilmanis, *Latvian-Russian Relations*, op. cit., 202-203.

²² U. S. Department of State, *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-41*, Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1948, p. 152.

²³ League of Nations Treaties Series, vol. XXIII, p. 82.

conferences among the Foreign Ministers. They were not secret. A German source ²⁴ said of Baltic cooperation :

The cooperation between the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania is based on the Treaty of Mutual Understanding and Cooperation concluded for ten years by these three States on September 12, 1934. In addition, Latvia and Estonia signed a mutual defense pact on November 1, 1923. *In practice, the political cooperation consisted mainly of semiannual conferences of Foreign Ministers and joint press conferences; on the other hand, there has often been an abundance of discord and rivalry within the Baltic Entente * * *. [Italics furnished.]*

La Revue Baltique published communiqués and statements relating to the two conferences. On page 140 of the February 1940 issue, No. 1, of the Revue was a "Press Communiqué of the 10th Conference of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania," dated December 8, 1939. The communiqué expressed the firm decision of the Foreign Ministers to continue in the future "in a spirit of trust and collaboration" their former policy of strict neutrality that has enabled them to avoid the hostilities of war; to coordinate the activities of the three countries with respect to problems resulting from the economic war; and to convoke the 11th Conference of the Foreign Ministers at Riga in March, 1940.

Similar publicity was given to the 11th, and last Foreign Ministers Conference, which was held March 14-16. The Latvian Official Gazette, Valdibas Vestnesis (March 14, 1940, No. 61, p. 2, cols. 3-4), announced the opening and agenda of the conference. The same gazette (No. 64, March 18, 1940, p. 1, cols. 3-4) published the official communiqué of the conference, dated March 16, 1940. It was also published in the original French in La Revue Baltique (June 1940, No. 2, pp. 280-281), together with a short account of the activities of the conference. The communiqué restated a policy of strict neutrality, called for collaboration in the economic and cultural fields, hailed the re-establishment of pacific relations between the Soviet Union and Finland (the treaty of peace between the two countries had been signed on March 12), and scheduled the 12th conference of Foreign Ministers at Kaunas in September 1940. The conference also adopted a special resolution calling for the establishment of special national agencies to increase collaboration in mutual trading.

These were the "secret" conferences of the Foreign Ministers of the Baltic States.

(4) *Improvement of relations between general staffs of the Baltic States.*—This allegation has never been substantiated even though the Soviet Union obtained possession of the Latvian archives. It has been pointed out that "it is more than obvious that after the erection of Soviet bases in the Baltic States such collaboration was considered to be too dangerous."²⁵ It would, therefore, appear that "enhancement of relations between the general staffs" of the Baltic States existed only in the minds of the authors of the ultimatum.

(5) *Establishment of La Revue Baltique.*—This periodical, the first and second numbers of which appeared in February and June 1940, respectively, was in reality a trilingual publication of the Societies of Friendship of the Baltic Peoples. It was dedicated exclusively to economic, social, and cultural affairs.²⁶ Indeed, it has been

²⁴ The German Foreign Office to the Reich Foreign Minister, June 17, 1940, Nazi-Soviet Relations. P. 152.

²⁵ Sprudzis. Op. cit., p. 44.

²⁶ Bilmanis. A History of Latvia. Op. cit., p. 395.

said that the "wildest imagination is needed to find anything anti-Soviet" in this publication.²⁷

The foreword to the February 1940 issue presented the aims of the publication, as follows:

The Revue Baltique has a twofold object: (1) to be a connecting link between the Baltic peoples, to express their public opinion on their fundamental problems as well as on current affairs, thus helping to form a general and homogenous Baltic public opinion; and (2) to put foreign circles interested in the Baltic States into direct touch with the creation of Baltic public opinion offering them an opportunity to study Baltic problems from direct sources * * *.

The necessity of mutual understanding must never be forgotten. Misunderstanding is often the cause of conflicts. Neutral countries in particular must endeavor to avoid this. Through the possibility of exchanging opinions, ideas of the future peace begin to germinate in time of war * * *.

To a limited extent Baltic conditions do influence the shaping of general world order. It should therefore be generally useful that these conditions be not altogether unknown.

The Revue Baltique has no official character. The Estonian-Latvian-Lithuanian Cooperation Bureau is a social institute. It embraces all who support the Rapprochement of the Baltic States. In it members of Government labor side by side with social workers in many walks of life. The new journal will carry the expression of social cooperation. This will explain why side by side there will be expressions by official people and the thoughts of amateurs. The journal does not intend to become a propaganda organ, or to follow a fixed line of thought; but it must become the focal point of many views, and enable its readers to participate in the shaping of a common public opinion * * *.

The attitude of contributors to La Revue Baltique was on the whole friendly to the Soviet Union. Two Latvian contributions, among many others, illustrate this attitude.

In the first issue (p. 147), there was a friendly and optimistic evaluation of the Pact of Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union. Munters, the Latvian Foreign Minister, was quoted as having said that "the pact has been concluded in a spirit of mutual confidence and cooperation, in spite of the differences in regimes which exists in the two countries and without encroaching on the sovereignty of the contracting parties."

An article by Munters, entitled "The Development of Latvian Foreign Relations" in the June 1940 issue,²⁸ contained the following evaluation of the Mutual Assistance Pact:

Judging the pact in the light of the past eight months' experience we can say that, in spite of various prophecies published in the foreign press and conjectures as to its meaning and ultimate fate it has, on behalf of both partners, been carried out loyally and in a spirit of friendship and good faith. This has repeatedly been admitted with satisfaction by responsible statesmen in both countries. The pact has been indeed proved as a factor of security on the shores of the Baltic, which both countries meant it to become at the moment of signing it.

During the past eight months many practical questions connected with the execution of the pact have been settled. All assertions that Latvia would be sovietized and lapse into the position of a Protectorate that has lost its liberty are completely without foundation. *We can describe our relations with the Soviet Union as very satisfactory both from the political and economic points of view.* [Italics furnished.]

It seems fair to say that because the instances given by the Soviet Union as violations of the Mutual Assistance Pact were not in accord with the facts, the Soviet Union was not justified in presenting an ultimatum to the Latvian Government. Furthermore, the Soviet demands for the establishment of a Latvian Government acceptable to them and of the immediate entry of Soviet troops in the country in

²⁷ Spekke. Op. cit., p. 385.

²⁸ Pages 171-175 contain the above.

numbers acceptable to the Soviet Government, were unlawful interferences in the domestic affairs of Latvia. They were illegal not only in general international law, but also specifically under the treaty obligations assumed by the Soviet Union in agreement with the Latvian Republic. As Jules Feldmans wrote:

The Soviet Union violated the following agreements that it voluntarily signed with Latvia: the Peace Treaty of August 11, 1920; the Treaty of Non-Aggression, signed February 5, 1932, and subsequently extended to December 31, 1945; the Convention Relating to Conciliation Procedure of June 18, 1932; the Convention for the Definition of Aggression, signed on July 3, 1933, and the Pact of Mutual Assistance, signed October 5, 1939.²⁹

Under general international public law, the Soviet action was an intervention without right. As defined by Lauterpacht such an intervention is "a dictatorial interference by a State in the affairs of another State for the purpose of altering the actual condition of things."³⁰ Such a violation of the international personality of the sovereign state of Latvia was forbidden by international law. It was also a flagrant breach of the treaty obligations assumed by the Soviet Union toward Latvia in that both countries had pledged themselves to abstain from interference in the domestic affairs of each other; to avoid all aggressive acts and violations of borders, political sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and to arbitrate all disputes that might arise and were not solved through diplomatic channels. It was also a violation of the Pact of Paris signed on August 27, 1928.³¹

IV. THE CRUCIAL DECISION: THE LATVIAN GOVERNMENT ACCEPTS THE ULTIMATUM

The Latvian Government met in extraordinary session to consider the Soviet ultimatum. Some of the ministers "urged that the Govern-

²⁹ Memorandum presented to the President of the Seventh United Nations Assembly on November 28, 1952, by Jules Feldmans, Latvian Minister to Washington. Latvian Information Bulletin, Latvian Legation, Washington, D. C., No. 1, January 1953: 2-3.

³⁰ Oppenheim, L. and H. Lauterpacht. *International Law*, London, 1937. 5th edition, vol. II, par. 134, p. 249.

³¹ An ultimatum, such as was delivered by the Soviet Union to Latvia on June 16, 1940, is illegal as between two states bound by the provisions of the Pact of Paris (Kellogg-Briand Pact). "Whether the pact prohibits both war and measures of force short of war, or only the former, it probably prohibits the threat of such action itself. This means that under the regime established by the pact an ultimatum (see below par. 95) is normally unlawful, as it amounts to an anticipatory breach of the pact." Oppenheim-Lauterpacht, *International Law*, London, 1952 (7th edition), vol. II, footnote 7, p. 186.

A number of Latvian scholars have given a scholarly evaluation of the events preceding and following the Soviet ultimatum of June 16, 1940, with special emphasis of the devious processes which led to the annexation of Latvia by the Soviet Union.

Here are some of the most important ones:

Chakste, Mintauts. Latvia and the Soviet Union. Washington, D. C., Latvian Legation, 1947 (mimeographed), reprinted in *Journal of Central European Affairs*, v. IX (1949), April and July issues.

A scholarly treatise, partly based on first-hand information and experiences of the author, an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Latvia, who witnessed himself the events he describes and evaluates.

Dinbergs, Anatol. The Incorporation of Latvia into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1940-1941. Thesis. Georgetown University. Washington, D. C., 1952. 425 pages (typewritten).

A scholarly treatise with many references to original source material collected for the first time in such completeness, the most extensive study heretofore published on this subject.

Masens, Vills. Die internationale Rechtslage Lettlands. Dissertation. Heidelberg, 1947. 148 pages.

(Typewritten copy available in the Library of Congress collection.) The emphasis in this work lies on the international status of Latvia as affected by the occupation of Latvia by the Red Army, with a special emphasis of the events leading to Latvia's incorporation into the Soviet Union.

Vitols, Hugo. L'Annexion de la Lettonie par l'Union Soviétique et le Droit. in the *Baltic Review* (Stockholm), vol. I, No. 4, pp. 193-203.

The mimeographed paper of the same author "The annexation of Latvia by the Soviet Union: its aspects under international law," 10 p., no date and place, is available in the Library of Congress collection.

ment should openly voice a protest, stating that the demands were a breach of the Mutual Assistance Pact on the part of the Soviet Union and that the ultimatum was to be accepted only because Latvia was threatened by overwhelming force.”³² However, the Minister of Foreign Affairs took the position that the ultimatum “must not only be accepted, but must be accepted unanimously by the Ministers of the Cabinet: otherwise the U. S. S. R. would open hostilities and bomb all Latvian cities.”³³ It was decided to reply to the Soviet Union in a conciliatory manner.³⁴ The reply said that the Latvian Government gave “its consent to the Soviet demand for the admission of Soviet military forces upon Latvian territory in the same spirit of mutual trust in which it had hitherto fulfilled the stipulations of the treaty of mutual assistance.”³⁵ The Latvian Government did not think that by agreeing to an unlimited occupation of Latvian territory by Soviet troops it renounced in fact the sovereignty guaranteed by the Mutual Assistance Pact. Alfreds Berzinsh, the only present surviving member of the last Latvian Cabinet, said of this situation:

* * * under the prevailing circumstances it was impossible for the Latvian Government to avoid the entry of the Red army on Latvian soil. In view of the complete isolation and the lack of military power to resist, the answer at that moment could only be an assent. But this assent was linked, at the same time, from a legal point of view, through the expression of faith therein, to the treaty of mutual assistance, which in turn guaranteed the sovereignty and independence of the Latvian Republic.³⁶

In view of the international and domestic position in which the Latvian Government found itself on June 17, 1940, it is doubtful if the free world could possibly hold it responsible for bowing to the Soviet ultimatum. And, certainly under the circumstances, the Soviet Union did not get a good title to Latvia. Latvian writers have well described conditions prevailing at that time.

Bilmanis³⁷ has written:

The condition of the Baltic States in the summer of 1940 was a most difficult one. They were cut off from all communication with the rest of the world. To the West was belligerent Germany which was hostile to them and had already come to an agreement with Soviet Russia. To the North, beyond the Gulf of Finland, was Finland, ruined by the recent war and nursing her wounds. Poland, the great neighbor to the South, was destroyed and divided between two merciless conquerors. Even great France lay defeated, derided, and broken under the wheels of the battlewagons of Germany. Great Britain watched with anxious eyes the skies of France, and with unflinching courage prepared herself for a struggle to the death against Hitler. It seemed indeed that the fate of the world was in the scales. Who was there under these conditions to take an effective interest in the fate of the Baltic States? In all the turmoils and catastrophes of Europe their fate seemed unimportant, a side issue.

Berzinsh, the last Minister of Public Affairs in free Latvia, has described the last meeting of the Cabinet as an independent government, saying, in part:

The question of resisting was considered first * * *. The Soviet High Command, having occupied Lithuania first, surely figured that strategically the Latvian army was in the worst possible position * * *. Even so, several of the Cabinet members were tempted to advocate a heroic act of national suicide rather than yield to the brutal Soviet ultimatum. Commonsense and the sense

³² Spekke. Op. cit., p. 385.

³³ Latvia in 1939-42. Background, Bolshevik and Nazi Occupation, Hopes for Future. Press Bureau of the Latvian Legation, Washington, D. C. 1942, p. 42.

³⁴ Spekke. Op. cit., p. 385.

³⁵ Berzinsh. Op. cit., p. 22.

³⁶ Ibid, p. 22.

³⁷ Latvia in 1939-42. Op. cit., p. 22.

of deep responsibility, however, prevailed. And it remained as a bare possibility that thereby the tragic fate of the doomed Latvian nation might be eased somewhat * * *.

It remains for Latvian posterity, for the world, and for history to pass final judgment on that fateful decision of the Latvian Cabinet of 1940.

Had it then decided in favor of resistance, every Latvian male between the ages of 18 and 45 would have had to be mobilized, in order to assemble an army of 200,000 men. That army would have had to be armed and disposed for combat within days. This was manifestly impossible. There was neither the modern equipment nor yet the necessary time available. *Had war broken out under these circumstances, it was quite certain that, attacked with the full might of Russia's airpower and mechanized hordes, such an army would have succumbed in a matter of days. Its survivors would have gone to swell the ranks of Soviet labor camps. It would have meant the sacrifice, the senseless sacrifice, of two hundred thousand Latvian families.* Such a magnificent gesture would assuredly remain in the annals as a matchless legend. Only there would have been no Latvian people left to pay tribute to the memory of such glorious forbears.³⁸ [Italics furnished.]

V. END OF LATVIAN INDEPENDENCE; THE SOVIET ARMY OCCUPIES LATVIA

The ensuing total occupation of Latvian territory by the Red army put an end to the independence of that country. Two hundred thousand Soviet troops, reinforced by tanks and a strong air force, represented the might of the Communist aggressors. The first Red tank columns appeared at Riga at 3:30 p. m. on June 17, 1940. The Soviet Army invaded the country from two sides, crossing the Latvian frontier to the east toward Daugavpils, and from the south, coming from Lithuania. The telephone and telegraph building at Riga, in which the post office and radio station were located, was seized. Thus, Latvia was deprived of all communication with the outside world. For several days earlier Soviet vessels had prevented Latvian ships from leaving the harbor of Riga.³⁹

Latvian Army officers, who had met the Red army at the frontier⁴⁰ to arrange for its entry, were bluntly told by Soviet officers that they needed no assistance. Their orders were to proceed at once and to occupy all centers of communication in Riga. The Minister of Public Affairs protested over the telephone to Soviet Minister Derevianski against arbitrary interference with Latvian broadcasts. He was told that there must be a misunderstanding and that an investigation would be started. However, an hour later Derevianski called back to say that:

The Red Army would henceforth supervise the radio station "in the interests of all concerned," but that "permission" had been given to proceed with the musical part of the program. For spoken items, however, such as lectures and news-casts, it would be necessary to apply for previous consent from the supreme commander of the Soviet occupation forces. When asked whether, in his opinion, such action was compatible with the stipulations of the Latvian-Soviet treaty—more specifically those concerning noninterference on the domestic affairs of the contracting parties—Mr. Derevianski gave an evasive reply. The army, he said, had a different approach in such matters; but he promised to settle things amicably to the best of his ability.⁴¹

The attitude of the German Reich toward the Soviet action in the Baltic States was one of unqualified acquiescence. The official German point of view was reflected in a telegram sent by the State Secre-

³⁸ Berzinsh. Op. cit., p. 18.

³⁹ *Ibid.* p. 23.

⁴⁰ Valdibas Vestnesis, No. 134, June 17, 1940, p. 5.

⁴¹ Berzinsh. Op. cit., p. 23.

tary in the Foreign Office on June 17 to all German missions. It stated:⁴²

The unresisted reinforcement of Russian troops in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia and the reorganization of the Governments of the Baltic States, sought by the Russian Government to bring about more reliable cooperation with the Soviet Union, are the concern of Russia and the Baltic States. Therefore in view of our unaltered friendly relations with the Soviet Union, there is no reason for nervousness on our part, which some of the foreign press has tried to impute to us in only too transparent a manner.

Please refrain from making any statements during conversations which could be interpreted as partisan. [Italics furnished.]

Molotov informed Count Schulenburg, the German Ambassador in Moscow, on the same day (June 17) of the Soviet action taken against the Baltic States. The Soviet leader explained that "it had become necessary to put an end to all the intrigues by which England and France had tried to sow discord and mistrust between Germany and the Soviet Union in the Baltic States."⁴³

He also told the count that special emissaries had been sent to the Baltic States to negotiate the formation of new governments.⁴⁴ Andrei Vishinsky, Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and Deputy Foreign Commissar of the U. S. S. R.,⁴⁵ was designated special emissary to Latvia.

VI. VISHINSKY APPOINTS THE LATVIAN GOVERNMENT

Andrei Vishinsky arrived in Riga on June 18, 1940. He called on President Ulmanis at 10:30 p. m., and declared that he was a special envoy of the Soviet Government, "entrusted with the execution of the stipulations resulting from the Soviet ultimatum."⁴⁶

On the next day, Foreign Minister Munters tried to meet with Vishinsky, but was informed that he "was sick from making the long trip and he could not leave the Soviet Embassy."⁴⁷

Berzinsh has minutely described activities in the Soviet Legation on that day.⁴⁸ Vishinsky and Vietrov, the first secretary of the legation, he wrote, were drawing up the list of the new Cabinet that the Soviet Union planned to impose on Latvia. Actually Vietrov was a leading NKVD official, stationed in Latvia to organize and operate the Communist underground, using the Embassy as an espionage center.⁴⁹ Later that day the new Cabinet members of the "People's" Government were summoned to the Soviet Embassy.⁵⁰

On the next day, June 20, Vishinsky again visited President Ulmanis at the castle of Riga. The Soviet representative presented to Ulmanis the list of ministers. Ulmanis asked "whether he could make some corrections or suggest other names." Vishinsky replied that his Gov-

⁴² Nazi-Soviet Relations, pp. 153-154.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

⁴⁴ Telegram No. 1167 of June 17, 1940, sent by Schulenburg to the German Foreign Office.

⁴⁵ Bol'shaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopedia, 2d ed., vol. 9, 1951, p. 540 under "Vishinsky."

⁴⁶ Berzinsh. *Op. cit.*, p. 25.

⁴⁷ Hearings before the Select Committee To Investigate the Incorporation of the Baltic States Into the U. S. S. R. of the House of Representatives 83d Cong., 1st sess., pt. I. Washington, Government Printing Office, 1954, p. 61 (hereafter quoted as "Hearings.")

⁴⁸ Berzinsh. *Op. cit.*, p. 25.

⁴⁹ Hearings, pp. 61-62.

⁵⁰ Hearings, p. 62.

ernment had "approved all the names of the ministers for the new Cabinet, and he did not believe that Moscow would make any changes; that Ulmanis could not reject any of them."⁵¹

The new Cabinet listed Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs ad interim: Prof. Dr. Augusts Kirchensteins; Minister of War: Gen. Roberts Dambitis; Minister of Interior: Vilis Lacis; Minister of Public Affairs: Peteris Blaus; Minister of Education: Julijs Lacis; Minister of Justice: Juris Paberzs; Minister of Communications: Janis Jagars; and Deputy Minister of Interior: Vikentijs Latkovskis.

Only Vilis Lacis and Latkovskis were Communists; the others might be termed "fellow travelers." About this Cabinet Berzinsh wrote:

The proposed Prime Minister, August Kirchensteins, a professor of bacteriology, was the vice president of the Latvian Soviet Russian Cultural Rapprochement Society. The rest were persons of middle of the road political views * * *. Vishinsky could not have chosen more perfect stooges to betray their own nation than these men. The majority of the Kirchensteins cabinet consisted of small-time newspapermen, writers, and poets, who had one thing in common: their weakness for alcohol. They had all in the past been assiduous visitors of the Soviet Legation, where a certain Vietrov, one of the secretaries, had been cultivating and grooming them over a period of more than 2 years. This Vietrov, an agent of the NKVD, had now become Vishinsky's principal adviser on Latvian affairs * * *.

With its customary duplicity, the Kremlin preferred to avoid censure by the world at large for its actions in Latvia. It was in every way preferable to utilize such front men, for only thus could the illusion be created that the Latvian people themselves had freely chosen to exchange liberty and prosperity for citizenship in the slave state of the Soviet Union. All that was to come later.⁵²

No appointments were made to fill the posts of Ministers of Agriculture and finance; nor was a Comptroller General selected.

The final meeting of the legal Latvian Government was held on June 19, 1940, at 3 o'clock. President Ulmanis said that "we cannot afford to be weak, because the days ahead will be tragic days. We must bring up all our mental and physical forces to stand these days which are still coming, the occupation by the Red Army."⁵³

The National Government ceased to exist at 10 a. m. on June 20; for at that moment "power was officially handed over to the Kirchensteins regime, to the tools of Vishinsky and Vietrov."⁵⁴

VII. ANNOUNCEMENT OF SECRETARIAT OF PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

On June 21, 1940, the official gazette, *Valdibas Vestnesis*, published an unsigned announcement dated June 20, 1940, the sense of which was that a new Cabinet of Ministers had been formed ["sastadijies", which means in Latvian literally: "has formed itself."] It was announced that the Cabinet had already held its first session, and that a new commander in chief of the army had been appointed. It was not stated who had made the appointment. This very unusual wording of the communiqué indicated the extraordinary manner in which the government had been formed.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Berzinsh. *Op. cit.*, p. 25; hearings, p. 62.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 26, hearings, p. 64.

⁵⁴ Berzinsh. *Op. cit.*, p. 27.

⁵⁵ Chakste, Mintauts. *Latvia and the Soviet Union*, Washington, D. C. 1947, p. 11.

The text of the communique,⁵⁶ as well as its format, showed failure to conform to constitutional procedures. (1) Section 56 of the Latvian Constitution provided that "the Cabinet of Ministers is to be formed by such persons as may be designated by the President of the Republic." (2) Furthermore, according to section 59, the Parliament should have been conducted for a vote of confidence. (3) And, as under section 49, "the authority of the members of the Saeima shall remain in force until the new Saeima shall convene, the old Saeima had to meet to pass a vote of confidence or nonconfidence in the new Cabinet (sec. 59)." None of these constitutional requirements was met in the setting up of the so-called People's Government.

VIII. THE KIRCHENSTEINS GOVERNMENT PRIOR TO JULY 4, 1940

When the Kirchensteins regime assumed power on the afternoon of June 20, 1940, all government employees and factory workers were required to demonstrate in the streets of Riga to show their "enthusiastic endorsement of the new Latvian people's government," and to participate in celebrations symbolizing the "victory march of the Latvian proletariat."⁵⁷ The demonstrations were arranged by Soviet Communist agitators who had come into the country on the Soviet warship *Marat* on June 18.⁵⁸ Earlier in the autumn of 1939 agitators disguised as "technicians" were permitted to enter at the request of the commanders of the Soviet military bases to assist in the construction of facilities.⁵⁹ A few Latvian Communists⁶⁰ joined the march to the Soviet Legation to express "gratitude for liberation." A small number of political prisoners who had been released from the Riga Central Prison under authority of the amnesty law—the first legislative act of the new Government—also participated in the demonstrations.

From the balcony of the Embassy, Vishinsky expressed his thanks for these manifestations of support, concluding with the words: "Long live free Latvia, long live the friendship between Latvia and the Soviet Union."⁶¹

⁵⁶ The text is as follows :

ANNOUNCEMENT

"The Secretariat of the President of the Republic, Dr. Karlis Ulmanis, announces that a new Cabinet of Ministers has been formed consisting of the following persons:

"Premier and provisionally Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prof. Dr. Augusts Kirchensteins.

"Minister of War—General Roberts Dambitis.

"Minister of Interior—writer Vilis Lācis.

"Minister of Public Affairs—newspaperman Peteris Blaus.

"Minister of Public Welfare and provisionally in charge of the Ministry of Public Education—newspaperman Julijs Lācis.

"Minister of Justice and provisionally in charge of the Ministry of Finance—courts' officer ('tiesu darbinieks') Juris Paberzs.

"Minister of Communications—engineer Janis J. Jagars.

"Deputy Minister of the Interior and Chief of the Political Police, public man ('sabiedrīks darbinieks') Vikentījs Latkovskis.

"General Roberts Klavins has been appointed commander in chief of the army.

"The new Cabinet of Ministers has had its first meeting this evening.

"JUNE 20, 1940."

⁵⁷ Berzīnsh. Op. cit., p. 27.

⁵⁸ Bilmanis. A History of Latvia. Op. cit., p. 394.

⁵⁹ Berzīnsh. Op. cit., p. 24.

⁶⁰ The illegal Latvian Communist Party had about 150 registered members. Bilmanis. A History of Latvia. Op. cit., p. 395.

⁶¹ Ceichners, Alfreds. Was Europa drohte, Die Bolschewisierung Lettlands, 1940-41, A. Ceichners Verlag, Riga, 1943, pp. 198-199, hearings, p. 69.

The demonstrators then surged toward the headquarters of the Kirchensteins government. A "delegation of the workers of Riga" submitted to the Prime Minister demands that included legalization of the Communist Party, a new constitution, a new parliament, and closer economic and cultural collaboration with the Soviet Union. Finally, the crowd went to the castle, where it demonstrated against President Ulmanis.⁶² At the time a Soviet warship anchored in the Daugava River turned its guns on the President's castle. Throughout these demonstrations, the crowd was flanked by Red troops and marched to the music of a Red army band.

At first Vishinsky was careful to conceal, even from his "puppet" government, the Kirchensteins Cabinet, his real long-range objectives.⁶³ They were tools in the hands of the Soviet leader and his aides in the Soviet Legation. Indicative of this situation was a statement of policy made by Kirchensteins on June 20.⁶⁴ He said:

It is the firm conviction of the Government that the solid friendship between the nations of the great Soviet Union and the Republic of Latvia will continue in the future to be a mighty and real force, which will ensure the independence of the Latvian State, a common security, and a peaceful and successful collaboration between the two states. In its foreign policy, it is the principle of the Government to assure peaceful and friendly relations with all countries and primarily with the U. S. S. R. The Government will see to it that the constitution of the Republic of Latvia is fully realized in accordance with the true will of the people. The Government calls upon the people of the Republic of Latvia to join hands in the common task on behalf of our beloved native land, Latvia. [Italics furnished.]

The new Prime Minister also promised on June 22, at a meeting of the Cabinet, to devote all the power of the Government to fostering the material and spiritual well being of the nation and to "guard a free, independent Latvia."⁶⁵

Such statements should not be accepted at their face value because they represented only camouflage and maneuver to conceal the true aims of the Soviet Union. The new government remained under the strict control of the Soviet Union.⁶⁶ Public declarations were prepared in Russian in the Soviet Legation and then translated into Latvian. For example, speeches of Premier Kirchensteins and of Minister of Defense Dambitis of June 21 were drafted by Vishinsky and Vietrov and translated by the Minister of Public Affairs, Blaus. And if any sentence was not right Blaus was directed to change it. As Blaus told Minister Berzinsh: "We don't make one step without asking Mr. Vishinsky in the Soviet Embassy."⁶⁷

Other ministerial positions were filled during the next several weeks, all by Vishinsky and the Soviet Legation. Three Vice Ministers were not even Latvian citizens, but Soviet subjects: P. Valeskalns, Education; Ed. Leitmans, Finance; and R. Blaus, Agriculture.⁶⁸ Appointment to Cabinet posts were ordinarily announced in the Official Gazette, but they were never dated or signed by an official agency or

⁶² Hearings, p. 69.

⁶³ Berzinsh. Op. cit., p. 26.

⁶⁴ Bilmanis, Dr. Alfred, *Baltic Problems and United Nations*, p. 11, quoted by Sprudz. Op. cit., p. 48.

⁶⁵ Archives of the Latvian Legation in London, quoted by Sprudz. Ibid., p. 48.

⁶⁶ Hearings, p. 64.

⁶⁷ Hearings, p. 64.

⁶⁸ Chakste. Op. cit., p. 12.

a Government officer. It was usually stated only that a new Minister had been "selected" (izraudzits).⁶⁹

However, in some instances, it was expressly stated that the Cabinet of Ministers made the appointment. Valdibas Vestnesis, No. 149 of July 5, 1940, contained two such announcements: (1) the decision of the Cabinet to merge the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, which was to be "managed" by the Minister of Finance, K. Karlsons, and by the Deputy Minister of Finance, N. Priede; (2) the appointment of A. Tabaks to the post of Comptroller General. Most of these appointees were Communists or were shortly admitted to membership in the party.

The Latvian Communist Party and the Communist Youth Organization, hitherto small underground movements, began to play decisive roles in the destruction of the Republic. The party assumed its traditional function of leadership in a Communist state. On June 24, 1940, it submitted to the Government its demands for communization of the country.^{69a}

IX. NEW LAWS DESTROYING THE OLD PUBLIC ORDER

The first law promulgated by the Kirchensteins government was "the amnesty law."⁷⁰ The intent to deceive was evident from the text. Section I provided for complete amnesty for all crimes directed against the state, including high treason. In contravention, the note to this section authorized the Minister of the Interior to retain prisoners in confinement in case they were found to be imperiling the security or interests of the state.

The next significant action was the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers concerning the surrender of all arms by the population.⁷¹ Its purpose was to disarm the inhabitants of Latvia to make them an easy prey to the Soviet secret police, who had already started to function.

A law of June 26, 1940, abolished the chambers of commerce and industry, and the chambers of artisans, agriculture, labor, writings and fine arts, and profession.⁷² "Committees of Toilers" were established in all places of employment in order to "democratize the administrative procedures."⁷³ The real purpose of these committees was to assist in the sovietization of the country.

Similar reorganizations were undertaken in the army. Soldiers elected "regiment committees," comprising 3 to 7 persons, to "protect the interests of the soldiers, to regulate the life of the soldiers and to further discipline."⁷⁴ These committees were set up to sovietize the army. For this purpose, a special law on "Political Leaders in the Army," patterned on a Soviet law, was passed on July 4.⁷⁵

With the intent of proving that the allegations contained in the Soviet ultimatum of June 16 were not devoid of substance (as in fact they were), the Kirchensteins government annulled on June 30 the

⁶⁹ Valdibas Vestnesis, No. 147, July 3, 1940, announcement relating to "selection" of Prof. Pauls Le'ins to post of Minister of Education, effective July 2, 1940; Valdibas Vestnesis, No. 148, July 4, 1940, announcement relating to "selection" of agronomist Janis Vanags to the post of Minister of Agriculture, effective July 3, 1940.

^{69a} Celchners, op. cit., pp. 201-202, quoting Jaunakas Zinas, July 5, 1950.

⁷⁰ Valdibas Vestnesis, No. 138, June 21, 1940.

⁷¹ Valdibas Vestnesis, No. 140, June 25, 1940.

⁷² Valdibas Vestnesis, No. 143, June 28, 1940.

⁷³ Valdibas Vestnesis, No. 143.

⁷⁴ Cina, July 31, 1940, quoted by Celchners, p. 213.

⁷⁵ Valdibas Vestnesis, No. 151, July 8, 1940.

1923 treaty of defense alliance between Latvia and Estonia and the 1934 treaty between those two countries pertaining to the organization of the alliance.⁷⁶ A parallel step was taken in the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of July 1 annulling the 1934 treaty of friendship and cooperation between Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia.⁷⁷ On July 21, 1940, the Prime Minister said in a speech before the People's Parliament:

With the dissolution of these conventions, nothing of an obligation under international law remains in the way of a close and inseparable cooperation between Latvia and the Soviet Union.⁷⁸

X. THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

On July 4, 1940, the Kirchensteins government reached agreement on holding elections for the Diet.⁷⁹ A new election law was adopted. The Prime Minister said on July 6:

We are able to give you this ballot so soon only thanks to the friendly support received from our mighty neighbor, the Soviet Union. *The Red Army is assisting us in the defense of our freedom and the preservation of our state.* Let us, therefore, be grateful to the Soviet Union and pledge to help to defend her frontiers against the enemy. *Once again I salute the freedom and the independence of the Latvian Republic. We are and will remain free, for we believe in the promises of Stalin, the highest authority of the Soviet Union.*⁸⁰ [Italics furnished.]

Reports of the forthcoming annexation of Latvia by the Soviet Union were officially termed unfounded rumors spread by the "enemies of the people" and "anti-Soviet provocateurs." Adolfs Sprudzis, has stated in his book, *The Annexation of Latvia*, that he heard Vishinsky, in a speech delivered in Riga, assure the Latvian people of their independence, and declare that "for years to come the Latvian and Soviet banners will wave together."⁸¹

The "Law Concerning Elections to the Diet"⁸² under which elections were scheduled for July 14 and 15 changed the rules and procedures set forth in the "Law Concerning Elections to the Diet" of June 9, 1922.⁸³ Section 81 of the Latvian Constitution, however, stated that the Cabinet of Ministers was not empowered to issue decrees having the force of law on a number of matters, including "alterations of the Diet Elections Law." Thus, the way in which the new election law was enacted constituted a violation of the constitution.

The new legislation consisted of five parts⁸⁴ under headings identical with those in the 1922 law. But the essential rules were different. The first three sections differed slightly, but the method of organization of the supervisory agency—the Central Electoral Committee—differed basically. Section 4 of the old law provided for an elections central committee, comprising representatives of the three branches

⁷⁶ Valdis Vestnesis, No. 145, July 1, 1940.

⁷⁷ Valdis Vestnesis, No. 147, July 3, 1940.

⁷⁸ Valdis Vestnesis, No. 163, July 22, 1940.

⁷⁹ Valdis Vestnesis, No. 149, July 5, 1940.

⁸⁰ *The New Leader*, October 27, 1945, quoted by Sprudzis, op. cit., p. 49.

⁸¹ Sprudzis, op. cit., p. 49.

⁸² Valdis Vestnesis, No. 149, July 5, 1940.

⁸³ Valdis Vestnesis, No. 141, June 30, 1922.

⁸⁴ Part I. Right to Vote (secs. 1-3).

Part II. Elections Committee (secs. 4-13).

Part III. Filing of Lists of Candidates (secs. 14-22).

Part IV. Procedure of Elections (secs. 23-35).

Part V. Counting of the Votes and Determination of the Results of the Elections (secs. 36-44).

of the Government: the legislative, the executive, and the judiciary.⁸⁵ The new law provided that all eight members of the committee should be Government appointees.

Mintauts Chakste, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Latvia, has made the following evaluation of the new electoral law.⁸⁶

The noteworthy innovation was the manner in which the voting commissions were composed, and the manner of their functioning. All members of the central commission, of the regional and local commissions, were to be appointed by the government. This was in direct contradiction to the electoral law of 1922, which had aimed exactly at the prevention of all government influence.

Another innovation was to be found in the exceedingly short term accorded to the presentation of candidates and for the holding of the elections themselves. Published on July 5, the law set the time limit for the presenting of candidates at 8:00 p. m. on July 10. Subsequently the central commission cut even this absurdly short term, by ordering the presentation of candidates to take place between 10 and 12 o'clock, on July 8 and 9, and between 10 and 2 o'clock, on July 10. For the sake of comparison, we might point out here that the law of 1922 provided for announcing elections at least forty days before they were to be held.

Chakste pointed out that the intention of the Government was clear: "it was to prevent the presentation of more than one candidate in any place—otherwise the chances of the Communist lists would have been entirely negligible." He continued:

But when it became evident that not even by such means could opposition candidates be prevented from running, the central commission stepped into the picture once more. It decreed on July 8 that all candidates must be prepared to present the program for which they stood, and the proof that such programs had been made known to the electorate. Unless these conditions were fulfilled, the candidate could not be accepted. This measure, it is hardly needful to stress, ran counter to the new electoral law itself. * * *⁸⁷

Leadership in the effort to provide the Communists with no excuse for omitting anti-Communist candidates was provided by Atis Kenins, the former Latvian Minister of Education and Justice. Since he knew Vishinsky personally, he sought to persuade him to permit a non-Communist ticket in the Parliamentary elections. The attempt ended in the rejection of the Kenins list of candidates and their eventual imprisonment.

Among the organizers of this "second" (i. e. non-Communist) ticket, besides Atis Kenins, were such prominent Latvian public leaders as:

Adolfs Blodnieks, former Prime Minister of Latvia and member of Parliament, of the Smallholders Party;

Janis Breikss, leader of the Democratic Center Party and member of all Latvian Parliaments since 1925;

Gen. Janis Balodis, hero of the Liberation War of Latvia, former Defense Minister and Vice President, member of the Farmers' Union;

Peteris Bergis, liberal, editor, former Minister of the Interior and member of the first Latvian Parliament;

Hugo Celmins, former Latvian Prime Minister and member of all Latvian Parliaments, of the Farmers' Union;

Voldemars Zamuelis, a lawyer, Senator and liberal politician, also a former Latvian Prime Minister;

⁸⁵ "For the purpose of guiding the elections to the Diet, an Elections Central Committee is to be created, consisting of: six members elected by the Diet, a person authorized by the President of the Republic, and a Member of the Supreme Court elected in the Plenary Meeting of all three divisions of the Supreme Court of Latvia."

⁸⁶ Chakste. *Op. cit.*, p. 13.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

Karlis Skalbe, Latvian poet, editor, and former member of Parliament, of the Democratic Center Party.

Except for the Social Democrats, an agreement to form a united election ticket of non-Communists was reached among all important Latvian political parties such as: the Farmers' Union, Democratic Center, Smallholders, Christian Democrats, and other smaller groups.

A joint election platform was also agreed upon and published.

The platform called for:

- (1) A free, independent, and democratic Latvia.
- (2) Close and constant cooperation with the U. S. S. R. aimed at the maximum development of the relations outlined in the treaty of friendship and mutual assistance of 1939.
- (3) The reconstruction of the Latvian state along progressive and democratic principles, and with the broadest participation of the workers and their organizations.
- (4) The creation of a national land pool, designed to provide land for the landless workers.
- (5) The utmost development and reorganization of the nation's economic life, with particular emphasis on the interests of the workers.
- (6) The maintenance and protection of private initiative and property, but within such limits as the welfare of the nation and the interests of the state should require.

(7) Promotion of national culture, extending its utmost benefits to all citizens alike, and with special solicitude for the rights of the minorities. Education, including the highest, to be made available to all, regardless of wealth.

(8) Extension and intensification of cultural and economic interchange with the peoples of the U. S. S. R.

(9) Continued direction of national life on the basis of strict legality, safeguarding to all the democratic liberties and property rights.⁸⁸

The Kenins committee sent a memorandum to Vishinsky, informing him of the adoption of the platform. He did not acknowledge it in writing, but before he left for Moscow, he told a member of the committee: "I wish you and your friends every success." Shortly after his departure, however, Atis Kenins and other prominent members of the national committee, including General Balodis, Peteris Bergis, and Hugo Celminsh, were arrested and deported to the Soviet Union.⁸⁹ The Communist-controlled press published the following announcement in explanation of this incident:⁹⁰

Some representatives of the class of wealthy citizens, calling themselves Latvian democrats, have started to organize their own list of candidates, in spite of the fact that all really democratic citizens have already joined the Working People's League. They have collected signatures among their fellow citizens. Our safety organs have revealed this political adventure and have, just in time, turned them over to the public prosecutors for the investigation and liquidation of this adventure.

The official report of the chairman of the Central Election Committee—the heart of the Communist election organization—acknowledged a total of 17 lists of candidates for the 5 election districts. But these were wholly discarded because, the committee alleged, of "formal defects."⁹¹

⁸⁸ Berzlnsh. *Op. cit.*, p. 34.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 34-45.

⁹⁰ *The New Leader*, October 27, 1945, quoted by Sprudz, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50.

⁹¹ Valdibas Vestnesis, 1940, No. 165; official report of A. Busevics, chairman of the Central Elections Committee in Minutes of the People's Parliament, 3d meeting, July 23, 1940.

Thus, the maneuvers of the Soviet officials to present only one list of candidates—that of the newly established “League of the Working People”—were successful. The Communist-controlled press said of this accomplishment:

Attentive observers will not fail to notice that the Working People’s League comprises all the honest representation of all classes of the population. There can be no other list of candidates beside the League, in which all the positive and creative elements of the nation are represented.⁹²

Deadline for the submission of lists of candidates was 8 p. m. on July 10, 1940. But the day before, on July 9, the Communist Secret Police [NKVD, now the MVD] invaded the election headquarters of the Latvian National Union. They seized and closed the headquarters. In Riga, about 70 Communist policemen carried out this operation. Search warrants and orders to close the election headquarters bore the signatures of the Interior Minister of the “puppet” government, Vilis Lacis, and his deputy, V. Latkovskis.

The so-called elections took place on July 14 and 15 under conditions characteristically Communist. There was no secret ballot, and a Government order decreed that the voters march in groups to the polling places. This applied to Government workers and units of the Army as well as to employees in factories, offices, shops, and elsewhere. Thus, the results of the election were a compulsory victory for the Communist bloc. Of a total of 1,181,323 votes cast, it obtained 1,155,807, or 97.8 percent. Through an error, the official results from a Soviet agency were published in a London newspaper hours before the polls had closed, thus illustrating strikingly the fraudulent nature of the elections.⁹³

XI. THE “PEOPLE’S” PARLIAMENT

Just as soon as the “People’s” Parliament had been chosen, street demonstrations, organized by the Soviet Legation and the Latvian Communist Party, began to take place in Riga and in other towns. Large posters were displayed, reading: “We demand establishment of Soviet Latvia as the 14th republic of the Soviet Union.” Vishlinsky, who had by then returned to Riga, spoke from the balcony of the Soviet Legation. He expressed the hope that the Parliament “would fulfill the wish cherished for long years by the Latvian people, to create close, indestructible ties of friendship with the Soviet Union and to establish a new happy life under the Red labor flag.”⁹⁴ The official newspaper of the Communist Party commented: “The new Parliament, which will assemble on Sunday, July 21, shall guide itself in its historical decisions by the will expressed by the Latvian people.”⁹⁵ The secretary of the Communist Party proclaimed that the demands of the people would be met.⁹⁶ And, on the eve of the convening of the Parliament, newspapers published huge slogans on their front pages: “We greet the 14th Soviet Republic Latvia! Long live Socialist Soviet Latvia?”—“The people has expressed its will, the will of the people is unalterable. Latvia must become a Soviet

⁹² The New Leader, October 27, 1945, quoted by Sprudz, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

⁹³ Newman, Bernard. *Baltic background*. London, Robert Hale, Ltd., 1948. p. 163.

⁹⁴ Cina (organ of Latvian Communist Party) July 19, 1940, in Ceichners, Alfreds. *Was Europa drohte: die Bolschewisierung Lettlands 1940-1941*. Riga, A. Ceichners, 1943, p. 265.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 266.

⁹⁶ Bilmanis, *A History of Latvia*, *op. cit.*, p. 397.

country and must be incorporated into the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics!"⁹⁷

The newly elected representatives were carefully briefed as to their actions: if they abstained from voting or spoke, when not directed to do so, they were to be handed over to the NKVD, the Secret Police.⁹⁸

The Cabinet of Ministers passed a law on July 19, providing that as of noon July 21—the time set for the opening of the Parliament—the functions of the President of the Republic were to be assumed by the President of the Cabinet of Ministers, Dr. Kirchensteins.⁹⁹

The Soviet Minister in Riga asked the President, Dr. Karlis Ulmanis, on July 21 whether he preferred exile in some Western country or in the Soviet Union. He selected Switzerland, but was nonetheless deported to the Soviet Union. To this day his fate is still unknown.¹ Thus, the Soviet conquerors did away with the last constitutional "obstacle" to the sovietization of Latvia.

The "puppet" parliament held its first session on schedule—noon of July 21, 1940—against a background of Red flags and large pictures of Stalin and Lenin. Most of the 100 participating representatives had never been active politically and were virtually unknown to the people of the country.

The Presidium was elected and the following agenda adopted: (1) report of the Premier about the activities of the Government; (2) government power in Latvia; (3) the consolidation of Latvia with the Soviet Union; (4) land questions; (5) nationalization of banks, large industry, and trade; (6) report of the Commission for Mandates; and (7) report of the Electoral Commission. Then the Parliament adjourned for a short time.

In the interim before it reassembled, a delegation of soldiers, led by a political leader, and a delegation of workers in Riga arrived at the Parliament building. They demanded, in the name of the whole people, the creation of a Soviet Latvia and its incorporation into the Soviet Union.²

When the session was resumed, the Parliament approved unanimously the report of the Premier and gave the Government authority to continue its activities "until the election of a new Government on the basis of a new Constitution."³

Zanis Spure, secretary of the Latvian Communist Party, Vikentijš Latkovskis, Chief of the Secret Police, and A. Deglavs, later head of the 5-year plan for Latvia, addressed the Parliament,⁴ which approved, again unanimously, their recommendation for the establishment of a sovietized Latvia.

Only Vilis Lacis, the Minister of the Interior and a longtime Communist, spoke of the question of the incorporation of Latvia into the Soviet Union. He described the former regime as one of bondage, with "a small clique * * * plundering the State's resources," and the people as having been "subjected to a tyrannous and corrupt oppression," during which "the greatest misery and unemployment reigned

⁹⁷ Ceichners, op. cit., p. 266.

⁹⁸ Latvian Encyclopedia, Stockholm, 1951, vol. I, p. 806, article "Inkorporacija" (Incorporation).

⁹⁹ Valdibas Vestnesis, No. 162, July 20, 1940, p. 2, col. 2.

¹ Hearings, p. 81.

² Valdibas Vestnesis, No. 163, July 22, 1940, p. 1.

³ Minutes of the July 21, 1940, meeting of the Parliament, Valdibas Vestnesis, No. 163, July 22, 1940, p. 1.

⁴ Ibid., p. 2.

in the land.”⁵ A resolution providing for incorporation was unanimously approved by the Parliament. It read, in part:

* * * only incorporation into the Soviet Union can heal Latvia's wounds, suffered throughout long years of slavery. Only the aid of the Soviet Union, received as an equal member thereof, can allow the people of Latvia to improve its economy, to assure its culture and national equality, its own peace, its daily bread, and its true liberty. The Parliament therefore requests the Supreme Council of the Soviet Union to admit Soviet Latvia as a member Republic to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. * * * [resolved] To entrust to a commission of 7 members to draft a declaration about Latvia's joining the U. S. S. R.⁶

The Parliament also passed a declaration relating to nationalization and sovietization of the national wealth. All these measures were made law at this first session of the “puppet” Parliament, which lasted 7½ hours.

On July 23, the Diet selected a commission of 20 members to submit its resolution on incorporation to the Soviet Government. This commission left for Moscow on July 30, where the seventh session of the All-Union Supreme Soviet was scheduled to convene on August 1.

XII. DECISIONS OF THE “PEOPLE’S” PARLIAMENT UNCONSTITUTIONAL

It can be objectively stated that these decisions of the new Latvian Parliament were unconstitutional.

(1) The elections, as has been discussed earlier, were null and void because they were held when Latvia was under foreign occupation⁷ and because they were not the free expression of the will of the people.

(2) The people were not permitted to present their own lists of candidates and were forced to vote under duress.

(3) The electorate was falsely assured that it was voting for an independent Latvia, safeguarded by the Treaty of Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union.

In addition to these defects in the electoral process, there were other constitutional requirements that forbade the adoption of the resolutions on the sovietization and incorporation of Latvia into the Soviet Union.

For example, section 77 of the 1922 constitution read:

Should the Saeima decide to modify any of the Provisions contained in Sections 1, 2, 3, and 6 of the present Constitution, such amendment, to acquire force of law must be submitted to a referendum.

And section 1 provided:

Latvia shall be an independent democratic republic.

Section 2 read:

The sovereign power of the Latvian State shall be vested in the Latvian people.

⁵ Bilmanis. A History of Latvia. Op. cit., p. 397.

⁶ Minutes, p. 3.

⁷ It is interesting to find the same point of view stressed in the “Decree of Peace of October 28, 1917” adopted by the first provisional government of workers and soldiers of Russia, largely Bolshevik: “By annexation or conquest of foreign countries, the Government, according to the legal conception of democracy in general and of the working classes in particular, understands every incorporation of a small or weak people to a large and powerful state, accomplished without the certain, clear, and voluntary expression of the acquiescence of that people. * * * *When a people is held down by force within the borders of a country, and when it cannot express freely its will—either through the press, through popular assemblies, through resolutions of parties, or through uprisings against oppression—that people cannot be considered free to decide its own statehood. Unless free elections are held and the country is completely evacuated by the occupation forces, the incorporation of the people to a preponderantly strong state can only be regarded as a forcible annexation.*” (Quoted by Chakste, op. cit., p. 30.) [Italics furnished.]

Clearly the decisions of the Soviet-organized Parliament, which were not submitted to a referendum, did not acquire the force of law under the Constitution of 1922 that was in force when they were adopted.

XIII. ATTITUDE OF THE UNITED STATES

The policy of the United States Government concerning the Soviet annexation of the Baltic States has been a consistent one of non-recognition. The position of that Government was stated by Acting Secretary of State Sumner Welles on July 23, 1940, as follows:

During these past few days the devious processes whereunder the political independence and territorial integrity of the three small Baltic republics—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—were to be deliberately annihilated by one of their more powerful neighbors, have been rapidly drawing to their conclusion. * * *

The policy of this Government is universally known. The people of the United States are opposed to predatory activities no matter whether they are carried on by use of force or by threat of force. They are likewise opposed to any form of intervention, on the part of one state, however powerful, in the domestic concerns of any other sovereign state, however weak.

These principles constitute the very foundation upon which the existing relationship between the 21 sovereign republics of the New World rests.

The United States will continue to stand by these principles, because of the conviction of the American people that unless the doctrine in which these principles are inherent once again governs the relations between nations, the rule of reason, of justice and of law—in other words, the basis of modern civilization—cannot be preserved.⁸

The American Government implemented this declaration by permitting diplomatic and consular representatives of the Baltic Republics to continue their activities in the United States, although the governments that had appointed them were no longer in existence. The American Legation in Riga was, of course, closed because the new regime no longer recognized its status.⁹

XIV. ATTITUDE OF LATVIAN ENVOYS ABROAD

Premier Kirchensteins sent telegrams to Latvian envoys abroad on July 25, 1940, ordering them to return home. The envoy in London, Karlis Zarins, who had learned of the Soviet occupation in a telephone conversation with Foreign Minister Munters on June 17, replied:

Departure impossible. I do not recognize the new government's investiture by help of foreign armed forces, violation of Latvian sovereignty and decision contrary to Constitution of entering the U. S. S. R.¹⁰

A similar stand was taken by other Latvian diplomatic representatives abroad. They denounced the elections to the Saeima and the decisions of that body as unconstitutional.¹¹

The Latvian envoys in London and Washington were deprived of their citizenship and declared outlaws by the new Communist government.¹²

⁸ Department of State Bulletin, vol. 3 (July-December 1940), p. 48.

⁹ Langer, Robert. *Seizure of Territory*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1947, p. 264.

¹⁰ In Sprudz. *Op. cit.* p. 52.

¹¹ Bilmanis. *Latvian-Russian relations*. *Op. cit.* pp. 203-206. See also Appendix, pp. 436-439, Nos. 17-20.

¹² Valdibas Vestnesis, 1940, p. 170.

XV. INCORPORATION OF LATVIA INTO THE U. S. S. R.

On August 5, 1940, the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agreed to the incorporation of Latvia into the Soviet Union. The Soviet law bringing about formal admission of the 'Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic' into the U. S. S. R. stated:

Having heard the report of the Plenipotentiary Commission of the Saeima (Diet) of Latvia, the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has decided:

1. to grant the request of the Saeima (Diet) of Latvia and to admit the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as an equal Federal Soviet Socialist Republic;
2. to carry out elections, in accordance with Sections 34 and 35 of the Constitution (Basic Law) of the U. S. S. R., to the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. in the Federal Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic;
3. to authorize the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. to set the day of elections.

The Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R.: M. Kalinin.

The Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R.: A. Gorkin.

MOSCOW, the KREMLIN, August 5, 1940.¹³

In describing the incorporation of Latvia into the Soviet Union the Committee for a Free Latvia stated:

On August 5, 1940, in Moscow, the Supreme Soviet proclaimed the incorporation of the Republic of Latvia into the Soviet Union. This act was officially motivated as an acceptance of a request submitted by representatives of the Latvian Parliament (Saeima). A motion to make such a request was voted upon in the Parliament's (Saeima's) meeting in Riga, on July 21, 1940. This resolution, as the Communists emphasized, was approved by the Saeima unanimously. And, according to official announcements, also the Latvian Saeima had been elected, on July 14 and 15, almost unanimously, with 97.8 percent electoral votes in favor of the single list of Communists and their fellow-travelers.

This is the pseudo legal make-up of the annexation of Latvia by the Soviet Union.

In reality the incorporation of Latvia into the Soviet Union was an illegal and lawless act, with no justification in the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia or in international law, or in the will of the people of Latvia.

First, the Latvian Parliament or Saeima, that was elected on July 14 and 15, was an illegal parliament because it was created in rigged-up elections by the Soviet occupying power.

Second, according to the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, the independence of Latvia could not be given away by a simple resolution of the Saeima, but a referendum or plebescite on this question by the body of electors was necessary.

Third, the people of Latvia cherished their political independence and were strongly opposed to Latvia's absorption by the Soviet Union.

Fourth, annexation of Latvia by the Soviet Union constituted an open breach of treaties with the Republic of Latvia in which the Soviet Union had pledged to observe and honor the independence and territorial integrity of Latvia.

Fifth, according to international law, the Soviet Union as an occupying power was not entitled to make any changes in the constitutional status of Latvia.¹⁴

¹³ Sed'maia Sesila Verkhovnovo Sovieta S. S. S. R., 1 avgusta-7 avgusta 1940 g. Stenograficheskii otchet. Izdanie Verkhovnogo Soveta S. S. S. R. Moskva 1940, p. 187.

¹⁴ From a report of the Committee for a Free Latvia, New York, N. Y., 1954, p. 12 (unpublished).

PART III—LITHUANIA

I. THE GERMAN-POLISH WAR AND LITHUANIAN NEUTRALITY

With the outbreak of World War II Lithuania at once became a prized objective in the intrigues of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. Each sought with a cynical indifference to Lithuania's own welfare to involve Lithuania in any situation advantageous to themselves. But Lithuanian leaders, cognizant of their nation's history, were themselves veteran observers of the international scene, and thus, they had the sagacity to see where lay the best interest of Lithuania. Therefore, when on September 1, 1939, the Nazi forces invaded Poland, they adopted without delay neutrality as a national policy and rigidly adhered to their position.¹

However, Nazi Germany saw an opportunity in the old conflict between Lithuania and Poland and proceeded to exploit this feud in its own interest. Under the terms of the secret protocols agreed to in the first Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of August 23, 1939, Lithuania was brushed into the German orbit of influence. With this as an opening wedge the Nazis went ardently about their business of attempting to push Lithuania into war against Poland. Dr. Peter Bruno Kleist, an official in the Bureau Ribbentrop (NSDAP Dienststelle von Ribbentrop), approached the Lithuanian Minister in Berlin, and suggested the wisdom of having Lithuania join Nazi Germany in common action against Poland. For one thing he promised Lithuania all necessary military assistance, and offered the assurance—on the basis of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact—that should Lithuania decide to join forces with the Nazis against Poland, Lithuania had nothing to fear from the Soviet Union.²

The reply of the Lithuanian Government came on September 11, 1939. Lithuania, the Hitler government was told, was determined to preserve absolute neutrality in the conflict between Germany and Poland. But the Nazis then proceeded to bring out their bigger diplomatic guns, and on September 21, 1939, Ribbentrop himself, as Hitler's Foreign Minister, personally repeated to the Lithuanian Minister in Berlin the proposition that had formerly been made unsuccessfully by Dr. Kleist. But Ribbentrop supported the Nazi overture with stronger arguments. For one thing he stated emphatically that the military operations had created a new situation. Lithuania, he said bluntly, was now in Germany's zone of influence. Ribbentrop's pressure extended to inviting the Lithuanian Foreign Minister to come to Berlin to talk things over. And then he added what undoubtedly appeared to be the most tempting proposition of all. Nazi Germany, he said, in future negotiations with the Soviet Union, would induce

¹ Vyriausybės Žinios, No. 660, 1939.

² Memorandum on restoration of Lithuania's independence, 1950, p.p. 25-28. See also, Harrison, E. S., Lithuania's Fight for Freedom. New York, Lithuanian-American Information Center, 1952, pp. 20-23.

that Government to withdraw its troops from Vilnius and the Vilnius territory. This would mean that Vilnius, the ancient capital of Lithuania seized by Poland, would be returned to Lithuania.

To the Nazi mind this enormously persuasive appeal to Lithuanian sentiment and prestige should have tipped the scale in favor of making Lithuania an ally of the Nazis. But the Lithuanian Government adamantly reaffirmed its decision in favor of neutrality and notified the Nazis accordingly. In fact, to the chagrin of the Nazi Foreign Office, Lithuania had not only turned its back on the German proposals, but actually proceeded to offer protection and to give every assistance to Polish refugees pouring in distress across Lithuanian borders before the seemingly irresistible might of the Nazi war machine.

On September 27, 1939, Ribbentrop left Berlin for Moscow, and the following day, in the Kremlin, Lithuania was turned over from the German zone of influence to the Soviet Union.³

II. THE MUTUAL ASSISTANCE PACT CONCLUDED

On September 17, 1939, the Red army crossed the Polish-Soviet frontier, and some days later entered the region of Vilnius and the city itself. Thus, the Soviet frontier was advanced to the former Lithuanian-Polish administrative line. On September 26, 1939, the Commissar for Foreign Affairs, V. Molotov, in outlining the change which occurred in Europe in the course of the preceding 4 weeks, expressed to the Minister Plenipotentiary of Lithuania in Moscow, Dr. Ladas Natkevicius, the desire to reconsider Lithuanian-Soviet relations because of the existing common frontier, stating that for this purpose it would be necessary for the Lithuanian Foreign Minister to come to Moscow.

The Government of Lithuania accepted the Soviet invitation on September 30, 1939. At the same time the Lithuanian Minister for Foreign Affairs, J. Urbsys, asked the Soviet Minister in Kaunas, Pozdniakov, for additional information about the scope of problems to be deliberated in Moscow. Pozdniakov informed him that in his opinion the question of the cession of the city of Vilnius and its environs to Lithuania, the mutual assistance pact, and certain other questions would be discussed.

On October 2, 1939, the Lithuanian delegation, headed by Urbsys, Minister for Foreign Affairs, left Kaunas for Moscow. That same evening the first meeting took place in the Kremlin with the Soviet officials Stalin, Molotov, Potemkin, and Pozdniakov. The negotiations were very difficult and gave rise to several crises.

Stalin and Molotov outlined the current political situation and indicated the new danger created in the past weeks bearing upon the independence of Lithuania. They expressed their fixed intention to maintain the peace and to preserve Lithuania's independence. In conclusion, the Soviet officials proposed that Lithuania conclude the three following conventions:

1. A treaty on the cession of the city of Vilnius and its region to Lithuania;
2. A mutual assistance pact, and

³ Ibid.

3. A treaty on the cession to Germany of a part of the Lithuanian territory.

In reference to the conclusion of a mutual assistance pact, the Soviet officials explained that the Soviet Government intended to place 50,000 troops in Lithuania in the most strategic places for the duration of the present war. As far as this matter concerned the treaty with Germany on the cession of a part of Lithuanian territory to Germany, this question had already been settled between the Soviet Union and Germany, Stalin stated.

These Soviet proposals caused consternation among members of the Lithuanian delegation. With great emotion, the chief of the Lithuanian delegation, Urbys, expressed his astonishment. He protested against the Soviet-German agreement concerning the disposal of Lithuanian territory. In the discussion that followed he indicated that in principle the establishment of Soviet troops in Lithuania was unacceptable. He said he was not authorized to conclude such a treaty. Therefore, he would return to Kaunas, report to the Lithuanian Government on the Soviet proposals, and ask for new instructions.

On October 4, 1939, Urbys returned to Kaunas bearing the three Soviet proposals. After lengthy deliberations, the Lithuanian Government reached the conclusion that the Soviet demand to admit Soviet military bases in Lithuania would endanger the independence of Lithuania. On October 6, 1939, the Lithuanian Government decided to propose to the Soviet Government a new project, which did not provide for Soviet military bases in Lithuania. Instead of military bases, Lithuania proposed the establishment of a special military mission consisting of representatives from the military staffs of Lithuania and the Soviet Union.

At the same time, the Lithuanian Foreign Minister desired a clarification of the German attitude toward Lithuania. The German Minister in Kaunas, Dr. Zechlin, explained that Germany did not intend to put into effect the German-Soviet agreement concerning the cession of a part of Lithuanian territory to Germany, and added that this agreement "[ist] *schon lang unter den Tisch gefallen*" [has long ago gone by the board"]. However, in the present political situation, Germany could not promise any help or make any demarche in favor of Lithuania; Lithuania would have to rely on itself alone.

On October 3, 1939, the German Ambassador in Moscow, Von der Schulenburg, wrote to the German Foreign Office:

Mr. Molotov summoned me to his office at 2 p. m. today, in order to communicate to me the following:

The Soviet Government would tell the Lithuanian Foreign Minister who arrives today, that, within the framework of an amicable settlement of mutual relations (probably similar to the one with Estonia), the Soviet Government was willing to cede the city of Vilna [Vilnius] and its environs to Lithuania, while at the same time the Soviet Government would indicate to Lithuania that it must cede the well-known portion of its territory to Germany. Molotov inquired what formal procedure we had in mind for carrying this out. His idea was the simultaneous signing of a Soviet-Lithuanian protocol on Vilna [Vilnius] and a German-Lithuanian protocol on the Lithuanian area to be ceded to us.

I replied that this suggestion did not appeal to me. It seemed to me more logical that the Soviet Government should exchange Vilna [Vilnius] for the strip to be ceded to us and then hand this strip over to us. Molotov did not seem quite in accord with my proposal but was willing to let me ask the viewpoint of my Government and give him a reply by tomorrow noon.

Molotov's suggestion seems to me harmful, as in the eyes of the world it would make us appear as "robbers" of Lithuanian territory, while the Soviet

Government figures as the donor. As I see it, only my suggestion enters into consideration at all. However, I would ask you to consider whether it might not be advisable for us, by a separate secret German-Soviet protocol, to *forego the cession of the Lithuanian strip of territory until the Soviet Union actually incorporates Lithuania, an idea on which, I believe, the arrangement concerning Lithuania was originally based.* [Italics furnished.]

⁴ U. S. Department of State. Nazi-Soviet relations, 1939-41. Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1948, p. 112.

Below are reproduced from Nazi-Soviet relations, additional documents relating to this same problem.

The Reich Foreign Minister to the German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) :

[Telegram]

BERLIN, OCTOBER 4, 1939.

Strictly Secret

No. 488

Reference to your telegram No. 463.

I, too, do not consider the method Molotov suggested for the cession of the Lithuanian strip of territory as suitable. On the contrary, please ask Molotov not to discuss this cession of territory with the Lithuanians at present, but rather to have the Soviet Government assume the obligation *toward Germany* to leave this strip of territory unoccupied in the event of a posting of Soviet forces in Lithuania, which may possibly be contemplated, and furthermore to leave it to Germany to determine the date on which the cession of the territory should be formally effected. An understanding to this effect should be set forth in a secret exchange of letters between yourself and Molotov. [p. 113]

REICH FOREIGN MINISTER.

The German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) to the German Foreign Office :

[Telegram]

MOSCOW, OCTOBER 5, 1939.
12.30 a. m.

Very Urgent

Strictly Secret

No. 470 of October 4

Reference my telegram No. 463 of October 3.

Immediately after Under State Secretary Gaus' first telephone call I transmitted to Molotov this morning the request not to divulge to the Lithuanian Foreign Minister anything regarding the German-Soviet understanding concerning Lithuania. Molotov asked me to see him at 5 p. m. and told me, that, unfortunately, he had been obliged yesterday to inform the Lithuanian Foreign Minister of this understanding. The Lithuanian delegation had been extremely dismayed and sad; they had declared that the loss of this area in particular would be especially hard to bear, since many prominent leaders of the Lithuanian people came from that part of Lithuania. This morning at 8 a. m. the Lithuanian Foreign Minister had flown back to Kaunas, intending to return to Moscow in one or two days.

I said that I would immediately notify my Government by telephone whereupon I called Herr Gaus. An hour later Molotov informed me that Stalin personally requested the German Government *not to insist for the moment upon the cession of the strip of Lithuanian territory.*

SCHULENBURG [p. 114].

The Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union (Molotov) to the German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) :

MOSCOW, OCTOBER 8, 1939.

Secret

Mr. Ambassador : I have the honor thereby to confirm that in connection with the secret supplementary protocol, concluded on September 29 [28], 1939, between the U. S. S. R. and Germany, concerning Lithuania, the following understanding exists between us :

1. The Lithuanian territory mentioned in the protocol and marked on the map attached [in Lithuania],

It shall be left to Germany to determine the date for the implementing of the agreement concerning the cession to Germany of the above-mentioned Lithuanian territory.

Please accept, Mr. Ambassador, the expression of my highest consideration.

MOLOTOV [p. 118].

The German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) to the German Foreign Office :

[Telegram]

MOSCOW, JULY 13, 1940—7.04 p. m.
Received, July 13, 1940—9.10 p. m.

Very Urgent

No. 1363 of July 13.

Reference your telegram of the 8th. No. 1164 and my telegram of 12th. No. 1348.

Molotov summoned me today and stated the following: Stalin had carefully reexamined the situation with respect to the strip of Lithuanian territory and has concluded that our claim to this strip of territory and the Soviet obligation to cede it are incontestable. Under the present circumstances, however, the cession of this strip of territory would be extremely inconvenient and difficult for the Soviet Government. Therefore, Stalin and he himself earnestly request the German Government to consider whether, in conformity with the extraordinary friendly relations between Germany and the Soviet Union, a way cannot be found which would leave this strip of territory permanently with Lithuania. Molotov added that we would of course at any time move the population of

On October 7, 1939, Urbsys returned to Moscow and on that same evening a new conference with Molotov and Potemkin took place in the Kremlin. The Lithuanian Foreign Minister made the following statement at the conference:

In order to make the Lithuanian point of view clearer, let me go back a little into the past. At first, we shall point out that Lithuania is not a new entity, but is a nation which in the past was independent and one which never lost its longing for liberty. Under the Tsarist regime, the liberty of the Lithuanian nation was restricted; printing was banned, and non-Lithuanians in Lithuanian territory were favored by the Russian authorities. When the Revolution broke out, the situation changed in the sense that this movement had raised the principle of the self-determination of nations. By virtue of this principle, we concluded the Treaty of Peace in 1920. In the Treaty we can read that it was concluded freely and for all time (*na vechnye vremena*). Thus, we should consider it as a logical result of freedom of self-determination by the two parties. Such a friendly and free conclusion of the Treaty of Peace inaugurated Lithuanian-Soviet relations which from the conclusion of that Treaty up to now were very good. The Soviet attitude toward Lithuania contributed much toward maintaining good and friendly relations. The Soviet Union never infringed upon Lithuanian internal affairs. She never caused us any trouble in foreign relations rather, to the contrary, she helped us much. Therefore, there is in Lithuania an abundance of friendly and favorable sentiments toward the Soviet Union. The ideas, propagated by the Soviet leaders on the peaceful intercourse of nations, based on right and justice, were always close to us.

However, the mutual-assistance pact proposed by the Soviet Union, would, in the opinion of the Lithuanian Government, infringe upon the traditional friendly relations and sow mistrust between the two States. The establishment of foreign troops in our land in time of peace would depress our nation and would make their attitude hostile toward the Soviet Union. The nation would not comprehend the establishment of the Soviet bases except as a military occupation of Lithuania. To station a Soviet army on Lithuanian territory would infringe upon the independence of Lithuania. That would create a source of permanent misunderstanding between the Soviet army and the Lithuanian civilian population. The lodging and maintenance of such an army, under present conditions, would create problems not easily solved. From the international point of view, the presence of Soviet troops in Lithuania would degrade Lithuania to a vassal state. Therefore, the Government of Lithuania proposes a mutual-assistance pact, which will not only satisfy the requisites of Lithuanian security, but which will permit it to maintain its neutrality.

Urbsys concluded that the Government of Lithuania, after deliberating upon the Soviet proposals, which he scrupulously reported to his Government, would not accept the Soviet proposals. However, Molotov was unconvinced. He insisted that Lithuania's reluctance to accept the proposed mutual-assistance pact would vitiate the pacts concluded with Latvia and Estonia. He repeatedly pointed out to the Lithuanian delegation that the establishment of Soviet troops in Lithuania would be limited to the period of the present war and that the Soviet Union had no intentions of infringing upon the social, economic, and political structure of Lithuania. He continued:

Gentlemen, Lithuania should not forget under what conditions Europe is now living. The present war has not unfolded entirely; it is difficult to forecast its repercussions and, therefore, the Soviet Union considers its security. We do not know what can happen in the West. The Germans can turn against us, if they would win the war. The aims of England are not clear either, if Germany should lose. You should not forget that Lithuania has a long frontier with Germany

German origin out of Lithuania, as well as out of this strip of territory. Molotov stressed again and again the difficulties which would at present result for the Soviet Union from the cession of this strip of territory, and he made his and Stalin's request seem very urgent by repeatedly expressing hope of a German concession. Request instructions by wire. Perhaps the Soviet request can be used to put through our economic and financial demands with respect to the Baltic States.

SCHULENBURG [p. 166].

* *Lietuva Tironu Pančiuose*, [Lithuania in chains of tyrants], 1947, pp. 24-25.

and that Lithuania should not look thoughtlessly upon its defense. Lithuania wishes to separate itself from Latvia and Estonia in regard to the security of the Soviet Union, but I should point out that Lithuania is much more important to the Soviet Union than Latvia and Estonia.*

Molotov promised to transmit the Lithuanian proposals to Stalin, who could not take part in this meeting, but who intended to participate in the future.

On October 8, 1939, Stalin criticized point by point the Lithuanian position and concluded that it could be taken into consideration only if the provisions of the Soviet project would be included in it. He added:

In any case we consider the creation of military bases on Lithuanian territory as a symbolic gesture. They can only be the most precious element in the service of Lithuanian security. If your Government is frightened at the figure of 35,000 soldiers of the Red Army, we can make concessions by asking for bases for 20,000 men * * * only. If Lithuania had fallen under German rule, she would without a doubt have become a German protectorate, whereas we respect the independence of the Lithuanian State. We are disposed to defend its territorial integrity.†

The Lithuanian Foreign Minister again tried to persuade the Soviet leaders that the Lithuanian proposal covered all needs of Lithuanian security and that the Soviet project had many deficiencies. Among other things he mentioned that the presence of Soviet troops in Lithuania could provoke greater activity of the Communists in Lithuania and so create difficulties in Lithuanian domestic policy. Stalin reacted energetically at this remark, stating that the Soviet Union in the future as in the past would not infringe upon Lithuanian internal policy and that for him it was without importance what means the Lithuanian Government would apply against the Communists. If it would be necessary "we ourselves would master your communists and warn them," Stalin stated.

The Lithuanian Minister for Foreign Affairs once more tried to continue the discussion but Stalin brusquely interrupted him and said "Vy slishkom mnogo dokazyvaete" (You are overstating your case). Then, Urbsys, turning to Stalin asked him to accept the Lithuanian proposal, that is, the mutual assistance pact without garrisons. Stalin bluntly replied: "Net" (No).

Faced with such a situation, Urbsys declared that he considered his powers exhausted because he was authorized to conclude a mutual assistance pact without military bases, and that he had to report to the Lithuanian Government and ask for new instructions.

On October 9, 1939, two members of the Lithuanian delegation, Kazys Bizauskas, Deputy Prime Minister, and Gen. S. Rastikis, Commander in Chief of the Army, left Moscow for Kaunas.

The Government of Lithuania was placed in a dilemma: to accept the Soviet proposal or to wait for military occupation. Toward October 10, 1939, and with the beginning of the collapse of the European order, the Soviet Union was concentrating its armed forces on the Lithuanian frontier. The pressure of the Soviet Government was so great that the Lithuanian Government was forced to agree to sign the pact of mutual assistance which had among its provisions the establishment of Soviet military bases in Lithuania. At that time the U. S. S. R. was the only great Power among Lithuania's neighbors

* Ibid., p. 200.

† Ibid., p. 28.

which was not engaged in the world conflict. It sought to exploit this favorable situation by strengthening its position and its power at first by diplomatic means. Assured that there was nothing to fear from the Western Powers and from Germany, the Soviet Union could play its game without inhibitions and apparently at will.

On October 10, the last meeting took place. The Soviet attitude toward Lithuania changed completely. The treaty for the cession of Vilnius and the Mutual Assistance Pact were joined in one, and the provision dealing with the term of the Soviet bases in Lithuania, namely that the military bases would be maintained only for the duration of the war, was eliminated. Faced with a new situation by the Soviet Government, Urbsys declared that the deleted provision was very important to Lithuania and that he could not sign such a treaty under these new conditions. Molotov bluntly explained that the new project was approved by the Council of the People's Commissars and that the provision dealing with the term of bases was stricken out by Stalin.

On October 10, 1939, at 10 p. m. the Lithuanian Minister for Foreign Affairs signed the treaty.

III. SOVIET GARRISONS IN LITHUANIA

A. THE FIRST 6 MONTHS

The first 6 months after the establishment of the Soviet bases on Lithuanian territory under the terms of the Pact of Mutual Assistance passed without important incidents. Soviet troops were disciplined and the Soviet authorities invariably repeated the old declaration that the Soviet Union did not intend to interfere in the internal affairs of Lithuania. From this point of view two statements made by Molotov, the Soviet Foreign Commissar, before the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. are of great importance.⁸

On October 31, 1939, Molotov stated:

* * * The pacts with the Baltic States in no way imply the interference of the Soviet Union in the internal affairs of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, as some foreign interests are trying to imply. * * * These pacts are inspired by mutual respect for the governmental, social, and economic system of the contracting parties. We stand for an exact and honest fulfilment of the agreements signed by us on a basis of reciprocity and declare that foolish talk of sovietisation of the Baltic States is useful only to our enemies and to all kinds of anti-Soviet provocateurs.

On March 29, 1940, Molotov, in the same forum, stated:

After the experience of half a year which has passed since the conclusion of Mutual Assistance Pacts with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, it is possible to draw definitive and positive conclusion regarding the treaties with the Baltic countries. It must be admitted that the pacts of the Soviet Union with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have furthered the consolidation of the international position of the Soviet Union as well as of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Despite the intimidation practiced by imperialistic circles, hostile to the Soviet Union, the national independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and their autonomous policies have in no way suffered, while the economic relations of these countries with the Soviet Union have undergone considerable expansion. The execution of the pacts with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania is proceeding satisfactorily and creating prerequisites for a further improvement of relations between the Soviet Union and these states.

⁸ The Baltic Review (New York) December 1953, No. 1; 8, 9.

The internal life of Lithuania during this period underwent no substantial changes. The Government of Lithuania carefully watched the activity of its Communists. Although formally the relations between Lithuania and the Soviet Union after the establishment of the Soviet bases were changed, public opinion remained anti-Communist.

B. A CHANGE IN MOSCOW'S ATTITUDE

But the seemingly correct Moscow attitude ended soon after the conclusion of the Peace Treaty between the Soviet Union and Finland on March 12, 1940. As early as the end of April 1940, the Plenipotentiary Minister of Lithuania, Dr. Ladas Natkevicius, reported to the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry that "a black cat crossed the road of Lithuanian-Soviet relations." He explained that the attitude of the rulers of the Kremlin had become colder in respect to him. He said that they had started to question him more and more on Lithuania's attitude toward the war, its attitude toward Germany, and its neutrality.

C. SOVIETS PICK A QUARREL

Repeated declarations of neutrality by the Baltic States irritated Moscow. On May 16, 1940, *Izvestia* published an article on the issues of the war and the situation of the neutral states. The article stated:^{8a}

The recent war events (occupation of Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxemburg) once more proved that neutrality of small states, which do not have power to support it, is a mere fantasy. Therefore, there are very few chances for small countries to survive and to maintain their independence. All considerations of small countries on the question of justice and injustice in relations with the Big Powers, which are in the war "to determine if they are to be or not to be," are at least naive. * * * We should once more remind them that the policy of neutrality of some small countries could not be called anything but suicide.

This article disturbed the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania. In the perspective of history, its purpose is now clear enough. The editorial in *Izvestia* was related to Soviet stories on the kidnaping of Soviet soldiers in Lithuania. On May 14, 1940, the Minister of Lithuania in Moscow, Dr. L. Natkevicius, communicated to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union a dispatch reporting the suicide of Butaev, a Soviet soldier. On May 15, Molotov through Lisiak, the Director of the Baltic Section, asked the Lithuanian Minister in Moscow to deliver the body of Butaev to the Soviet military authorities in Lithuania. It was on May 16 that the *Izvestia* editorial was published; the obvious intent was to emphasize the impossibility of neutrality in the light of the present position of the Baltic States.

There were other signs indicating the change of the Soviet attitude toward Lithuania. At that time the underground activities of the Communist Party in Lithuania increased. At Prienai, Gaizunai, where the barracks for the Soviet bases were under construction, the Communists organized strikes and incited the workers against the Lithuanian authorities. From May 18 to May 25, 1940, the Soviets transferred about 100 tanks, 250 trucks with ammunition and artillery, airplanes, and supplies to Gaizunai (in the central part of Lithuania) from Naujoji Vilnia (situated near the Soviet frontier).

^{8a} *Izvestia*, May 16, 1940.

With this new show of armed force the Soviet Government presented to the Lithuanian Government on May 25, 1940, the following note:

According to the report of Mr. Pozdniakov, two more soldiers of the Red Army—Nosov and Shmavgonets—recently disappeared from the Soviet military bases in Lithuania. We are sure that disappearances of Soviet soldiers were brought about by persons under the protection of the Lithuanian authorities. These persons give them drink, involve them in criminal activities, and after that, prepare the way for their desertion or destroy them. The Soviet Government considers such action of the Lithuanian authorities as provocative toward the Soviet Union which may have serious consequences. The Soviet Government proposes to the Lithuanian Government to halt such provocative action to take the necessary steps immediately to search for the Soviet soldiers who disappeared and to transfer them to the military authorities of the Soviet bases in Lithuania. The Soviet Government hopes that the Lithuanian Government will take the necessary measures to comply with the Soviet proposals and will not force it to take other measures.⁹

The Lithuanian Government reacted immediately, and on the following day the Lithuanian Minister for Foreign Affairs presented to Pozdniakov, the Soviet Minister in Lithuania, the following response to Molotov's statement of the day before:

The Chairman of the People's Commissars and the Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Molotov, declared in a written communication to the Minister Plenipotentiary of Lithuania, Mr. Natkevicius, that the Soviet Government definitely knows that certain persons, enjoying the protection of the Lithuanian authorities, tempted the Soviet soldiers to commit criminal acts and then helped them to desert or did away with them.

The Government of Lithuania has the honor to ask the Government of the Soviet Union to furnish evidence which would accelerate and facilitate the investigation, especially to indicate the persons and authorities which Chairman Molotov had in mind in his statement. The Government of Lithuania gave the order to search energetically for two soldiers mentioned in the statement of Chairman Molotov, and, if they were found, to arrest them and to deliver them to the military authorities of the Soviet bases in Lithuania.¹⁰

On May 27, 1940, General Loktionov, Deputy Commissar for Defense, visited the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, J. Urbsys, and repeated the story about the disappearance of Soviet soldiers in Lithuania, stating that, in his opinion, the Government of Lithuania should bear the responsibility.

On May 28, 1940, the Government of Lithuania presented an additional note to the Government of the Soviet Union. The note stated:

In addition to the statement of May 26, the Government of Lithuania has the honor to inform the Government of the Soviet Union that it had appointed a special commission for investigation of the charges made against the agencies of the Lithuanian Government and their officials.

The commission consists of: Mr. Brazinskas, prosecutor of the District Court of Vilnius, Mr. A. Jakobas, legal adviser of the Ministry of the Interior, and Lieutenant Colonel Korla, examining magistrate of the Military Court.

The Government of Lithuania, informing the Government of the Soviet Union on the appointment of this commission, repeats its request for information to expedite its investigation.

The two soldiers of the Red Army mentioned by the Chairman of the People's Commissar and Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Molotov, were named Nosov and Shmavgonets. Shmavgonets had been returned to his unit on information supplied by the Deputy Commissar for Defense, Loktionov. He was with another soldier, Pisarev, who was not mentioned by the People's Commissar, Mr. Molotov. The Lithuanian Government did not know from other sources about Pisarev's disappearance from the Soviet bases in Lithuania.

⁹ From the Archives of the Chief of Diplomacy of Lithuania, S. Lozoraitis, Rome.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

In the opinion of the Lithuanian Government, it would be useful in the investigation of this case if both soldiers of the Red Army, who returned to their units, could testify before the above-mentioned commission, and also could indicate, where they were kept if they could recognize the place as stated in their depositions during the period from their disappearance until their return to their military units.

The Government of Lithuania expresses its agreement that the representative of the Soviet Military Command stationed in Lithuania should take part in the investigation of the above-mentioned soldiers of the Red Army and establish the places where they were kept. According to the information of the Soviet Minister in Lithuania, Mr. Pozdniakov, and Deputy Commissar for Defense, General Loktionev, there is one more soldier of the Red Army who is missing from his unit, namely, Shumov.

In order to search for him the Government of Lithuania asks for the following information: from which military unit he had disappeared; when he disappeared; his first name and the name of his father; special identification marks, and his photograph, if possible.¹¹

D. SOVIETS PUBLISH CHARGES

All Lithuanian efforts to settle the incident and to clear up the case of the alleged disappearances met with no response from the Soviet Government. Then, unexpectedly, the Soviet Government published the following public communiqué:

ON PROVOCATION BY THE LITHUANIAN AUTHORITIES

COMMUNIQUE OF THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MAY 30, 1940

Recently there have been many disappearances of soldiers from Soviet military bases located on Lithuanian territory under the Soviet-Lithuanian Treaty of Mutual Assistance. From information gathered by the N. K. I. D. [People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs] it appears that these disappearances have been arranged with the support of the Lithuanian Government.

In one case, for instance, a tank driver of the 10th Tank Brigade, one Shmavgonets, disappeared from his military unit on May 18 and came back on May 26. Shmavgonets reported to the command that on May 18 he was kidnapped and transported to an unknown house where he was held in the basement for 7 days. For several days Shmavgonets did not get anything to eat or drink. The kidnapers, using violence and threats, tried to obtain information on the tank brigade and its armament. On the night of May 25 Shmavgonets was blindfolded, taken out of the town and released.

Pisarev, a tank driver of the same tank brigade, disappeared on May 24 and came back on May 27. Pisarev disclosed that on the evening of May 24 when he was in the truck park of the brigade (the park is situated in the yard of a military station of a Lithuanian infantry regiment) he was attacked by 6 persons. The attackers gagged him, put a bag over his head, led him away in an unknown direction to a basement, where he spent 3 days without water and food. The kidnapers, using violence, interrogated Pisarev on the situation of the brigade, especially where it was to be transferred. Pisarev succeeded in escaping through a sewer main.

The outward appearance of both Red Army men, Pisarev and Shmavgonets, was marked particularly by fatigue and exhaustion attesting to the harsh treatment which they had undergone.

Furthermore, there was the case of Junior Commanding Officer Butaev, who disappeared from his military unit in February of this year. The Lithuanian authorities in Vilna, who were requested by the Red Army command to search for Butaev, informed the Red Army authorities that Butaev had committed suicide when they attempted to arrest him. In this case the Lithuanian authorities explained that death occurred from a bullet in the mouth, but an examination of the corpse established that the wound was in the area of the heart. There were other contradictions in the information given by the officials of Lithuania.

There were two more cases involving the disappearance of Soviet soldiers in Lithuania.

¹¹ Ibid.

On May 25 of this year the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Mr. V. M. Molotov, stated in the name of the Soviet Government through the Lithuanian Minister in Moscow, Mr. Natkevičius, that the Soviet Government considered that the attitude of the Lithuanian authorities toward the U. S. S. R. was provocative and would involve grave consequences. The Soviet Government demanded that the Lithuanian Government take the necessary steps to halt immediately these provocative actions and to search for the Soviet soldiers who had disappeared. The Soviet Government expressed its hope that the Lithuanian Government would accept the Soviet proposals and would not force it to take other measures.¹²

IV. TIMOSHENKO ASSURES LITHUANIAN MINISTER

Marshal Timoshenko discussed Lithuanian-Soviet tensions with Dr. L. Natkevičius at a dinner on June 4, 1940, given by the Latvian Minister in Moscow. Marshal Timoshenko expressed the opinion that the case would be settled in a peaceful manner. Butaev, the marshal said, was an ordinary "*svoloch*" (scoundrel). He said that there probably were some faults with the Red army men, too. The Lithuanian Minister in Moscow reported the conversations at this dinner to the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs as follows:

On June 4, the Latvian envoy, on the occasion of the visit of General Berkis, arranged a dinner which the People's Commissars Timoshenko and Kuznetsov, Marshals Kulik and Shaposhnikov attended. The Narkomindel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) was represented by Messrs. Dekanozov, Sobolev, Lisiak, and Barkov.

I was also invited with the Estonian envoy. I happened to sit next to Marshal Timoshenko, the People's Commissar of Defense. I happened to converse at length about our affairs. The Marshal knows less about Lithuania than about Latvia. He knew well, at least, those fine Latvian soldiers * * *

As regards a certain "tension" now evident between Lithuania and the U. S. S. R., the Marshal appeared to be undisturbed and saw no great tragedy in that.

He even said that there probably was also some fault of the Red Army and its leadership because the gates and the entrances [in the military camps] were not in order, and Butaev was an ordinary scoundrel ["*svoloch*"].

We will settle the cases in a peaceful manner. I am very calm and dislike making a fuss ["*brykatsa*"].

I thanked the Marshal for such an attitude in this matter and raised my glass to his health. He touched my glass with his. Later we talked about other matters. The Marshal is a cavalry man. He was born in Bessarabia. "That is not a great encouragement * * *" I said, bursting into laughter. He is especially healthy, strong and tall.

Marshal Kulik told jokes during the dinner, while Marshal Shaposhnikov was quiet, and with his shaved head, resembled a Catholic bishop.¹³

V. NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

A. LITHUANIA OFFERS DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS

On May 30, 1940, the Government of Lithuania decided to send its Minister of Foreign Affairs, J. Urbsys, to Moscow and through direct negotiations try to find a way to settle the soldier incidents. Lithuania wished to establish mutually satisfactory procedures to avoid tension over such incidents in the future. That day the decision was communicated to Pozdniakov, the Soviet Minister in Kaunas.

¹² *Izvestia*, No. 123/7195/May 30, 1940. *Vneshniaia Politika SSSR*. Vol. IV, Moscow 1946, pp. 507, 508.

¹³ Natkevičius to J. Urbsys, No. 232 Secret, Moscow, June 6, 1940. Confidential. This document and others that follow were formerly deposited in the Archives of the Lithuanian Legation in Berlin. They are now deposited in the Hoover Library on War, Revolution and Peace, Stanford University, Stanford, Calif.

B. LITHUANIAN PRIME MINISTER SUMMONED TO MOSCOW

On June 4, 1940, the Lithuanian Minister in Moscow informed the Lithuanian Government that Molotov agreed to receive the Prime Minister and discuss the matter with him but not with the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

On June 6, 1940, the Prime Minister of Lithuania, Antanas Merkys, came to Moscow, and on June 7 had his first meeting with Molotov.

C. THE FIRST MEETING

In his report to the Lithuanian Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Lithuanian Minister in Moscow, who was present at the conversation between Merkys and Molotov, described this first meeting as follows: ¹⁴

The Prime Minister arrived at Moscow at 11:20 a. m. Moscow time. The station was decorated with Lithuanian and U. S. S. R. flags. From the Soviet side the Assistant of the Sovnarkom, Mr. Vishinsky, Mr. Dekznovov, Mr. Barkov, Mr. Lisiak, and the Commandant of Moscow, General Devinkin, came to the station to meet him. The Prime Minister stayed at the Legation. General Reklaitis and Dr. Maclulis also came with him.

At 3 p. m. the Chief of Molotov's office, Mr. Kozyrev, telephoned asking if the Prime Minister could come in the evening at 9 p. m. to the Kremlin. His aides were invited to attend the Byelorussian festival which was presented by the Minsk opera.

At 9 p. m., the Prime Minister and I arrived at the Kremlin.

The Prime Minister thanked Mr. Molotov for having accorded him the opportunity to discuss the questions directly. He said that Lithuania had no other interest except friendly relations with the Soviets. Frankness and loyalty were the guides of the Lithuanian Government toward the Soviets. The Prime Minister, after having described our relations with the Soviets in the past immediate emphasized that they were strengthened after the Pact of October 10th [1939].

He said, that the Soviet garrisons also were established in an orderly manner, although small incidents were unavoidable. The Lithuanian Government could enumerate a number of them, but it closes its eyes to them, although there were such cases as a woman being shot, people being run over, etc. To settle these matters, it had been proposed to conclude a series of conventions, but for the time being, these conventions, with the exception of the communications agreement, had not been concluded.

The May 25th statement of Mr. Molotov, later announced by Tass, was a great surprise to Lithuania.

The Prime Minister divided the charges of the Soviet Government into two parts: first, the Butaev case; and second, the disappearance of three soldiers.

Regarding the case of Butaev, the Prime Minister explained in detail how Butaev met Petrusевичius. It appears that both were of the same profession. They had an extensive talk, and, after that contact was established, it was quickly broken. The Prime Minister explained the further course of the case. He described the circumstances under which Butaev was stopped by our railway police, and again released because the railway police were not warned about him. The circumstances of his detainment and death were also explained in detail.

"It would be far easier for me to say that Butaev was killed. The question would be clearer because it would correspond to Soviet affirmations, but I cannot say that because Butaev shot himself," said the Prime Minister.

At this point, Mr. Molotov interrupted the talk and said: "You see, you yourselves confess that Lithuanian intelligence agents had dealings with Butaev, that it [the Soviet authorities] was not allowed to question the persons who found Butaev * * * that there exist no doubts as to his killing." Mr. Molotov very clearly insisted that the Lithuanian security authorities had had a hand in it, while the Lithuanian Government was concerned only with a simple, formal explanation ["otpiskoi"]. The two little notes received do not make a serious impression. The Soviet Government was even surprised by those rude means which were applied in regard to the Red army men.

¹⁴ Dr. L. Natkevicius to J. Urbsys, No. 239, confidential, June 8, 1940.

The Soviet policy in regard to Lithuania, he said, has been pro-Lithuanian; the Lithuanian policy in regard to the Soviets was far from being pro-Soviet. Can you say that you are pro-Soviet? Your Minister of Interior and Director of the Security Department are clearly hostilely disposed toward the Soviets [vrazhdebno nastroyeni]. Here, a while ago, you dismissed General Rastikis. Why? Only because during the negotiations we noticed a certain sympathy he had for the Soviets? The Lithuanian press is behaving itself in the worst way possible toward the Soviets. It has come to such a point that it began to print caricatures of the most disgusting contents directed against the Soviets. Lately, riflemen [belonging to a paramilitary organization] are being armed and [pod vidom bazarov] in a secret way are being mobilized, which is concealed mobilization. What does all this mean? Or again recently, in Alytus alone, ten laundresses were arrested, only because they served the garrisons. Painter Lazarevicius of the Alytus region, a useful citizen to the garrisons who warned the Alytus garrison of an attempt to blow up the soldiers' barracks, has been arrested and taken away. There was also such an incident in Alytus on June 5th. Pharmacist Kozlovski, who probably is a kulak [well-to-do peasant] and white-guardist, fired a shot and the bullet fell close to a Red army man. He later excused himself by saying that he was shooting a crow * * *. In other words, anti-Soviet action is apparent everywhere, instead of confidence in, and sympathy with the Soviets, which one would like to see. We gave back Vilnius, but the Lithuanians do not appreciate that at all, and yet, there has not appeared any other government or state which would have made a similar gesture. You wished that the Lithuanians remaining in the U. S. S. R. be returned to you. We also agreed to that * * * while Lithuania is reacting differently; her security authorities are making provocations, kidnapping Red Army men.

The Prime Minister replied that the circumstances of the disappearance of the Red army men were being investigated. Before he left Lithuania on June 6th, there were some clues. A certain Savickaite gave very clear statements according to which it was possible to establish under what circumstances at least the disappearance of one Red army man occurred.

The Prime Minister tried to read the statements, but Mr. Molotov interrupted him by saying, in effect, that he supported all that to be idle talk of a prostitute which your agents had made up. The material could be sent to the proper authorities and they would take care of the matter ["razberutsia"] there.

The Prime Minister handed him a copy of the protocol and 7 photographs.

With regard to the general attitude of the Lithuanian Government, the Prime Minister affirmed that Lithuania has but one interest: to cultivate excellent relations with the U. S. S. R. since her own self-interest dictates that to her. The whole Lithuanian policy in the course of 20 years has been based upon this principle. Even at the time of the departure of the Prime Minister to Moscow, the President of the Republic emphasized clearly that the Lithuanian policy toward the U. S. S. R. was based upon confidence, tested friendship, and frankness.

"It may be that some frictions occur because of too much confidence," I interrupted. "The situation of an envoy who endeavours to do everything to smooth the relations between the two governments becomes, nevertheless, delicate when such unexpected zigzags occur * * *."

Mr. Molotov emphasized that he had no complaints concerning the envoy, but that in Lithuania the elements hostilely disposed towards the Soviet Union [vrazhdebno nastroyeniye Sovetskomu Souzu elementy] were spoiling everything. You must purge your Ministry of the Interior.

The Prime Minister stressed that the resignation of General Rastikis has nothing to do with the Lithuanian-U. S. S. R. relations.

The clerical newspaper "XX Amzius" was punished for the caricature.

To this Pozdniakov replied that the punishment took place only after May 25th, while the caricature appeared on May 4th.

With regard to the "mobilization" of riflemen, the Prime Minister said that a great misunderstanding existed. It was an old paramilitary organization. The riflemen hold exercises from time to time, and arms are, if possible, supplied to them, but that has nothing to do with any new measures whatever concerning some secret mobilization.

The arrest of the laundresses was not known to him, but it was possible that one or another of them happened to be among the purged elements around the barracks.

"You are purging the element that happens to be useful to us. You want to leave our units, especially their leadership, without a service staff * * *. The

measures applied are such as can harm the normal life of the garrisons," [stated Molotov].

Prime Minister Merkys said that he would telegraph immediately to clear up the situation, stating that such elements that could be useful to the garrisons should not be affected, and he reminded him of the necessity of concluding an agreement according to which persons working at the garrisons would be made known.

The Prime Minister in his retort once more emphasized the Lithuanian Government's good will, which sometimes could be paralyzed by an unexpected event which is not within her control, and he emphasized the government's determination to settle the outstanding questions in every respect. The Prime Minister also pointed out that no attention was paid to his statements, but one was forced to believe 100% in whatever was said by the Soviet soldiers, whose assertions could be invented.

Mr. Molotov again emphasized that the two brief notes of Mr. Urbsys and the explanations of the Prime Minister were not sufficient for the Soviets. In the Butaev case they only confirmed the Soviet view that the agents of the Lithuanian Security police ["ochranka"] were active, while, in general, the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of the Red Army men were not fully explained. They want to see that measures are taken to punish the guilty persons. Again this was pointed out precisely to the Minister of the Interior and the Director of Security and it was asked what would the Lithuanian Government do if it were confronted with a whole series of unfriendly and damaging acts? It is not up to him to indicate the measures; the Lithuanian Government itself should decide upon them and determine them.

Mr. Molotov proposed to meet once more and during that meeting he would listen to proposals of the Lithuanian Government. Such a meeting could take place tomorrow. In that matter the initiative was left to us.

From the conversations these conclusions can be made:

1. that the Soviets are filled with much bitterness against us which they want to express;
2. that they are less concerned about the results of the investigation, justice, and the finding of clues in the alleged kidnapping of the Red Army men;
3. that there is a desire to have renewed affirmations of our good will and a hundred percent pro-Soviet policy in our relations with them;
4. that one of the principal measures to be taken should be the replacement of the Minister of the Interior and the Director of the Security Department.

D. THE SECOND MEETING

On June 9, 1940, the second conference took place between Merkys, the Lithuanian Prime Minister, and Molotov. Dr. Natkevicius made the following report to the Lithuanian Foreign Minister:

The second conversation took place at the Kremlin on June 9th at 9 p. m. The conversation lasted one and a half hours.

Mr. Molotov first asked what news there was in the Butaev case and in the case of the soldiers who disappeared from the Soviet barracks.

The Prime Minister replied that in the case of Butaev he had reported everything that he knew, but regarding the disappearance of the soldiers he had news only about Shmavgonets. All other measures were taken. Besides, the government would replace the Director of the Security Department. (The Prime Minister was determined to make a more general statement orally, which I add, but, having been interrupted by Mr. Molotov, he did not make it.)

Mr. Molotov emphasized clearly, that the explanations of the Prime Minister did not satisfy him. At this point he read the depositions of Pisarev, more or less in the sense as published in the Tass communique.

Mr. Molotov, having mentioned several of Pozdniakov's reports, attacked Lithuania because the latter was organizing a Baltic military alliance against the Soviets [skolachivaet vojennyj baltiiskij sojuz]. Molotov read a translation from the Revue Baltique No. 1, where it was stated that after the Klaipeda [Memel] and Vilnius [Vilna] questions were solved there would be no obstacles whatsoever for complete Latvian, Lithuanian, and Estonian collaboration. What does this mean? Previously, there was no such complete collaboration. Now it only remained to conclude a military convention and such collaboration would be complete. In the meantime, Mr. Merkys *did not utter a single word* about the

Soviet Union, which was also a Baltic State, having a mutual assistance pact with Lithuania. (Actually in the Revue Baltique article there was the word cordial, but not complete.)

There were also other matters [stated Mr. Molotov]. Mr. Turauskas, Director of the Political Department, in his conversation with Pozdniakov replied to a question about a military convention of the Baltic States, that there were no obstacles whatsoever to concluding a military convention, although in that same statement it was said that there was no need for such a convention, after the conclusion of the Nonaggression Pact with the Soviet Union.

Here I added that the statements were in order since it was said that the pact with the Soviets eliminated the need for such a convention for the conclusion of which there were no obstacles.

"But that is a diplomatic expression. The actual fact is admitted that for the conclusion of a military convention there are no impediments," said Molotov.

Then I said that war conditions, and the similar positions of the Baltic countries even vis-a-vis the Soviets themselves, naturally had to make collaboration among the Baltic States closer and more complete. The Prime Minister also had that in mind.

Molotov answered: "One should not be naive. We know what such complete collaboration means. You already have a military convention with the Estonians and Latvians * * *."

Our declarations and assurances could not help. Molotov illustrated his argument by mentioning the visits of the chiefs of staff, the visits of Generals Gerulaitis and Reklaitis, and by the appointment of a Lithuanian military attaché to Estonia. The conferences of the Baltic ministers of foreign affairs also have become more frequent. All those measures have been taking place behind the back of the Soviet Union; we have not even been informed about them.

The Prime Minister, in denying the purpose of such a military convention, requested that the same kind of accusations be made against the Estonians and Latvians, since the Estonians and Latvians, who were cool in their relations with Lithuania before the conclusion of the pact, because of the Polish question, themselves have gravitated to our side. There was no great harm in such a regional rapprochement. The Lithuanians accepted it cordially without any hidden motives with regard to the Soviets.

The appointment of a military attaché to Estonia was an old matter, promised long ago, but not fulfilled. Besides, the staff wanted to train its officers in posts of minor importance so that it could later send them to important posts, such as Moscow.

Mr. Molotov emphasized several times that the explanations of the Prime Minister did not convince him and that he would report them to his government but he did not believe it would convince them either. One could not deny the existence of a military convention between Lithuania and Latvia with Estonia. They knew that such a convention existed [stated Mr. Molotov].

Mr. Molotov wanted the Lithuanian Government to give full assurances. It would still be possible to meet tomorrow (June 10), if the Prime Minister could report any new developments or propositions.

Mr. Molotov several times emphasized that it was necessary to discuss those questions thoroughly.

Further conversation was postponed until June 10. When we returned, we telegraphed (telegram No. 242) asking that Mr. Urbsys bring with him complete explanations of the President and the Government regarding the matter. We also added that he should bring a letter to Mr. Kalinin from the President of the Republic concerning the assurances of Lithuania's good will and the most loyal execution of the pact of October 10.

From the conversation this conclusion can be made. If the Soviet's aims are only to intimidate, and they are not determined to occupy Lithuania in the near future, then there is a clear dissatisfaction with the policy of the present government. During the last conversation allusions were made to our internal policy and the Minister of the Interior. Now the head of the government himself has even been brought into the question.

From the tactical point of view, one should regret that an opportunity has been missed to make the enclosed statement, which would have brought more clarity to the situation.

Enclosures: 7 copies of this document and a draft of the statement which was planned to be made verbally.¹⁵

¹⁵ Dr. L. Natkevicius to J. Urbsys. No. 244. Secret. Confidential. Moscow, June 10, 1940.

The second meeting with Molotov was more disappointing than the first. Molotov accused not only the Minister of the Interior of complicity but the Prime Minister as well. There were no longer any doubts that Moscow had far-reaching intentions which could endanger the independence of Lithuania.

The Prime Minister of Lithuania sent an urgent report to Kaunas. He asked that the President of the Republic, Antanas Smetona, send immediately a message to the Chairman of the Presidium of the U. S. S. R. assuring the loyalty of Lithuania to the U. S. S. R. He asked also that the Minister of Foreign Affairs come to Moscow to explain Lithuanian-Latvian-Estonian foreign relations.

An emergency meeting was called by the President of the Republic. The President expressed certain doubts about the advisability of sending such a message. In his opinion, if the Soviet Union had decided to use violence against Lithuania, nothing would help. The members of the Cabinet, and especially the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, insisted on the necessity for such a message. In their opinion, if the Soviet Union had no confidence in the Prime Minister, the message of the President of the Republic assuring the loyalty of Lithuania to the U. S. S. R. might contribute to the removal of Soviet doubts. Finally, the President of the Republic agreed, and J. Urbsys left immediately for Moscow.

E. THE THIRD MEETING

On June 11, 1940, the Lithuanian Foreign Minister came to Moscow bearing the loyalty message to M. I. Kalinin, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. Urbsys also carried with him a general declaration of the Lithuanian Government on Lithuanian-Soviet relations. The same evening at 9 p. m. the third meeting took place in the Kremlin.

The report of the Lithuanian Minister in Moscow on this meeting stated:

The following participated in the conversation with Mr. Molotov on June 11 at 9 p. m.: Prime Minister Merkys, Mr. Urbsys, and myself. Mr. Molotov was assisted by Mr. Pozdniakov.

Mr. Molotov asked if Mr. Urbsys had anything to report. The Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that he had to report certain decisions adopted by the Lithuanian Government at the June 10th meeting with the President of the Republic, which he read:

"On June 10, 1940, the Lithuanian Government at a meeting with the President of the Republic discussed the complications in the relations between the Lithuanian Republic and the Soviet Union and unanimously came to these conclusions:

"The Lithuanian Government regrets that in spite of its best intentions there were cases which could affect the tested friendly Lithuanian-Soviet relations which had been strengthened by the Mutual Assistance Pact and the return to Lithuania of her eternal capital.

"The Government reaffirms its unquestioned and firm loyalty and its friendly relations with the Soviet Union and also to all treaties concluded between the Lithuanian Republic and the Soviet Union.

"The Government has adopted a series of measures designed to strengthen the security of the Soviet troops in Lithuania; it has been decided to continue energetically the investigations of cases involving Soviet soldiers in Lithuania and to take measures to punish the persons who have committed offenses of laxity and carelessness.

"In connection with the Soviet Government's expressed opinion that the Lithuanian Government has a military convention with Estonia and Latvia, the Government gives its assurances that Lithuania does not have such a treaty.

"The Minister of Foreign Affairs has been entrusted to proceed to Moscow immediately and, together with the Prime Minister at present in Moscow, to report to the Soviet Government on this matter.

"The Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs are being entrusted to give complete information and explanations to the Government of the Soviet Union about questions of interest to her."

After that he read the following statement:

"In connection with complications arising in the relations between the Soviet Union and the Lithuanian Republic, the President of the Lithuanian Republic has decided to make changes in the composition of the government."

Mr. Urbsys mentioned that he had brought a letter to Mr. Kalinin, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, from the President of the Republic of Lithuania, in which the latter wished to give assurances of the tested friendship between the two countries, and to give assurances by the Lithuanian Republic of the most loyal execution of treaties in the spirit of the Mutual Assistance Pact. A copy of this letter translated into Russian was handed to Mr. Molotov, which he read carefully.

The contents of the letter of the President of the Republic were as follows:

The Most Honorable CHAIRMAN OF THE PRESIDUM OF THE SUPREME SOVIET:

I learned that the Chairman of the Council of the Soviet Union's People's Commissars and Foreign Commissar, Mr. Molotov, stated to the Prime Minister of the Lithuanian Republic, Mr. Merkys, at the present time on a visit to Moscow, some doubts as to the Lithuanian Republic's public or secret commitments with some states that could be incompatible with the policy of Lithuania toward the U. S. S. R.

Wishing to disperse all possible doubts about the policy of the Republic of Lithuania toward the U. S. S. R., I hasten to assure you that there can be no doubt whatsoever concerning the relations of the Republic of Lithuania with the Soviet Union, because those relations are very clear, having been determined by treaties, beginning with the Treaty of July 12, 1920, the Nonaggression Treaty of September 28, 1926, and by traditions of loyalty and friendship which have been tested through many years.

As a matter of fact, from the Treaty of July 12, 1920, until the Treaty of October 10, 1939, by which Lithuania's eternal capital, Vilnius, was returned to her and Lithuania's security was strengthened by the Mutual Assistance Pact, Lithuania on every occasion collaborated with the U. S. S. R. in international policies of peace, security, and honoring of treaties. The treaty of October 10, 1939, especially cleared up and settled relations between the two states which have been based upon traditional friendship and confidence. The Government of the Republic of Lithuania and myself have always made, are making now, and will continue to make efforts to execute this treaty in the most loyal way.

Therefore, on this occasion I have the honor once again to assure the Government of the U. S. S. R. through you that the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and I by no means intended to enter into any public or secret commitments with any other state because that would be incompatible with existing treaties and traditions of long standing of real friendship between our countries.

Permit me to add that not only the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and I, but also the entire Lithuanian nation appreciate very much the present conditions of peace in our country which are so closely connected with the whole peace policy of the U. S. S. R., the expression of which is the Treaty of Mutual Assistance concluded by our countries.

Firmly believing in the continuation of the tested friendship of the U. S. S. R. in regard to Lithuania, I can on my part give assurance in the name of all Lithuania that for such friendship Lithuania will know how to repay the Soviet Union.

A. SMETONA,

President of the Lithuanian Republic.

Mr. M. I. KALININ,

Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet,

Moscow, Kremlin.

In addition to this, Mr. Urbsys gave an explanation concerning:

1. the unexpectedness of the tension and its surprise to us, and
2. the Baltic Entente.

According to Mr. Urbsys, until May 25 we were convinced that our relations with the Soviet Union were good. Soviet officials, who were asked about that

on various occasions, confirmed that to us. It is true that some negotiations lasted too long, as, for example, those on construction and rent matters. Nevertheless, that delay did not harm the Soviet troops in any way, because the army was sheltered and construction was underway.

If anyone suffers from that then it is only we, because we received no rent until an agreement could be reached, added the Minister.

On May 25th there was a storm ["buria"] but without warning ["bez bureviestnikov"] and it brought to Lithuania a certain feeling of confusion ["Rasterianost"] because what had happened was neither known or understood.

Mr. Urbsys reminded [Molotov] that the Baltic Entente has existed since 1934. This treaty is public. There was one secret declaration which at the time was reported to the Soviet Union. Mr. Urbsys presented it again on this occasion. The exchange of visits was mostly of a sentimental character, especially since we are also relatives to the Latvians. There were no secret agreements whatsoever. It was agreed to purchase abroad (from overseas countries) through joint efforts the raw material necessary for us. From the Soviet Union's side we never had any reproaches whatever or any desires expressed in regard to that collaboration. Mr. Urbsys intimated that if it became known that those visits were disliked by the Soviet Union, it would be possible in the future not to make them. It was true, with regard to the latest conferences, that there were no documents given to Mr. Pozdniakov, as had been done before. But at the present time, minutes of the conferences were not kept because there were no practical questions discussed. Only the exchange of views concerning the international political situations have taken place.

Mr. Molotov retorted, saying that documents were not important to them, but the giving of information was.

In reply to these explanations Molotov asked whether Skucas and Povilaitis were still at their posts and if they were not prosecuted.

The Prime Minister replied that the President of the Republic had already stated that he would make a change in the Cabinet of Ministers, and with regard to the dismissal of the Director of the Security Department he already stated he (the Director) would be dismissed and that he would attend to this himself after his return to Kaunas.

Mr. Molotov said that for that purpose there was a possibility of a communication between Moscow and Kaunas, but he understands his colleague's position as Prime Minister.

Mr. Molotov expressed his astonishment that there occurred great unfriendly acts in Lithuania. Maybe Lithuania was not satisfied with the Soviets; let her give her opinion.

Mr. Urbsys replied, "No, we have no complaints." On the contrary, the attitude of the Soviet troops until the present time has dispersed various doubts in Lithuania and abroad which were raised when those troops arrived. Small misunderstandings which might have happened were insignificant when one takes into consideration that the troops number 20,000. It seemed to us that the government of the Soviet Union was not sincere with us. There has existed for a long time between us a gentlemen's agreement about exchange of information. No effect of it can be seen at the present time. It was not known what the stand of the Soviet Union was and what its international policy was. Not knowing this, it was impossible to create any uniformity. It would have been desirable to know the views of the Soviet Union; then we could adapt ourselves to them, concluded Mr. Urbsys.

During the war with Finland, the Lithuanian press conducted itself in a very bad manner. We were silent; we wrote no protests; but when it came to the murder of Soviet soldiers, it was no longer possible to remain silent. The police even at present organized strikes, while the Lithuanian government arrested workers, and interfered with construction. Were there any workers who were not in prison? stated Mr. Molotov.

The Prime Minister explained the circumstances under which the arrest of seven workers was made.

Mr. Molotov asserted that the assurances of the Lithuanian government with regard to the non-existence of a military convention between Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia did not convince him. The measures to which the Lithuanian government had recourse did not correspond to the circumstances ["obstanovke"], while the bureaucratic investigation of the Commission was only a means to postpone the decision.

An answer to the letter of the President of the Republic of Lithuania would be given by the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R., M. I. Kalinin himself. He himself (Molotov) even constitutionally could not do that, since he was not a member of the Presidium. It will be necessary to wait a little for an answer.

In reply to that it was said that the President of the Republic wished to make a contribution to clear the atmosphere. He confirmed the old friendship and assured the most loyal execution of the treaties between Lithuania and the U. S. S. R. in the spirit of the Mutual Assistance Pact.

Mr. Molotov was of the opinion that it would be necessary to wait a little.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Merkys, stated that in that case he could return to Kaunas so that he could undertake measures on the spot, while the Foreign Minister would remain in Moscow to continue the conversations. Mr. Molotov agreed to that. Mr. Urbsys, taking leave of Molotov, expressed the hope that maybe Mr. Molotov would accord him the honor of another visit. Molotov, smiling, replied: "That's understandable." The meeting lasted altogether one hour.

Enclosures: 7 copies of this document, 2 statements (8 copies each) and Mr. President's letter in the Russian language (8 copies).¹⁴

The third meeting did not relieve the tension. The conclusions of Molotov that "the assurances of the Lithuanian Government regarding the nonexistence of a military convention between Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia did not convince him" and that "the measures to which the Lithuanian Government had recourse do not correspond to the circumstances [obstanovki] whereas the bureaucratic investigation of the Commission is only a means to postpone the decision," were not encouraging.

After the third meeting, Prime Minister Merkys left Moscow for Lithuania. Foreign Minister Urbsys remained in Moscow.

F. AUDIENCE WITH KALININ

On June 14, 1940, Dr. L. Natkevicius handed the message of the President of the Republic of Lithuania to Kalinin, the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. The Lithuanian Minister reported on this audience to Kaunas:

The audience with Mr. Kalinin was fixed for June 14, at 12 o'clock in the Kremlin. Mr. Kalinin received me without ostentation, one of his secretaries participating.

In presenting the message of the Head of the Lithuanian State I said that the President of the Lithuanian Republic was very concerned about the uneasiness of the last days between the two countries, which can affect the relations between the U. S. S. R. and Lithuania. The President of the Republic wished to address the President of the U. S. S. R. to dispel the misunderstandings, to assure the tested friendship between the U. S. S. R. and Lithuania which was strengthened by the Mutual Assistance Pact and to give assurance of the most loyal execution in general of existing treaties between the U. S. S. R. and Lithuania. Mr. Kalinin declared that in Lithuania there were "disloyal signs" with regard to the Soviets, and that a strike directed against the Soviets has occurred in construction work.

I replied that acts of disloyalty with regard to the Soviets were unknown to the Lithuanian government. Lithuania was only anxious to maintain the best traditional and stabilized relations with the U. S. S. R. In view of the existence of a large number of Soviet troops in Lithuania there could have been misunderstandings, for the very deployment of Soviet troops in Lithuania has been conducive to incidents. Besides, overoptimism ["izbytok doverija"] may have also harmed to some extent, because measures were not taken to separate the civilian population from the Soviet troops. Troops, for instance, visited taverns freely. A strike in construction work had taken place, but it did not last long. Some zealous agitators have been arrested. That was natural. I informed him that

¹⁴ Dr. L. Natkevicius to J. Urbsys, No. 249. Secret. Confidential. Moscow, June 13, 1940.

the Minister of Interior has resigned in connection with the uneasiness of the situation and his resignation was accepted. Besides, the Director of the Security Department has also left his post. Mr. Kalinin did not react to that, but only asked whether that department was called a security department.

I explained that the Lithuanian Government and the entire Lithuanian nation appreciated very positively the fact that while the war was raging Lithuania could remain aside and, due to the peaceful policy of the Soviet Government, could enjoy the fruits of peace.

Lithuania has no need to look elsewhere for assistance; she was preoccupied with maintaining excellent traditional relations with the U. S. S. R. in the spirit of the Mutual Assistance Pact.

Mr. Kalinin said that the Soviets really sought only that. He said that he would have to reply to the letter of the President of Lithuania.

I answered that the document of the President of Lithuania was a unilateral act by which the President wished to show his concern for Lithuanian-Soviet relations; he wished to help dispel the misunderstandings, to emphasize Lithuania's good will and her wish to execute loyally the existing treaties between the U. S. S. R. and Lithuania. The purpose of the document of the President of the Republic of Lithuania was to make a contribution to the elimination of a certain tension in our relations with the Soviets.

Mr. Kalinin replied that he would study the document. The conversation was short. It lasted altogether twelve minutes. Mr. Kalinin did not wish to express an opinion about the latest events, but, nevertheless, found it necessary to emphasize that there were "signs of disloyalty" from the Lithuanian side.¹⁷

G. VISIT BY DEKANOZOV

In an effort to ease the tensions in Lithuanian-Soviet relations, Foreign Minister Urbsys visited V. G. Dekanozov, Deputy Commissar of Foreign Affairs, on June 14, 1940. Dekanozov repeated substantially the same charges which had been made by Molotov. Dr. Natkevicius reported on this visit as follows:

On June 14 Minister Urbsys and I paid a visit to Mr. Dekanozov.

Minister Urbsys described briefly the course of our relations with the U. S. S. R. until May 25th, emphasizing throughout Lithuania's good will. He said that the statement of May 25th was unexpected, that previously no reproaches were made to Lithuania—to the contrary, it was said that a friendly atmosphere reigned everywhere.

Mr. Dekanozov retorted extensively, reproaching the incorrect attitude of our press with regard to the Soviets and the efforts of security agents to attract soldiers by creating the impression of desertion. The Lithuanian Government tolerated all that and maybe even concealed the activities of its agents in the case of the soldiers, the examination of which surprisingly up to the present time has produced no results whatsoever.

Mr. Urbsys wanted to assure him that the government did not do all that, but sought the very best of relations with the U. S. S. R. Even the government itself was reorganized. General Skucas resigned from his office as Minister of the Interior, while Povilaitis was discharged from his office as Director of the Security Department.

Then, is Mr. Merkys going to be Minister of the Interior? Mr. Dekanozov asked with surprise at this point. Minister Urbsys explained that for the present the Prime Minister naturally occupied that post, but whether he would remain in the future we have no information.

Minister Urbsys and I were under the impression that the Prime Minister was hardly more desirable to the Soviets than General Skucas himself. Mr. Urbsys also described Lithuania's relations with Latvia and Estonia prior to the Pact of October 10 and thereafter.

We discussed the matter concerning the time limit for the evacuation of Lithuanians from the U. S. S. R. which was to be extended until August 1, and we presented other requests for his consideration. In connection with this matter I left a document, the memorandum of which is herewith enclosed.

The conversation lasted exactly one hour.

¹⁷ Dr. L. Natkevicius to J. Urbsys, No. 254. Secret. Confidential. Moscow, June 14, 1940.

After the meeting with Dekanozov, * * * Urbysys shook hands with Mr. Lislak, head of the Baltic section.

Enclosures: 7 copies of this document and a note, No. 144, of April 15th on the matter of the evacuation of Lithuanians.¹⁸

H. CONCLUSIONS OF THE LITHUANIAN ENVOY

Dr. Natkevicius, who was present at all meetings with the Soviet officials, sent to Kaunas his own evaluation of the existing situation. He concluded that the developments represented a state of danger. The visit of the Prime Minister in Moscow had not cleared the atmosphere, and the measures proposed or undertaken by the Prime Minister, did not seem to satisfy the Soviets.

The report stated:

As a result of the well-known statement of Mr. Molotov of May 25, I telegraphed the text of the statement that same evening and indicated, as an imperative matter, that the Prime Minister, himself, come urgently to Moscow to smooth the accusations (telegram 202-203-204).

In the absence of an immediate response I, myself, was anxious to go to Kaunas. After my return on June 3d, Mr. Molotov asked me to see him, and he expressed a desire that the Prime Minister of Lithuania come to Moscow.

Having informed Kaunas of this, the Prime Minister, Mr. Merkys, arrived in Moscow on June 7th. At the first meeting Mr. Molotov clearly stated his dissatisfaction with regard to the Minister of the Interior and the Director of the Security Department. Since the Prime Minister did not give any promise immediately, the question of the settlement of the misunderstandings was postponed until the next meeting (June 9th). Personally I had to insist and even beg the Prime Minister to announce the resignation of General Skucas at the meeting of June 9th. Nevertheless, the Prime Minister did so only in the case of the Director of the Security Department.

On June 9th, Mr. Molotov, without waiting for the Lithuanian Government to take measures, attacked the Prime Minister himself, during the conversation, reproaching him for the "Revue Baltique" article in which there was not a single word about the Soviet Union, but only emphasis upon ("Skolochivanije baltiskoj antanty") strengthening of the Baltic entente by concluding a military alliance. One has to admit that no confidence was placed in the Prime Minister of Lithuania himself, who did not wish to remove from the Cabinet of Ministers the member of the Cabinet undesirable to them.

That is a clear intervention in Lithuania's internal affairs. Undoubtedly, that is sad, but in these times when only a fiction remains of the sovereignty of small states one has also to count upon the manifestation of the ("mauvaise humeur") bad humor of such a neighbor as the Soviets happen to be.

It was clear to me that it would be hard to restore the atmosphere of confidence in regard to the person who was so attacked by the chairman of the Sovnarkom (Council of the People's Commissars).

Actually the charges concerning a military convention with the Latvians and Estonians was only picking a quarrel to show dissatisfaction with the policy conducted by the Prime Minister, especially in view of Molotov's statement that in that article "not a single word" is mentioned about the U. S. S. R. which, according to Molotov, is also a Baltic state.

At the June 11th meeting Minister Urbysys also participated. At that meeting Mr. Molotov clearly asked, mentioning names, whether Mr. Skucas and Mr. Povilaitis were still in their positions and not prosecuted. The question was direct, but came after several previous allusions.

The statements read by Minister Urbysys cleared the atmosphere, but did not eliminate the tension. The gods are angry. The farewell of the Prime Minister and Mr. Molotov was too cool.

On June 12th at the airport Mr. Pozdniakov asked me whether the same Cabinet of Ministers was to remain. Evidently the acceptance of the resignation of General Skucas and the resignation of the Director of the Security Department were not sufficient measures. Even *Tass* did not announce this fact and the

¹⁸ Dr. L. Natkevicius to Ed. Turauskas, No. 257, secret, confidential, Moscow, June 14, 1940.

newspapers did not publish it. The answer of Mr. Molotov to the telegram of the Prime Minister was cool; only the narrative of the contents of our telegram with the word ["druzhestvennyi"] friendly was left out.

The conflict was not settled. During the audience with Mr. Kalinin (June 14th) he mentioned the cases of disloyalty from the Lithuanian side and did not say a single word about the possibilities of eliminating the tension. During the June 14th conversation Dekanozov showed surprise that Prime Minister Merkys was also the Minister of the Interior. It seemed that this combination was no less acceptable than Mr. Skucas himself.

Such is the state of affairs.

Political sensibility would require radical conclusions to be made. We are living through a moment too dangerous. Everything must be done to satisfy the big neighbor.

Mr. Molotov has indicated a certain person psychologically acceptable to them (Gen. Rastikis). One should push them forward into top positions and have in mind in the first place that the visit of the Prime Minister in Moscow did not clear the atmosphere, and measures undertaken by him do not satisfy the Soviets.¹⁹

Such were the efforts of the Lithuanian Government to satisfy the rulers of the Kremlin. They were not and could not have been successful. The Government of Moscow was merely pursuing the plan to implement its secret arrangements with Hitlerian Germany regarding Lithuania. The so-called disappearance of Soviet soldiers and other Soviet charges were intended to create a pretext to annex Lithuania. The Soviet Government, knowing the charges to be unfounded, did not seriously attempt to settle the matter.

The Lithuanian Government was operating virtually in the dark. It had no knowledge of the exact version of the Molotov-Ribbentrop agreements. There were rumors about the division of the spheres of influence between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, and that finally Lithuania was to fall in the Soviet sphere. The representatives of the Lithuanian Government acted under the assumption that concessions to the Soviet Union might win time and preserve the political independence of the country. This assumption, which later was proved to be false, explains the efforts of the Government of Lithuania and its aim to reach sincerely a reasonable understanding with the Government of Moscow.

VI. SOVIET ULTIMATUM TO LITHUANIA

A. THE TEXT

On June 14, 1940, at 11:50 p. m., Molotov presented to the Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, at that time in Moscow, the Soviet ultimatum, which stated:

As a result of the recent exchange of views which took place in Moscow between the Chairman of the People's Commissars of the U. S. S. R. and the Prime Minister of Lithuania, Mr. Merkys, and also with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, the Soviet Government considers the following facts as established:

1. For some months a series of kidnappings of Soviet soldiers from the military bases established in Lithuanian territory under the Soviet-Lithuanian Mutual Assistance Pact, and the torturing of them in order to get secret military information on the Soviet State has been taking place in Lithuania. It is established that the soldier Butaev was not only kidnapped but also murdered by the Lithuanian police after the Government of the Soviet Union presented the demand of extradition. Two kidnapped Soviet soldiers, Pisarev and Shmavgonets,

¹⁹ Dr. L. Natkevicius to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, No. 258, urgent, confidential, Moscow, June 14, 1940.

succeeded in escaping from the Lithuanian police, who kidnapped and tortured them. Shutov, a soldier kidnapped in Lithuania, was not found until now. By these actions taken against the Soviet troops in Lithuania, the Lithuanian authorities tried to make unbearable the presence of Soviet troops in Lithuania.

This is proved also by such incidents, now frequently occurring, as numerous arrests and the sending to labor camps Lithuanian citizens who served the Soviet units—workers in dining rooms, laundresses, etc.—and also by the mass arrests of the workers and technicians, engaged in building of barracks for the Soviet troops. Those unprovoked and unrestrained repressions against the Lithuanian citizens, engaged in service for the Soviet troops, were intended not only to make impossible the residence of Soviet troops in Lithuania, but also to create a hostile attitude in Lithuania toward the Soviet troops and to prepare aggression against the Soviet military units. All these facts show that the Lithuanian Government is wantonly violating the Treaty of Mutual Assistance concluded with the Soviet Union, and is preparing aggression against the Soviet garrisons, established in accordance with this Treaty.

2. Immediately after the conclusion of the Mutual Assistance Pact between Lithuania and the U. S. S. R., the Lithuanian Government entered into a military alliance with Latvia and Estonia, transforming the so-called Baltic Entente, which was formerly a military alliance only between Latvia and Estonia, into a triple military alliance. The Soviet Government considers as established that this military alliance was directed against the Soviet Union. In connection with the entrance of Lithuania into this military alliance, the relations between the military staffs became closer and were kept secret from the U. S. S. R. It is known that in February 1940 there was established a printed organ of this military Entente, "Revue Baltique," published in English, French, and German.

All these facts prove that the Lithuanian Government brutally violated the Soviet-Lithuanian Pact of Mutual Assistance which had forbidden either to conclude "any alliance or to take a part in coalitions directed against contracting parties" [Section 4 of the Treaty].

All these violations of the Soviet-Lithuanian Pact and the hostile action of the Lithuanian Government toward the U. S. S. R. took place irrespective of an exclusively well-disposed and in reality a pro-Lithuanian policy of the Soviet Union toward Lithuania, which [The Soviet Union], as it is well known, on its own initiative, ceded the city of Vilnius and its region to Lithuania.

The Soviet Union considers that the present situation cannot be continued. The Soviet Government considers it necessary and urgent:

1. That the Minister of the Interior, Skucas, and the Director of the Department of the Security, Povilaitis, be immediately delivered to the judicial authorities and tried as directly guilty of acts of provocation committed against the garrisons of the Soviet Union in Lithuania.

2. That a Government be immediately formed in Lithuania capable of assuring and determined to assure the proper fulfilment of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance between the Soviet Union and Lithuania and to suppress firmly the enemies of this Treaty.

3. That a free entry into the territory of Lithuania be immediately assured for units of the army of the Soviet Union which will be stationed in the most important centers of Lithuania and which will be sufficiently numerous to assure the enforcement of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance between the Soviet Union and Lithuania and to put an end to acts of provocation directed against the garrisons of the Soviet Union in Lithuania.

The Soviet Government considers that the fulfilment of these demands is a basic condition without which the Soviet-Lithuanian Treaty of Mutual Assistance cannot be carried out honestly and in good faith.

The Soviet Government will wait for the answer of the Lithuanian Government until 10 a. m. of June 15. The failure to respond at the established time will be considered as a refusal to carry out the above mentioned demands of the Soviet Union.²⁰

The circumstances under which this ultimatum was transmitted were described in the following report made by the Lithuanian Minister in Moscow to the Lithuanian Government:

On June 14 at 11:30 Moscow time one of Molotov's secretaries telephoned me, asking if Minister Urbsys and I could come to the Kremlin at 11:40. I said that

²⁰ Izvestia No. 137/7209/ of June 16, 1940. Vneshnaya Politika SSSR. Sbornik Dokumentov, vol. IV, Moscow, 1946, p. 511.

Minister Urbsys was at present at the theater. It would be difficult to find him there, but maybe the performance has already ended and he would be returning. I said that we could be at the Kremlin before 12, but I could not promise to be there by 11:40. After Mr. Urbsys' return, we arrived at the Kremlin at 11:50.

Messrs. Molotov and Pozdniakov greeted us. After asking us to have a seat, Mr. Molotov said that he had a very important statement to make to the Lithuanian government.

He read the enclosed demands of the ultimatum, namely:

1. that the Minister of the Interior, Mr. Skucas, and the Director of the Security Department, Mr. Povilaitis, shall be prosecuted immediately as the persons directly guilty of acts of provocation committed against the Soviet garrisons in Lithuania;

2. that a Government shall be formed immediately in Lithuania that would be able and would be determined to assure the friendly execution of the Soviet-Lithuanian Mutual Assistance Pact and severely suppress the enemies of that pact;

3. that free passage into Lithuanian territory shall be provided immediately for Soviet military units in order to deploy them in the more important centers of Lithuania in numbers sufficient to enable them to enforce the Soviet-Lithuanian Mutual Assistance Pact and to prevent acts of provocation directed against Soviet garrisons in Lithuania.

After the demands were read by us, Mr. Urbsys asked whether the time limit could be prolonged. There remained only 10 hours. To this Mr. Molotov replied that it was the decision of the government, which he could not change. Mr. Molotov assured us that there would be no need to transmit the reasons and that we could quickly cipher the three points and receive an answer by 10 a. m. tomorrow. But, irrespective of what answer you receive, the Soviet troops will enter Lithuania, added Molotov. We inquired what number of troops the Soviets wished to send into Lithuania. Mr. Molotov replied, 3 to 4 army corps.

Mr. Urbsys asked if all members of the present government were unacceptable to the Soviets.

Mr. Molotov replied that not all were unacceptable to him, but that he has no confidence in the present government, while concerning a new one, agreement would be necessary. "It is important that the Lithuanian Government be pro-Soviet, just as ours is pro-Lithuanian," said Molotov. The present government did not understand the situation and even now does not understand it; besides it is unfriendly to the Soviets and has arranged provocations [Molotov continued]. Mr. Urbsys tried to explain by saying that he also was a member of the government but did not know that the government had arranged provocative acts.

We said that it was not clear how Messrs. Skucas and Povilaitis could be prosecuted. Mr. Molotov replied that if your jurists could not find the necessary provisions, then our [the Soviet] jurists, in accordance with Lithuanian codes, would look for provisions, even for treason. They are real traitors to Lithuanian interests, he added.

We asked if the Soviet Army would begin its march into Lithuania by 10 a. m. Mr. Molotov did not answer. Mr. Molotov did not give a negative reply to the question, whether it would be possible to negotiate about the entrance of troops, but gave us to understand that they [the Soviets] would conduct themselves as they wished.

In bidding farewell, Mr. Urbsys said that as a participant in the conclusion of the October 10 pact and its signatory, he regretted that that pact was being brought to such a finale within 8 months and that he feared for Lithuania's fate.

To this Mr. Molotov replied that Lithuania's fate was threatened by no one else but its own provocateurs.

The conversation lasted 30 minutes.

Enclosures: Seven copies of this document and Mr. Molotov's statement.²¹

B. LITHUANIAN REACTION

On June 15, 1940, at 2 a. m., the Ministry of Foreign Affairs received information that Molotov had presented to the Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, at that time in Moscow, an ultimatum demanding

²¹ Dr. L. Natkevicius to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Confidential. Moscow, June 14, 1940.

that General Skucas and Povilaitis be prosecuted; that the Lithuanian Government be reorganized; and that an unlimited number of the Soviet troops be admitted into Lithuania. The deadline for the answer was 10 a. m. on June 15.

Immediately an emergency meeting was called by the President of the Republic. All members of the Cabinet were present with the exception of E. Galvanauskas, the Minister of Finance, at the time out of Kaunas, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Urbsys at that time in Moscow. Present at the meeting were also the Commander in Chief of the Army and the Chief of the General Staff. President Smetona suggested rejection of the Soviet demands. He urged the organization of military resistance against Soviet aggression. He recommended also that the Government should leave the country and organize abroad the struggle for the restoration of the independence of Lithuania. However, the majority of the Cabinet advised the President to comply with the Soviet demands in order to prevent the destruction of their country. In their opinion it was impossible in a few hours to organize any substantial resistance against the Red army. Finally, the President of the Republic agreed to accept the ultimatum on condition that the new Prime Minister would be a man of his own choice and not selected by the Soviet emissaries. On June 15, 1940, at 9 a. m., Urbsys transmitted the answer of the Lithuanian Government, accepting the imposed conditions of the Soviet Government.²²

On the same day, the President of the Republic accepted the resignation of the Merkys Cabinet but asked Merkys to continue in office until a new Cabinet was constituted.²³

On the suggestion of the members of the Cabinet the President appointed Gen. S. Rastikis to assume the duties of the Prime Minister, presuming that Gen. S. Rastikis would be acceptable to the Soviet Union. When General Rastikis began the consultations for the formation of a new Cabinet, J. Urbsys, Foreign Minister in the Merkys Cabinet, who was still in Moscow, suddenly informed the President of the Republic that Molotov considered General Rastikis unacceptable to the Soviet Union and that the Soviet Government had decided to send V. G. Dekanozov, Deputy Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, to Kaunas to take care of the formation of the new Cabinet.

The President felt that under these conditions he could not perform his constitutional duties. He was unwilling to legalize Soviet acts that destroyed Lithuania's independence. He decided to carry the struggle for the restoration of Lithuanian independence beyond its borders and left Lithuanian territory on June 15, 1940. His departure was an act of protest. Before leaving, President Smetona vested in Merkys, Acting Prime Minister, the Office of the President of the Republic in accordance with article 71 of the constitution.²⁴

Huge military formations of the Red army occupied Lithuania, and on June 15, 1940, Lithuania fell under complete Soviet military control.

V. G. Dekanozov arrived at Kaunas from Moscow. It was his mission to form the new government and to complete the task of incorporating Lithuania into the Soviet Union.

²² *Izvestia*, No. 137/7209/ of June 16, 1940.

²³ *Vyriausybes Ziniuos*, No. 710, 1940.

²⁴ *Vyriausybes Ziniuos* No. 709, 1939.

VII. ESTABLISHMENT OF SOVIET RULE

A. THE PLAN

According to the Moscow plan, the incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union was to be carried out not by direct Soviet order but by so-called acts of Lithuania itself. To accomplish such a plan it was necessary, formally, to preserve the rules established by the constitution of Lithuania.

The Soviet Government wanted a smooth transition that would cloak the processes of deceit, threat, and intimidation under the pretense of pursuing constitutional procedures.

The sudden departure of the President of Lithuania created legal obstacles for carrying out the Soviet plan. With the President in Lithuania, it would have been easy to force him to appoint a Prime Minister selected by the Kremlin. Failing to comply with Soviet orders, he could have been forced to resign.

But the constitutional problem was now practically insurmountable. Before his departure President Smetona charged Mr. Merkys, Acting Prime Minister, to perform the duties of the President of the Republic in accordance with article 71 of the Constitution of Lithuania.

Being indisposed, I ask you to substitute for me in my duties as President of the Republic in accordance with Section 71 of the Constitution of Lithuania.

A. SMETONA, *President of Republic.*

A. MERKYS, *Prime Minister.*

KAUNAS, JUNE 15, 1940, No. 751.²⁸

The Acting Prime Minister, who assumed the duties of the President of the Republic under these circumstances, did not have the power either to designate a new Prime Minister or to charge anyone else with the formation of a government.

The pertinent part of article 71 declared :

In the event that the President of the Republic is ill or away from the country, the Prime Minister shall act in his stead.

The Prime Minister in charge shall execute for the President acts that are inherent in his powers.

Thus, the Acting Prime Minister had authority only to perform the ordinary functions of the Presidency inherent in that office. He could not assume the leadership of the State which belonged to the President alone so long as the President lived. However, in the event of the death of the President, or his resignation, the full powers of the office fell to his authority.

Thus, article 72 of the Constitution of Lithuania stated :

In the event of the death or resignation of the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister shall assume the leadership of the State until a President of the Republic shall be elected and until he assumes the leadership of the State.

While heading the State, the Prime Minister shall have all the powers of the President of the Republic.

But, the Soviet Government had to get rid of President Smetona in order to carry out its plan, but Smetona was now beyond Soviet control. It was necessary to deprive him of the title of the Presidency. It was necessary also to give the green light to the "puppet" chosen by Dekanozov.

²⁸ Vyriausybes Zinios, No. 709, June 16, 1940.

To achieve these ends, the emissaries of the Kremlin found it necessary to compel the Lithuanian Government to misinterpret deliberately the Lithuanian Constitution. For this purpose the Elta (The official Lithuanian Information Bureau) published the following communiqué:

Yesterday, June 15, the President of the Republic, Antanas Smetona, left the country. Under the present circumstances, the Government considers his departure as his resignation from the duties of the President of the Republic. In accordance with Section 72 of the Constitution of Lithuania, the duties of the President of the Republic shall be performed by the Acting Prime Minister, Mr. Merkys.²⁰

This interpretation of the constitution constituted a flagrant violation of the constitution itself. It was evident that under these circumstances the Acting Prime Minister, who had assumed the duties of the President in accordance with article 71 of the constitution, could not assume the powers in accordance with article 72. In addition, the so-called decision of the Lithuanian Government on the interpretation of the constitution published by Elta was never published in the official gazette *Vyriausybes Zinios*, and, as a matter of fact, no such decision had ever been made by the Council of Ministers.

The interpretation of the constitution as well as appointment of the new government were done under duress by the orders of the Soviet emissaries. They sought to cloak their lawlessness with the appearance of legality and to present their unconstitutional and, in fact, anticonstitutional acts, under a constitutional facade. Acting Prime Minister Merkys, while temporarily performing the duties of the President of the Republic, did not and could not legally appoint a new Prime Minister.

In accordance with this misinterpretation, the vacancy of the President of the Republic was filled by Acting Prime Minister Merkys who signed the acts for the appointment of the new Prime Minister, the Soviet nominee, Justas Paleckis. Because of Soviet compulsion, no choice was left to Merkys but to affix his signature to the act of appointment. He then resigned. After the resignation of Merkys, J. Paleckis, automatically assumed the duties of the President of the Republic, and the Deputy Prime Minister, V. Kreve-Mickevicius, in accordance with the article 102 of the constitution, took over the functions of the Prime Minister.

The new Government of Paleckis, having obtained its investiture from the Soviets, could act only within the limits prescribed by the Kremlin. Thus, the source of power of the new Government resided in the will of the occupiers, but not in the will of the Lithuanian nation. Its purpose was to administer the country according to the directives of the occupiers and to carry into effect the projects of the U. S. S. R. A government so constituted could take no decision binding upon the State of Lithuania.

B. PALECKIS ASSUMES POWER

On June 16, 1940, Acting Prime Minister Merkys had his first conversation with Dekanozov regarding the formation of a new government. Merkys mentioned certain persons who, in his opinion, would be qualified to perform the duties of the Prime Minister. Dekanozov rejected all proposed candidates. On the following day

²⁰ *Lietuvos Aidas*, June 17, 1940.

the composition of the new Cabinet, selected by the Soviet emissaries, was communicated by telephone to Merkys. On June 17, 1940, Merkys under duress signed the appointment of J. Paleckis as Prime Minister and the appointments of the following members of his Cabinet:

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and temporarily in charge of the Ministry of Public Education—Vincas Kreve-Mickevicius.

Minister of Defense and Commander in Chief of the Army, General Vincas Vitkauskas

Minister of Justice, Povilas Pakarklis

Minister of Finance and temporarily in charge of the Ministry of Communications, Ernestas Galvanauskas

Minister of Agriculture and temporarily in charge of the Ministry of the Interior, Matas Mickis

Minister of Health, Dr. Leonas Koganas²⁷

On June 18, Paleckis appointed Antanas Venclova as Minister of Public Education;²⁸ and on June 19, he appointed Mecys Gedvilas as Minister of the Interior.²⁹

Later the following three ministers were appointed: Minister of Labor, Martynas Junca-Kucinskas,³⁰ State's Comptroller, Liudas Adomauskas,³¹ Special Representative for city of Vilnius and its region, Grosmanas-Didziulis.

The Paleckis Cabinet, although selected by the Soviet officials, included some non-Communists. It consisted of three groups: (1) Communists—M. Gedvilas, J. Paleckis, Dr. L. Koganas, M. Mickis, (2) Liberal Democrats—Prof. Kreve-Mickevicius, E. Galvanauskas, and (3) fellow travelers—A. Venclova and General Vitkauskas. The Communist group was increased by the appointment of three new members: L. Adomauskas, Junca-Kucinskas, and Grosmanas-Didziulis. Thus, at the end of June, the Government was completely dominated by Communists.

C. PALECKIS' MESSAGE TO LITHUANIA

It now became the impossible task of the Soviet puppets to propagandize the illegal Government in such a way so as to give it the appearance of legitimacy and to carry out behind this facade the plan of the Kremlin. In addition, they found it imperative to allay public fear of the destruction of Lithuanian sovereignty. Three major efforts were directed to these ends consisting of a major message by Paleckis to the Lithuanian people, a speech by Gedvilas, and a Tass communiqué.

On June 18, 1940, Acting President Paleckis addressed a message to the Lithuanian nation on the aims of the Government in which he stated:

* * * In foreign relations the new Government will continue to maintain normal relations with all states. The first task of the Government will be the establishment of sincere and friendly relations with the Soviet Union with which Lithuania has a close alliance based on the Mutual Assistance Pact.³²

Some days later the Communist Minister of the Interior, M. Gedvilas, said:

The basic elements of our Governmental system remain unchanged. Nobody threatens legally acquired property. The Red Army came to our country with

²⁷ Vyriausybes Zinios, No. 710, 1940.

²⁸ Vyriausybes Zinios, No. 711, 1940.

²⁹ Vyriausybes Zinios, No. 712, 1940.

³⁰ Vyriausybes Zinios, No. 713, 1940.

³¹ Vyriausybes Zinios, No. 712, 1940.

³² Lietuvos Zinios, June 19, 1940, No. 137

no purpose to change our system of life or to exercise some kind of occupation, but to protect us from the danger of war and to help us maintain our independence."³³

On June 24, 1940, Tass published a communiqué declaring that the aim of the Red army in the three Baltic States was not to bring pressure on Germany but to produce the guaranties for the execution of mutual assistance pacts between the U. S. S. R. and the three states.³⁴

Thus, in all these statements the mutual-assistance pact with the Soviet Union was considered the cornerstone of Lithuanian-Soviet relations. This inspired some hope that the Lithuanian Republic might survive the crisis and preserve at least a part of its independence.

D. OUTLAWED COMMUNIST PARTY LEGALIZED

On June 25, 1940, the Minister of the Interior ordered that the Communist Party of Lithuania be entered on the register of societies and associations. Thus, the ban on the Communist Party was removed. As a matter of fact, the legitimatizing of the Communist Party was one of the first acts of the Paleckis Government. Promptly on taking office President Paleckis granted amnesty to Communists.³⁵

The first solemn meeting honoring the members of the Communist Party was organized on June 19, 1940, 2 days after Paleckis came to power, although the Communist Party technically was still illegal. The Minister of the Interior stated simply: "We will create a happy Lithuanian people's republic."³⁶ Rumors about the establishment of the Soviet system in Lithuania were denied vigorously:

There can be no doubt but that agitation against the new Government is concealed under such slogan as: "We shall immediately introduce the Stalin Constitution." We have heard these slogans, unverified and suspect, presented during the meeting honoring political prisoners. Such slogans must be characterized as mistakes. We should all understand that the slogan such as "We shall introduce the Stalin Constitution" means the overthrow of the present Government. That is what our most hostile enemies want us to do.³⁷

When the Communist Party was legitimatized, there was some hope that political activities for other political parties would still be permitted. However, this proved to be an illusion. All former political parties were considered by the Communists as belonging in the category of the enemies of the people.

On June 27, XX Amzius (twentieth century) quoted another newspaper, *Lietuvos Aidas* (Echo of Lithuania):

Yesterday L. A. published an editorial in connection with the legitimization of the Communist Party. It emphasized the importance of the Communist Party and, among other things, wrote:

"[The Communist Party] which has always fought for the people's interests, will now be the only legal party in liberated Lithuania. There is no place in Lithuania for other parties which for a long time struggled against the people and against the independence of Lithuania."³⁸

This was, of course, strictly in accord with Communist doctrine:

"He [Lenin] is said to have expressed it jokingly on one occasion by declaring that there could be any number of parties in the Soviet Union on one condition: that the Communist Party must be in power and all others in jail."³⁹ Stalin

³³ *Lietuvos Zinios*, June 22, No. 140.

³⁴ XX Amzius, June 24, 1940.

³⁵ *Vilniaus Balsas*, June 20, 1940.

³⁶ XX Amzius, June 21, 1940.

³⁷ XX Amzius, June 21, 1940.

³⁸ XX Amzius, June 27, 1940.

³⁹ Chamberlin, William Henry, *The Russian Enigma*, New York, Scribner's, 1943, p. 139.

expressed the same thought less humorously in *Pravda* on November 26, 1936: "In the Soviet Union there is no basis for the existence of several parties, or, consequently, for the freedom of parties. In the Soviet Union there is a basis only for the Communist Party."⁴⁰

The Lithuanian Communist Youth Association and the Labor and Employees Union [Communist] were brought within the law on June 29.

The Lithuanian Communist Party presented to what they called the People's Government the following demands:

To create immediately a network of labor unions in industry as well as in agriculture;

To deprive the landlords of their land and their stock and living inventory, and to distribute them to the landless or poor peasants; to release the landless and smallholders from their taxes in arrears.

To introduce a progressive tax system;

To make elections to the health insurance fund more democratic; to provide better medical care; to organize old-age insurance;

To assure work for the unemployed and to promote living standards;

To separate the church from the state and to introduce civil records for birth, death, and marriage;

To struggle against chauvinism;

To abolish the falsified Lithuanian Constitution;

To arrest all enemies of the people and to confiscate their property;

To purge the administration, the police, and the army of all enemies of the people.

There was still no word on the sovietization of Lithuania.

VIII. ATTEMPTS TO PRESERVE LITHUANIAN INDEPENDENCE

A. HOPES OF SOME LEADERS

Professor Kreve-Mickevicius and Ernestas Galvanauskas did their utmost to preserve the independence of Lithuania. At every opportunity they pointed out that independence was the goal of the Government. At first they were supported by General Vitkauskas, the Minister of Defense. General Vitkauskas stated on June 19, when he introduced the military commanders and the chiefs of the Riflemen's Association (national guard) to the Acting President of the Republic:

In presenting our welcome to you, Mr. President of the Republic, and to your Government, we pledge that we will perform conscientiously the duties imposed on us by you and by the Lithuanian Government, for the common good of our free nation and independent State.

On June 26, 1940, a ceremony honoring the Unknown Soldier was organized by the People's Government at the War Museum. Here, Kreve-Mickevicius, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, acting as Prime Minister, declared that "the first step of the People's Government is to pay respect to the Unknown Soldier as a symbol of the struggle which was fought for the people's well-being and as a sign that we will struggle for the same ideal for which the Unknown Soldier lost his life."⁴¹

Such statements were now becoming less frequent. The Communists began to substitute the slogan "free Lithuania" for "independent Lithuania."

There were officials of the People's Government who had a measure of confidence in Lithuanian-Soviet friendship. For the first time,

⁴⁰ Bullitt, William, *The Great Globe Itself. A Preface to the World Affairs*, London, MacMillan & Co., Ltd., 1947, p. 65.

⁴¹ Vilniaus Balsas, June 27, 1940.

however, they were beginning to see now that they had been duped into accepting office under the guidance of the emissaries of the Kremlin. They had been honestly determined to preserve Lithuanian sovereignty and independence, and now for the first time they began to see the light. Finding themselves the victims of an extraordinary ruse they decided, however belatedly, to settle the matter directly with Moscow. In Dekanozov, the Kremlin's agent, they saw the enemy of all their dreams, but they harbored a remote hope that Moscow had no knowledge of Dekanozov's high-handed methods.

B. KREVE-MICKEVICIUS' TRIP TO MOSCOW

On June 24 1940, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kreve-Mickevicius, asked the Lithuanian Envoy in Moscow to arrange a meeting for him with Molotov. Molotov's first answer was negative: all questions should be settled with Dekanozov, the Soviet special Envoy in Lithuania. But Professor Kreve-Mickevicius insisted, and Molotov agreed. On July 2, 1940, Professor Kreve-Mickevicius was received by Molotov in Moscow.

In a long conversation Molotov explained the future plans of the Soviet Union. The most important problem which Professor Kreve-Mickevicius tried to clear up with Molotov was the future relations between Lithuania and the Soviet Union. He complained to Molotov of interference in the internal affairs of Lithuania by Dekanozov, the Soviet Legation in Lithuania, and also by the Red Army. He argued that the Lithuanian Government had lost control of the country. He asked Molotov to take measures to discipline the Soviet officials in Lithuania and to conclude a new convention in which Lithuanian-Soviet foreign relations would be stipulated in a more precise manner.

Molotov replied that Lithuania had been liberated from dictatorship and now, under the protection of the Red Army, could enjoy freedom. The People's Government, he said, deserved praise for the purge of hostile elements from the Army, the police, and the administration; but the final decision should be given to the people, who were masters in their own home. The Soviet Government rejoiced very much because of the victories of the Lithuanian people, he said, and added that the Soviet Government did not intend to bring any pressure on the free decision of the Lithuanian people and would accept its decisions freely made. Molotov concluded that it would be necessary to organize elections to the People's Diet which would determine further Lithuanian-Soviet relations.

Professor Kreve-Mickevicius sought to persuade Molotov that the time for clarifying Lithuanian-Soviet relations was then. No one could predict, he told Molotov, what decisions the People's Diet would make.

Professor Kreve-Mickevicius tried again and again to return to the question of an agreement between the Soviet Union and Lithuania. Molotov at last bluntly cut him off. What transpired thereafter in the conference was best told by Professor Kreve-Mickevicius himself, who since that time made under oath the following commentary of the meeting with Molotov:

"You provoke my candor, Mr. Minister," he said at last, glancing up at me. "You force me to say something which I had no wish to say at this time. There-

fore we shall speak openly without sentimentality of which there is already enough. You must take a good look at reality and understand that in the future small nations will have to disappear. Your Lithuania along with the other Baltic nations, including Finland, will have to join the glorious family of the Soviet Union. Therefore you should begin now to initiate your people into the Soviet system which in the future shall reign everywhere, throughout all Europe; put into practice earlier in some places, as in the Baltic nations, later in others."

Although I had been warned in advance by Mr. Natkeviccius that I might hear such things, I was completely abashed by Molotov's flat statement. My throat felt dry, my lips frozen, and for some time I was speechless.

It appeared that Mr. Molotov perceived my condition. He telephoned and ordered some tea.

"When these things become evident there will be great confusion among our people, perhaps even armed resistance," I began, not realizing what I was saying. "The German Government without doubt will make use of this, for it will not tolerate the instigation of the Soviet system on its border."

"Germany swallowed the occupation of the Baltic States without choking, and she will have to digest their incorporation," Molotov snapped back. "They are having too much trouble in the West now to want a war with the mighty Soviet Union. I also will not conceal from you that in regard to these matters we have already come to an agreement with them. Comrade Stalin has already spoken about this to your former Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs when they came to see us about some misunderstandings which had arisen with the soldiers of our garrisons."

"You have said yourself, Mr. Commissar, that the present German Government is not to be trusted, therefore you cannot predict how they will behave in this respect. For my part I can only warn you that when your aims become clear our people will look to the Germans as possible allies who will help liberate them from your tyranny. The Lithuanian farmers already, still ignorant of what fate has in store for them, are restless, dreading a change in the agricultural system. They are already intimidated by your officials and the agitation of sympathizers, and they fear the system of collectivization. They have been accustomed for centuries to private ownership of their land; they prize it as they prize their independence. The theory of land collectivization is foreign to them."

"We do not think of imposing (naviazat) a collective system of farm supervision," remarked Molotov. "We do not maintain that this system is the best method of land reform, but Russia is still a nation too poor and wretched to be able to afford (posvolit sebe) a different system of land reform."

"As I now see it, our people have shown themselves to be more alert than we, and they have distrusted your public pledges and are becoming restless in their distrust, although we have tried to quiet them," I continued my song not realizing that it was not only useless to the matter I wished to defend but was, more than likely, harmful. "Endless lines of farmers' delegations have visited me and the Minister of Agriculture. They have all demanded that we defend not only the internal order but the freedom and independence of the nation as well. When the people will discover the Soviet Union's motives, they will give way to great despair and disorder which will demolish the very foundations of the nation, destroy the still stable prosperity as well as the basis for that prosperity, wiping out all foreign agreements so essential to our economy. The populace without doubt will regard your garrisons as an army of occupation and they will fight them in every way imaginable. Would all this be beneficial to the Soviet Union in such unstable times? * * * In order that all this may be avoided we propose that a friendship pact be made with us on new terms. This would improve our position and strengthen the authority of the Soviet Union in the eyes of the Lithuanian people. According to this pact we would agree even to limit ourselves in matters of foreign policy, being mindful of the interests and advice of the Soviet Union."

"I will not say that your proposal is not worth considering today. At another time it would have been very acceptable to us, but conditions have changed so that such a turn might not be useful either to the Soviet Union or to the Baltic States. We are more firmly convinced now than ever that our brilliant comrade, Lenin, was not mistaken when he assured us that the Second World War will help us to gain power throughout all Europe as the First helped us to gain power in Russia.

"Today we support Germany but just enough to keep her from being smothered before the miserable and starving masses of the warring nations become disillusioned and rise against their leaders. Then the German bourgeoisie will

come to an agreement with its enemy, the allied bourgeoisie, in order to crush with their combined forces the aroused proletariat. But at that moment we will come to its aid, we will come with fresh forces, well prepared, and in the territory of Western Europe, I believe, somewhere near the Rhine, the final battle between the proletariat and the degenerate bourgeoisie will take place which will decide the fate of Europe for all time. We are convinced that we, not the bourgeoisie, will win that battle.

"This is why we cannot seriously consider your offer today. We cannot allow a small island with a form of government that will have to disappear in all Europe to remain behind our back.

"You, Mr. Commissar, forget that the United States of America with her vast material and technical strength might come to the aid of those Western European nations who are fighting against German aggression. This nation, as we know, has once already saved Western Europe because of her way of life. I do not believe that history cannot repeat itself."

"You are absolutely right, Mr. Minister," Molotov stressed. "We know very well that the United States of America are eager to enter this war, and they use every means to provoke that entry. We doubt that we shall be successful in persuading her to resist that provocation; however, this does not worry us. We know that country better than those who govern it do. Have you ever visited the United States?"

"No, I have not," I admitted, "but I have read a great deal about that nation."

"In other words, you have no idea what that loose swamp, which calls itself the United States of North America, is like. American journalists, and to some extent the writers, are clever with their pretty words at deceiving themselves and others when they talk about their land. But we do not have to believe them. There, when they speak of humanism, liberty, equality, and democracy, it is merely the most loathsome hypocrisy, which is so characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon peoples. There at every step you find a church, but in spite of this, there is no other nation in the world so materialistic, where the only thing that matters is money, money, and more money * * * There every official, from an ordinary policeman to their president, is every ready to make mistakes and errors, if these errors increase his bank account.

"We are not like the stiff Germans who believe only in using their fists. We shall find means to help the leaders of American politics make mistakes, when these mistakes will be to our advantage. Therefore, their entrance into the war does not worry us in the slightest. All those who put their faith in them will be greatly disillusioned * * *"

"Past events have taught us that we can have faith only in ourselves, and our country has not yet lost that faith," I said, in answer to Molotov's last words of emphasized rebuke. "The people of Lithuania, at the end of the First World War, were able alone during the most difficult times to repulse the Polish attempts to occupy and incorporate Lithuania. Poland was supported in these attempts by all of the Western European allies, the French, the British, the Belgians * * * Although our people had no one to turn to for aid or support, they fought valiantly, and won their freedom. And now they will not surrender it easily."

"Mr. Minister, you must not forget that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics brings to nations not slavery, but true freedom, and so your people are not threatened with the loss of their freedom. They will be asked, in the manner approved by the Soviet Republics, whether they wish to join the family of the Soviet Union."

I felt that our conversation was becoming more and more tense. Evidently my words and resistance had so annoyed Mr. Molotov that the gentle tone began to fade from his voice. But I was so affected by all that I had heard that I could not control myself. Therefore I replied that the whole Lithuanian nation had long since decided to be independent, and to live her own life. I do not have to guess what the answer to the question raised would be, provided no force was used.

"The word 'force' has been removed from our dictionary," Molotov hurriedly shot back in a stern voice. "We shall not use force, but we shall know how to convince your people that their welfare demands this union, since only in this way, under the protection of the entire Soviet Union, can they live in peace, without fear of being drawn into the slaughter of war."

I expressed my disbelief that a country could be found that would allow itself to be convinced that it is advantageous to give up its freedom for the protection

of a foreign state. The Lithuanian nation, who sacrificed so many of her sons for liberty, would be less apt to be thus convinced.

"You will see that before four months have passed, the people of all the Baltic States will vote for incorporation, which will take place without any disturbances, although you try to intimidate me," Mr. Molotov assured me. "Closing our conversation, I should like to advise you again to look reality straight in the eye, and to keep in mind the aims of our true policy, important for all mankind.

"Lithuania cannot remain an exception, and her future will depend upon the fate of all Europe; you must understand that," Mr. Molotov went on to explain. "You would be doing the most intelligent thing if you would accept without any hesitation the leadership of the Communist Party which is determined to effect the unification of all Europe and the application of the new order.

"Lithuania, as well as the other Baltic States, will be able quietly, even more quietly than before, and undisturbed to expand its national culture, only giving it a socialistic content."

He, Molotov, and the central government of the Soviet Union believe that the members of the present Lithuanian Government, keeping in mind the good of their country, will remain to cooperate further with the Soviet Union, at least so that the incorporation into the family of the Soviet Union would take place without any great disturbances on the part of the unreliable, poorly orientated persons.

The members of the present government surely would not wish the people to regard them as foes in the future. * * *

These last remarks Mr. Molotov delivered standing, giving me to understand that all that was to be said had been said.

I rose also and, standing, replied that the words of Mr. Commissar had not convinced me. How my colleagues in the Government would react I did not know. Personally, I felt that I could no longer remain at the head of the Lithuanian Government, for I had been mistaken in believing the promises given by the Soviet Union that their armed forces came into Lithuania just to protect her neutrality, and not to interfere in her internal affairs. I was mistaken in so believing and therefore I must make the proper deductions. Furthermore, I did not wish to participate in the burial of Lithuania's Independence.

"Such a step on your part at this time would be very unpleasant for us, and I am sure that you will think well before you decide," answered Mr. Molotov, walking to the middle of the room.⁴²

When Professor Kreve-Mickevicius returned to Kaunas, he tried to postpone the elections. At first, he refused to put on the agenda the draft of electoral law presented by the Communist Minister of Justice, P. Pakarklis. However, it was too late. The Communist Cabinet held the balance of power.

J. Paleckis, Acting President of the Republic, convoked a meeting of the Cabinet. E. Galvanauskas, Minister of Finance, finding the situation hopeless, resigned and fled abroad. The Cabinet, with the President of the Republic presiding, immediately adopted the Law on Election to the People's Diet. After the meeting Professor Kreve-Mickevicius submitted his resignation. The resignation of Galvanauskas was accepted, but the Acting President of the Republic refused to accept the resignation of Kreve-Mickevicius. Instead he gave him 2 weeks' vacation for "improvement of his health." The leadership was then entrusted to the Communist, Gedvilas, who conscientiously carried out the plan drafted in Moscow.

IX. SOVIET CONTROL TIGHTENED

A. REORGANIZATION AND PURGES

On the very first day of the Soviet occupation, June 15, 1940, the Soviet secret police (NKVD) was established in Lithuania. It re-

⁴² From the archives of the Lithuanian Legation in Washington. For full report by Kreve-Mickevicius, see appendix A, III, No. 9.

tained the old name: State Security Department within the Ministry of Interior. A. Snieckus, secretary general of the Lithuanian Communist Party, was appointed its chief. Thoroughly trained in Moscow, he was just released from prison in Lithuania. To assist him, special instructors and advisers, all experienced agents, were sent from Moscow to Lithuania. The objective of the new chief and his force was the liquidation of all persons who had held any official position in the political, religious, cultural, or economic life of the country.

The Communist authorities, under direct control of Snieckus and the Soviet emissaries, Dekanozov and Pozdniakov, started systematically to execute the plan laid down in Moscow. The plan of action was carried out in this manner: at first, the Communist Party presented their demands at the meetings as demands of the people; and later the administration, and especially the Security Police, carried out these demands.

On June 24, 1940, the Communist Party began to use the slogan: "Enemies of the people get out of the administration and the army." It was a sign to start the purge. Within a short time all commanders of higher military units were removed.⁴³

Every day the press reported new dismissals of army officers. This provoked concern among the Lithuanian people. The Minister of Defense, eager to dissipate unfavorable reaction, made a declaration by radio on June 30, 1940, in which, among other things, he stated:

I declare briefly and categorically that the Lithuanian Army will continue to exist and in the future, if necessary, will defend the independence of Lithuania. However, now it will defend it not alone but together with the friendly Army of the U. S. S. R. The relations between the Lithuanian and the Soviet armies do not raise any doubts. They should be considered hopefully and with full confidence.⁴⁴

However, that did not change the course of events. On July 2, 1940, the Law on Reorganization of the Lithuanian Army was proclaimed.⁴⁵ The law provided that the Lithuanian Army should be reorganized fundamentally, and that the army was to be called the "Lithuanian People's Army." Political instructors were to be introduced in the Army, and a propaganda section established. Members of the Army were to take part in political activities.

Another purge was conducted in the Ministry of the Interior. The chiefs of counties, chiefs of police, mayors of cities and towns, and chiefs of townships were dismissed.⁴⁶

Although the police had undergone a purge, the Minister of the Interior, did not inspire confidence in the remaining police employees. On June 26, 1940, an amendment to the Law on Police was promulgated which authorized the chiefs of counties to form a People's Militia.⁴⁷ The duties of this newly created militia were reported by the County Chief, Adomas Ciplys:

Capitalism and chauvinism do not at an instant disappear entirely. Their roots seen in all forms of evil manifestations, are deeply rooted in the organism of our nation. For the suppression of such evil roots, the help of the honest people and the working people is necessary. The direct duty of the Militia will be to suppress all criminal activities directed against the People's Government.⁴⁸

⁴³ XX Amzius, June 26, July 2, 5, 1940; Vilniaus Balsas July 4, 1950.

⁴⁴ Lietuvos Zinios, July 1, 1940.

⁴⁵ Vyriausybes Zinios, No. 714, 1940.

⁴⁶ Vilniaus Balsas, June 26, 27, July 2, 5, 7, 13; XX Amzius, June 26, 1940.

⁴⁷ Vyriausybes Zinios, No. 713, 1940.

⁴⁸ Vilniaus Balsas, July 3, 1940.

The purge of the courts left the judicial system barren of talent; persons were not available with the necessary qualifications as laid down by the Law on the Organization of Courts. To cope with this situation, an amendment to the Law on Organization of Courts was proclaimed which authorized the Minister of Justice to appoint new judges without the qualifications required by the law.⁴⁹

The purge did not spare the schools.⁵⁰ Many principals were dismissed. On June 28, 1940, the Minister of Public Education issued a general order in which he stated:

Responsible principals and teachers shall understand well the importance of the present time and the aims of the People's Government. Everything directed against the mass of the people, against the working people shall be rejected and removed from the schools.⁵¹

B. LIQUIDATION OF PRESS AND SOCIETIES

Parallel with the purge of the "enemies of the people" from the administration, the police, the schools, the courts, and the army, a new attack was organized against the other source of "reaction"—the press and societies. On July 1, 1940, the Communist Minister of the Interior issued an order prescribing the suspension of activities of all societies and their branches which were entered in the register of societies before June 20, 1940. The suspended societies might continue their activities provided the Minister of the Interior gave special permission.⁵²

As early as June 27, an order of the Minister of the Interior was issued calling for the withholding of permits for all publications issued prior to June 20, 1940. In the future publication of periodicals would be permitted only by special authorization.⁵³

The Minister of the Interior issued a cease order to the following publications: 10 Centu, Kurjer Wilenski, Nowe Slovo, Das Wort, Der Moment, Laikas, Darbas, Sekmadienis. These periodicals, in the opinion of the Minister of the Interior, were engaged in anti-Soviet propaganda and thus were engaged in the struggle against the interests of the Lithuanian people.⁵⁴

A special attack was directed against Jewish associations. The daily newspaper Lietuvos Aidas in its editorial on the suspension of the activities of the "Fund of Palestine" and the "Office of Palestine" wrote:

During the Smetona period the Jewish reactionaries were trustful collaborators of the Lithuanian plutocrats. The Jewish bourgeoisie was an ally of Smetona; its representatives made a fool of the Jewish labor masses. The Jewish capitalists worked together with the Lithuanian capitalists.⁵⁵

The Riflemen's Association (National Guard) and Scouts Association, which functioned on the basis of special laws, were liquidated on July 13 and July 18, 1940.⁵⁶

C. MASS ARRESTS OF LEADERS AND MEMBERS OF POLITICAL PARTIES

As soon as the Law on the Elections to the People's Diet was proclaimed (July 6), on July 7, 1940, A. Snieckus, the Director of the

⁴⁹ Vyriausybes Zinios, No. 713, 1940.

⁵⁰ Vilniaus Balsas, July 1, 4, 1940; Lietuvos Zinios, July 6, 1940.

⁵¹ XX Amzius, July 1, 1940.

⁵² XX Amzius, July 1, 1940.

⁵³ XX Amzius, July 1, 1940.

⁵⁴ Lietuvos Aidas, June 30, 1940.

⁵⁵ Lietuvos Aidas, July 6, 1940.

⁵⁶ Vyriausybes Zinios, Nos. 717, 720, 1940.

State Security Department and the secretary-general of the Lithuanian Communist Party, ordered the arrests on July 11 and 12 of the leaders and active members of all non-Communist political parties. The order called for: ⁵⁷

Active abolition of the leading influence of parties hostile to the State: Nationalists, Voldemarists, Populists, Christian Democrats, Young Lithuanians, Trotskyists, Social Democrats, National Guardsmen, and others.

The action must be carried out simultaneously through all Lithuania on the night of July 11/12, 1940.

According to K. Palekis:

In this "Plan" is stated that 200 persons were to be put into the Kaunas Prison, whereas on the night of July 11th/12th some 2,000 persons in Lithuania were arrested, the leading persons of the country. Those that succeeded in escaping arrest that night were pursued and captured later on.⁵⁸

D. DEPORTATIONS BEGIN ⁵⁹

Before formal incorporation was brought about, the "puppet" Government of Lithuania acted as if Lithuania were already part of the Soviet Empire. In national or international law there could be no possible basis for deporting to Soviet Russia citizens of the presumably independent Republic of Lithuania. Yet this was precisely what happened. As the iron clamp of Soviet control tightened, the former Prime Minister, A. Merkys, tried to escape deportation but was arrested in flight at Riga. At the same time the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, J. Urbsys, was picked up. Both leaders of the Lithuanian people together with their families were then deported to the Soviet Union.

This flagrant violation and complete disregard for national and international law was then explained by Gedvilas, the Communist Minister of the Interior, in a message to the Acting President of the Republic. Gedvilas sent to the Acting President of the Republic the following letter:

"To Mr. PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC:

For reasons of State security, I hold that it is necessary to deport from the territory of Lithuania, as persons dangerous to the Lithuanian State, and to settle in the Soviet Union, the former Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania, A. Merkys, and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Urbsys, together with their families.

(signed) M. GEDVILA,
Minister of Internal Affairs.

KAUNAS, 16th July 1940.

I confirm and consent.

(signed) J. PALECKIS,
President of the Republic.

KAUNAS, 16th July 1940.⁶⁰

X. ELECTIONS

A. PROCLAMATION

Two decades before the destruction of Lithuania's national independence by Soviet Russia Lenin had written:

Any incorporation of a small and weak nation into a large or strong state without the definite, clear desire to that effect that nation "and especially"

⁵⁷ "Lietuviu Archyvas" I. 13. For complete text of the plan, see appendix B, No. 2.

⁵⁸ Palekis, K., *Genocide Lithuanian's Threefold Tragedy*, published by "Venta" Germany, 1949, pp. 262-264.

⁵⁹ For documents relating to deportations in Lithuania, see appendix B.

⁶⁰ Lithuanian Bulletin, September-October 1947.

if this nation is not accorded the right to decide the problem of the form of its political existence by a free vote—implying the complete withdrawal of the troops of the incorporating or merely strong nation—then the incorporation is an annexation, i. e., an arbitrary appropriation of a foreign country an act of violence.⁶¹

Apparently, not unmindful of this advice, Moscow had prepared a detailed plan for the incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union. The guiding principle of the Soviet plan was that the incorporation into the Soviet Union should be requested by the representatives of Lithuania. For this purpose, the Government of Moscow ordered the “puppet” Government of Lithuania to carry out the elections to the People’s Diet.

On July 5, 1940, the Lithuanian Government published an official communiqué which declared that the elections to the People’s Diet would be held on July 14.⁶² The next day Paleckis, Acting President of the Republic, issued the following proclamation:

To the Lithuanian People:

The People’s Government, formed after the disintegration of the Smetona regime has taken, during its brief existence, many urgently needed and important measures to cure the political ills of the country and to break the iron chains which bound and enslaved the toilers of the Lithuanian Republic. At the present time the Government is approaching another no less important problem, the further reorganization of the country’s life in all fields. Before beginning this task, the People’s Government will give an account of its work to the nation. Afterwards, the People’s Government wishes to learn the true will and desires of the people so that it can continue its work for the creation of a peaceful and prosperous life for our country based upon the people’s initiative and support.

The plutocratic Government of the nationalists with its dictatorial regime, serving to enrich only a small group of persons, were afraid to have the people represented in the government. Therefore, it did not convene the Diet for more than 10 years, and later it enacted an electoral law of such nature that anything resembling democracy and attributing any rights to the Diet was excluded.

The People’s Government deems it absolutely necessary to organize the elections in such a manner that the Diet will come closer to the people, that it will become really democratic and that it will represent the will of the toilers of our country.

With firm conviction and with unwavering determination to make the Government work in full contact with the people, the Government has resolved:

1. To enact a new law on election to the People’s Diet;
2. To hold the elections of a new People’s Diet;
3. To form the Supreme Electoral Commission;
4. To set the date of elections to the People’s Diet for July 14, 1940, taking into consideration the Nation’s urgent problems.

J. PALECKIS.

The Prime Minister, Acting as President of the Republic, Kaunas, July 6, 1940.⁶³

B. ELECTORAL LAW ⁶⁴

The Law on Elections to the People’s Diet was based on the pattern of the electoral law of the U. S. S. R. The basic principle of this law was: nomination of the candidates to the People’s Diet should be reserved for the Communist Party and its affiliated organizations. However, the voting should be equal, direct, and secret, and carried out according to the principles of universal suffrage.

The relationship between the Law on Elections to the People’s Diet and the Soviet electoral system was admitted openly by the Director of

⁶¹ Collected works of Lenin, vol. XII, p. 13.

⁶² Vilniaus Balsas, July 5, 1940.

⁶³ Published in the Vyriausybes Zinios, July 6, 1940, No. 715.

⁶⁴ For electoral laws, see appendix A, III, No. 7.

the Official Lithuanian Information Bureau, Kostas Korsakas, on the first day of the elections, July 14, 1940, when he said :

Today, the Lithuanian people, following the example of the free peoples of the U. S. S. R. under the leadership of the Great Stalin, are electing the Diet in a most just and democratic way.

It is true that these elections are not bourgeois democratic elections.⁶⁵

The method of operation of a Soviet election was well described by Julian Towster, in a book "European Political Systems." Towster wrote :

ELECTION OF THE SOVIET HIERARCHY ; THE VOTE WITHOUT THE CHOICE

Soviet elections are mass undertakings. In the elections held in recent years for the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. (March 1950) the supreme soviets of the union republics and the autonomous republics (February 1950), more than 100 million voters and many hundreds of thousands of candidates were involved. Numbers alone, however, are no guarantee of a democratic process. And this is particularly true in the case of Soviet elections, the characteristics of which differ fundamentally from those of the Western democratic polities.

Essentially, Soviet elections are regarded as neither a means of changing rulers at stated intervals nor a club over them to induce greater responsibility and accountability during their tenure of office. Although the highest party leaders—in their own cases, the sole judges and masters of personnel changes and responsibility—may formally use the elections to the soviets to achieve both ends at the lower echelon of the government bureaucracy, they possess and have frequently used other means for those purposes. Soviet elections are viewed primarily as a school of political education and ideological indoctrination, in official verbiage "a huge political school in which millions of working people deepen and extend their understanding of the party and governmental policy." They are conceived of a device to build a consensus behind the regime, one of the mass activities designed to convey to the populace a sense of participation in politics. At the same time they are considered one of the principal occasions to whip up social pressure in behalf of increased productivity in every line of endeavor.

This conception is responsible for the extraordinary effort and fanfare which accompany the drive to bring out the vote. Several stages are envisaged ; formation of electoral precincts, with their respective commissions ; compilation of voters' lists ; nomination and registration of candidates ; preparations for election day ; and tabulation of the results. An elaborate and sprawling electoral machinery is set up. * * *

In part, no doubt, to sell the citizens on the idea that the elections are of significance, Politburo members stand for elections to the Federal Supreme Soviet * * * The constitution provides that each citizen has the right to vote at the age of 18 and to be elected to the Supreme Soviet at the age of 23. It grants the right to nominate Supreme Soviet candidates to public organizations and societies of toilers, Communist Party organizations, trade unions, cooperatives, youth organizations, and cultural societies, and this right has been interpreted to include general meetings of various groups of citizens. Actual practice shows, however, that representatives of the party take part in and influence every meeting for the nomination of a candidate. As a result the one nominee for office is, in accordance with the prevailing custom of putting up only one candidate, the choice of the party as well as of the particular district. Always he is a person deemed loyal to the regime, regardless of whether he is formally a member of the party. And the area election commission, staffed predominantly with party members, would refuse to register him as a candidate if it had any doubts concerning his devotion to the party and its leaders or if higher party indicated dissatisfaction with his selection.

After the candidates have been nominated, the election preparations enter what the Soviet leaders regard as its most important stage and a most intensive propaganda campaign is unleashed, despite the fact that to all intents and purposes the election of the registered candidates is assured. * * *

⁶⁵ Lietuvos Zinios, July 15, 1940.

In March 1936, Stalin told Roy Howard that under the new constitution "elections will be lively; they will be conducted around numerous very acute problems, principally of a practical nature; they will help to 'tighten up all institutions and organizations and compel them to improve their work': and they will serve as a wip in the hands of the population against the organs of government that work badly." Soviet practice has given a singularly perverted connotation to this promise. The elections are indeed made "lively" as a vehicle of agitation to help in the attainment of industrial, agricultural, or military objectives. But the wip is in the hands of the leaders, and popular expressions of criticism of "organs of government that work badly" are invoked only at the instigation and within the bounds permitted by those leaders. They thus serve as a catharsis device, of which totalitarian states stand in the greatest need. They also meet a number of practical needs, among the most important (besides those already mentioned) being the provision of an additional sifting instrument to aid the party leaders in the course of the campaign to spot people with organizing or articulating skills for eventual recruitment in the service of the party. But, unlike elections in democratic states, they offer the citizen no contest of candidates and programs and no determining role in selecting and controlling his governors. All they grant him is a vote without choice.⁶⁶

C. ACTIVE AND PASSIVE ELECTORAL RIGHTS

No phase of the election law failed to be tampered with or deliberately manipulated to serve Soviet ends. The law was in fact created with a view to achieving not a free choice of the people, but the desired aims of the Kremlin. Thus, for example, the right to vote was restricted by law to Lithuanian citizens. One part of the law, section I, on the elections to the People's Diet declared:

Every Lithuanian citizen 21 years of age or over on election day shall have the right to elect the people's representatives.

Again, with regard to the right to vote, the Electoral Commission of the Vilnius District, published the following statement:

The Electoral Commission of the District of Vilnius proclaims that the following persons have the right to take part in elections:

- (1) Lithuanian citizens;
- (2) Persons who presented their applications for Lithuanian citizenship, and who possess corresponding certificates;
- (3) Persons possessing certificates of aliens.⁶⁷

The electoral law did not require a list of voters, and no such lists were established.

Section 2 provided that "Any Lithuanian citizen who had attained 21 years of age on the day of the elections, may be elected as a people's representative."

D. ELECTORAL MACHINERY

In order to supervise the elections, to give instruction on the conduct of elections, and to carry them out, the following electoral commissions were appointed: the Supreme Electoral Commission, district electoral commissions, and precinct electoral commissions. The Supreme Electoral Commission was appointed by the President of the Republic on the proposal of the Prime Minister (sec. 8). The district electoral commissions were appointed by the chairman of the Supreme Electoral Commission (sec. 10), and the chairmen of the precinct electoral commissions were appointed by the chairman of the corresponding district electoral commission. The other members of the precinct electoral commissions were to be chosen by the chairman,

⁶⁶ Towster, Julian. *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In European political systems.* Edited by Taylor Cole. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953, pp. 100-103.

⁶⁷ Vilnius Balsas, July 11, 1940.

but subject to approval by the chairman of the district electoral commission (sec. 12).

On the same day the law on elections to the People's Diet was proclaimed the Acting President of the Republic appointed the Supreme Electoral Commission which consisted of: Chairman, Vladas Niunka; Deputy Chairman, Kestutis Domasevicius; and members: Attorney Andrius Bulota, Valerija Narvidaite, and Jonas Kvetkauskas.⁶⁸ Any representative of the electoral corps was authorized to supervise elections. Thus, full control of elections was in the hands of the Supreme Electoral Commission, the members of which were Communists.

E. LISTS OF NOMINEES

This phase of the electoral process was the most important part of the Soviet innovation. The following provisions of the electoral law provide a clue to the nature of Soviet "democracy":

18. The people's representatives shall be nominated from each county.

A city having more than 35,000 inhabitants shall be treated as a county.

19. As many candidates for the people's representatives shall be nominated as there are to be elected from the electoral district.

20. The candidates for the people's representatives shall be nominated at a county meeting of the toiling people convoked by the district electoral commission.

The persons who receive the highest number of votes shall be considered nominated.

21. After the conclusion of voting, the chairman of the meeting shall announce how many votes were cast for each nominee and who shall be considered nominated, and then shall close the meeting.

22. Minutes shall be kept of the meeting.

The minutes shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting.

The consent of the nominated people's representatives and the result of the vote shall be added to the minutes.

All these documents shall be sent to the district electoral commission without delay.

23. The lists of nominated people's representatives shall be presented by the district electoral commission to the Supreme Electoral Commission for approval. If the Supreme Electoral Commission considers the nomination unlawful, a meeting of the county's toiling people shall take place for a new nomination not later than within 2 days from the communication of the decision of the Supreme Electoral Commission.

Section 20 of the law stated that "the people's representatives shall be nominated at the county meeting of the toiling people convoked by the district electoral commission." But it did not determine who was to take part in the meeting and vote. Evidently the authors of the law did not want to settle this question. In the absence of special provisions it would be presumed that all persons who have the right to vote have the right to take part in the meetings convoked for the nomination of candidates to the People's Diet. However, this was not the case. The Supreme Electoral Commission published the following statement on July 8, 1940:

In connection with requests received on the question as to who had the right to nominate the candidates for the elections of representatives to the People's Diet, the Supreme Electoral Commission decided that the candidates might be nominated by cultural, educational, labor or other public organizations, or working people's associations, possessing permission established by law to carry on their activities.⁶⁹

Thus, the "meetings of the toiling people" for nomination of candidates were not meetings in which all electors were to take part, but

⁶⁸ Vyriausybes Zinios, No. 715, July 6, 1940.

⁶⁹ Vilniaus Balsas, July 9, 1940.

special meetings in which only the members of the above-mentioned organizations were to participate. In this way the nominations of candidates were monopolized by the Communist Party and its affiliated organizations. All other organizations were outlawed.

The same principles, which were established in section 141 of the Constitution of the Soviet Union, were applied in the elections of Lithuania, namely:

Candidates for election are nominated according to electoral areas.

The right to nominate candidates is reserved for public organizations and societies of the working people: Communist Party organizations, trade unions, cooperatives, youth organizations, and cultural societies.

Another striking phase of the electoral law concerning nominations of candidates was:

As many people's candidates for representatives shall be nominated as there are to be elected from the electoral district.

Each electoral district consisted of three counties. The miracle persisted that at the meetings of the "toiling people" the same list of candidates was nominated in every county of the electoral district. It goes without saying that this mystery could be performed only under the leadership of the Communist Party. Thus, the electors had no choice in the selection of candidates. As a matter of fact, such a nomination was equivalent to election. There were no other competing candidates.

F. COMPULSORY VOTING

Voting was compulsory. The law stated:

Everyone shall have the duty to vote (section 24).

To verify whether the voter fulfilled this duty the electoral law provided that—

a notation shall be made on the passport * * * that the bearer of the passport had voted (section 35).

The duty to vote was especially emphasized during the electoral campaign.

The daily newspaper Vilniaus Balsas [Voice of Vilnius] stated in its editorial of July 9:

We have as our teacher the powerful State of the U. S. S. R. which had shown to the toiling people of the whole world how we should work and live.

We have as the fighting vanguard of the working people, the Communist Party, which has never deviated from the straight and right way, leading the working people to a happy future. We have the Red Army which secures freedom and order. The Lithuanian people under its protection can peacefully work and create a brighter future.

We have our People's Government which in a short time has done a gigantic task; it has destroyed in 20 days those things which for 20 years had been forged to exploit and harm the people. The People's Government in 20 days restored the hope of the people to live, granted them freedom to create its future freely, broke all chains of enslavement and destroyed all kinds of parasites.

Persons who do not vote, who do not take part in elections are not concerned with the future of the people. They are the enemies of the people. There is no longer a place for such persons in working Lithuania. [Italics furnished.]

And at the last moment, on election day, the Acting President of the Republic repeated the same threat:

Only the enemies of the people, only the enemies of this new Lithuania may stay home and not participate in this victory march of the Lithuanian people.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ XX Amzius, July 15, 1940.

The threat to single out persons who did not vote as the "enemies of the people" was not just propaganda. Lithuanians were aware of Soviet practice. The "People's" Government said there would be no pity for the "enemies of the people." As early as July 3, 1940, the law on the confiscation of property of fugitives was proclaimed. It provided that the property of those Lithuanians, who *for political reasons* left the country after June 15, 1940, or who had gone into hiding, was to be confiscated. By enacting this law, the Communists hoped to achieve a double purpose: to intimidate the population before the elections, and to create the impression that the private property of loyal citizens would be preserved. Later this law was completely revised. The new law on confiscation of property of refugees and fugitives was enacted on August 8, 1940, retroactive to July 25, 1940. The range of confiscation was extended to include wide categories. At first, the property of all inhabitants of Lithuania, who left the country after June 15, 1940, or who were in hiding, was subject to confiscation (sec. 1). The qualification "for political reasons" and some judicial guaranties which were in the first confiscation law were abolished. Secondly, the property of those persons, "enemies of the people," who left Lithuania before June 15, 1940, *legally or illegally*, and who did not return within one month of the publication of the present law, was also subject to confiscation (sec. 2). The law authorized the Confiscation Commission to decide who shall be considered an enemy of the people.⁷¹ Thus, as a matter of fact, all Lithuanians living abroad became enemies of the people.

G. ELECTORAL PLATFORM

The Communist Party, although recognized as the only legal party in Lithuania, did not dare to organize elections in its own name. For electoral purposes, the Communist Party formed a so-called Union of Working People of Lithuania. In the Soviet Union the elections were organized by the Communist Party in the name of a bloc consisting of the Communist Party and persons without party affiliation. However, this label seemed inappropriate in Lithuania, where the Communist position was very weak. The Communist Party preferred to remain behind the scenes. On the day following the proclamation of the law on elections to the Diet, the Union of Working People of Lithuania presented itself as a bloc. It represented itself as composed of labor unions, representatives of industrial enterprises, and organizations made legitimate by the Minister of the Interior. Among these organizations were Lithuanian Communist Youth Organization, Central Bureau of Labor Union, Freethinkers Association, Tenants Association, Lithuanian People's Relief, and the Lithuanian Communist Party.

The basic aims of the Union of Working People in the electoral platform were established as follows:

- a. Foreign policy:
[To strengthen] the friendship and unshakeable alliance of the Republic of Lithuania and the Soviet Union.
- b. Domestic policy:
 1. To exempt all toiling peasants from unpaid taxes and debts; to abolish all kinds of fines.

⁷¹ For the complete text see appendix A, III, No. 8.

2. To exempt the poor and small landholders from the debts due to the banks.
3. To render aid to the landless and small holders and provide land for them.
4. To improve the situation of labor and employees by increasing salaries and by improving working conditions.
5. To establish social and accident insurance for the working people at the expense of the entrepreneurs or the State.
6. To provide maintenance for old and disabled workers at the expense of the State.
7. To develop people's health institutions, hospitals, sanatoriums, dispensaries, and infirmaries by increasing their number.
8. To develop in general national culture, art, science and people's education.
9. [To secure] complete equality of all nationalities and freedom of religion.
10. To democratize further the People's Army.
11. [To safeguard] freedom of speech, press, meetings, and associations for the defense of the interests of the working people.
12. To establish the civil register of births, deaths, and marriages.
13. [To assure] inviolability of citizens' person and property.
14. To suspend payments of pensions and allowances to the wealthy people and to the enemies of the people; to abolish special personal additional payments to high ranking officials, and to reduce exorbitant salaries for high ranking officials.
15. To reduce rents for apartments and to safeguard the rights of poor tenants.
16. To struggle against speculation.⁷²

Thus, the electoral platform did not mention the incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union. It declared only that there was to be "an unshakable alliance of the Republic of Lithuania with the U. S. S. R."⁷³ Two days later a second more detailed electoral appeal was published. However, there was nothing in this to justify the implication that the People's Diet would introduce the Communist system in Lithuania or would ask that Lithuania be admitted into the Soviet Union. On the contrary, emphatic assurances were given to Lithuanian peasants.

Peasants. We demand that you do not listen to unfounded allegations made up by the enemies of the people that the People's Government would force you to join collective farms, and that it would persecute those who are faithful to their religion. Such allegations are evil slanders and calumnies. By their decisions in the Diet the candidates of the Union of the Working Peoples of Lithuania would assure your right to the land which you are tilling and your undisputable right to shape your life according to your will for the sake of toiling people.⁷⁴

H. VOTING

Once the list of candidates was established, the principal concern of the Communist Party was that the greatest possible number of electors should vote. To accomplish this goal intimidation and police methods were used. All electors were watched, and since each voter had to present his passport to be stamped at the polls, an abstention could not pass unobserved. Those who had no stamps on their passports risked more serious consequences. However, on July 14, 1940, very few people voted (15-20 percent).⁷⁵ Absenteeism was so evident that the Communist Party decided to take some additional measures.

On the evening of July 14, the Acting President of the Republic published a decree extending the voting time until 10 p. m. July 15.⁷⁶

⁷² Vilniaus Balsas, July 7, 1940.

⁷³ Vilniaus Balsas, July 7, 1940.

⁷⁴ Vilniaus Balsas, July 11, 1940.

⁷⁵ Pranas Mickus. Liaudies Seimo Rinkimu Duomenų Klastojimas in Lietuvių Archyvas Bolševizmo Metai, vol. III. Kaunas, Studiju Biuro leidinys, 1942, pp. 17-34.

⁷⁶ Vyriausybės Žinios, No. 717, 1940.

The Supreme Electoral Commission published the following warning:

During the elections to the People's Diet there were cases in which the remnants of the Smetona clique have appeared in a provocative manner on the premises of the electoral precincts: they threw on the ground the ballots with the names of the nominated people's candidates, and made other harmful demonstrations in order to hinder the people in expressing their aspirations.

Moreover, certain voters being unacquainted with the law on elections to the People's Diet put in the envelope only one ballot, supposing that they had to elect only one candidate in the electoral district.

We point out that it is permissible to put into the envelope all ballots of the candidates nominated in the electoral district, which were given to voters on the electoral premises before the election.

It is not at all permissible to throw the ballots on the ground.⁷

The administration issued orders to county chiefs, police, and chiefs of townships to take all necessary measures, to organize transportation to the polls and to warn the population of its duty to vote. As a result the next day the population took part in the "election" and cast their ballots "freely" and with "enthusiasm."

I. RESULTS

On July 17, 1940, the Supreme Electoral Commission published the following statement on the results of elections:

THE LIST OF THE REPRESENTATIVES ELECTED TO THE PEOPLE'S DIET

The Supreme Electoral Commission, in accordance with section 44 of the Law on Election to the People's Diet (V. Z. No. 715, text 5634), and after examination of the records presented by the district electoral commissions has established:

1. In the elections of the People's Diet, which took place on July 14-15, 1940, 1,386,569 voters have submitted, in accordance with Sections 32-35 of the Law on Election to the People's Diet, 1,386,599 envelopes; this represents 95.1 percent of all those who had the right to vote according to Section 1 of the above-mentioned law.

2. For the ticket of the Union of Working People's 1,375,349 voters, or 99.19 percent of all who cast the ballots voted.

3. No complaints on irregularity of voting were submitted.

4. The Supreme Electoral Commission, in accordance with Section 44 of the Law on Election to the People's Diet, and considering that the elections were carried out in conformity with the law, has resolved to publish in Vyriausbyes Zinios the list of representatives elected to the People's Diet.

I. DISTRICT OF KAUNAS

1. Banaitis, Juozas, 32, teacher, director of the Government Radio Service, city of Kaunas.

2. Glotnis, Juozas, 43, peasant, village Darzballiai, township of Krakiai, county of Kedainiai.

3. Garmus, Antanas, 60, physician, city of Kaunas.

4. Venclova, Antanas, writer, 34, Minister of Public Education, city of Kaunas.

5. Petrauskas, Pranas, 42, peasant, village Jokubaiciai, township of Gudziunai, county of Kedainiai.

6. Staskeviciute, Aleksandra, 40, opera singer, city of Kaunas.

7. Bieliauskas, Vytautas, 23, soldier, city of Marijampole.

8. Snieckus, Antanas, 37, director of the Security Agency, city of Kaunas.

9. Sumauskas, Motiejus, 35, chairman of the Chamber of Labor, city of Kaunas.

10. Vinickis, Jankelis, 33, worker, city of Kaunas.

⁷ XX Amzius. July 15, 1940.

II. DISTRICT OF ALYTUS

11. Tamulevicius, Tomas, 25, peasant, town of Alytus.
12. Ballionis, Feliksas, 56, peasant, town of Varena.
13. Balciunas, Kazys, 45, peasant, village of Papiskiai, township of Daugai, county of Alytus.
14. Jaciunskas, Vladas, 30, peasant, township of Simnas, county of Alytus.
15. Pakarklis, Povilas, 38, Minister of Justice, city of Kaunas.
16. Cvirka, Petras, 31, writer, city of Kaunas.
17. Milanciute, Petre, 27, druggist, town of Vievis, county of Trakai.
18. Ramanauskas, Petras, 26, worker, town of Seirijai.
19. Razanauskas, Aleksas, 25, worker, town of Alytus.

III. DISTRICT OF MARIJAMPOLE

20. Meskauskiene, Mikalina, 33, Director of the Department of Land Reform, city of Kaunas.
21. Mickus, Pranas, 38, agronomist, town of Dotnuva.
22. Eidukaitis, Pranas, 60, peasant, village Vaitkabaliai, township of Graziškiai, county of Vilkaviskis.
23. Bieliauskas, Jurgis, 50, peasant, village Maziskes, township of Griskabudis, county of Sakiai.
24. Pleškaitis, Jonas, 45, peasant, village Slobada, township of Bubleliai, county of Sakiai.
25. Demskis, Juozas, 57, peasant, village Kuryne, township of Jankai, county of Sakiai.
26. Dauksys, Petras, 32, joiner, village Birzai, township of Gizai, county of Marijampole.
27. Ditkevicus, Viktoras, 22, soldier, town of Marijampole.

IV. DISTRICT OF UKMERGE

28. Pupeikis, Stasys, 35, teacher of public school, Minister of Communications, city of Kaunas.
29. Malasinskas, Jonas, 41, peasant, village Kavoliai, township of Dusetai, county of Zarasai.
30. Gutauskas, Vladas, 41, peasant, village Taugaiciai, township of Kovarskas, county of Ukmerge.
31. Abakonis, Jonas, 30, peasant, county of Ukmerge.
32. Alisauskas, Jurgis, 29, land worker, township of Slesikai, county of Ukmerge.
33. Dambrauskas, Adomas, 48, land worker, village Guziai, township of Siesikai, county of Ukmerge.
34. Gira, Liudas, 54, writer, city of Kaunas.
35. Guzevicus, Aleksas, 32, journalist, city of Kaunas.

V. DISTRICT OF PANEVEZYS

37. Mickis, Matas, 42, Minister of Agriculture, city of Kaunas.
38. Petrauskas, Kazys, 26, worker, city of Panevezys.
39. Dembo, Icikas, 35, technician, town of Raguva.
40. Laucys Ignas, 52, peasant, township of Obeliai, county of Rokiskis.
41. Dovydenas, Liudas, 33, writer, city of Kaunas.
42. Kutraite, Marija, 29, worker, village Vensnenai, county of Birzai.
43. Murauskas, Stepas, 50, peasant, village Zaideliai, township of Kupiskis.
44. Mikonis, Antanas, 24, worker, town of Birzai.
45. Grigalavicius, Juozas, 27, peasant, village Semetai, county of Rokiskis.
46. Pauksnys, Petras, 38, peasant, county of Birzai.
47. Birzietis, Vladas, 27, technician, student, reserve officer, city of Panevezys.

VI. DISTRICT OF SIAULIAI

48. Paleckiene, Genovaitė, 38, teacher, city of Kaunas.
49. Tverkus, Jonas, 35, small holder, village Bebirviai, township of Simkaiciai.
50. Orintas, Stasys, 31, small holder, village Kungiai, township of Raseiniai.
51. Svitra, Juozas, 22, soldier of II Lancers regiment, town of Taurage.
52. Mackevicius, Nocha, 35, teacher, city of Siauliai.
53. Zibertas, Pranas, 47, worker, town of Kursenai.

54. Rimdzius, Rapolas, 35, worker, city of Siauliai.
 55. Aksionaitis, Pranas, 58, worker, deputy mayor of Jurbarkas, town of Jurbarkas.
 56. Baranauskas, Balys, 38, civil employee, city of Siauliai.
 57. Zebenka, Romanas, 34, agronomist, city of Kaunas.
 58. Kacinskas, Henrikas, 40, actor, city of Kaunas.
 59. Kazimieraitis, Domas, 40, small holder, village Bivainiai, county of Siauliai.
 60. Jasutis, Eduardas, 34, peasant, village Tolosiai, township of Skaisgiris.
 61. Ryliskis, Juozas, 43, worker, town of Taurage.

VII. DISTRICT OF TELSIAI

62. Gedvilas, Mecius, 40, Minister of the Interior, city of Kaunas.
 63. Vaineikiene, Stase, 55, writer, mayor of town Palanga, town of Palanga.
 64. Adomauskas, Liudas, 60, Chief of Government Control, city of Kaunas.
 65. Abdulskaite, Birute, 27, small holder, town of Salantai.
 66. Taurinskas, Jonas, 50, peasant, town of Mazeikiai.
 67. Butkus, Antanas, 31, peasant, village Pulai, county of Kretinga.
 68. Bauza, Antanas, 39, peasant, town of Tveriai.
 69. Rocius, Domas, 36, worker in agriculture, town of Telsiai.

VIII. DISTRICT OF VILNIUS

70. Jendrichovski, Stefan, 30, economist, city of Vilnius.
 71. Wolkowicz, Stanislaw, 46, constructor, city of Vilnius.
 72. Stachelska-Dziezicka, Irena, 29, physician, city of Vilnius.
 73. Didziulis, Karolis, 46, the Plenipotentiary Minister in city of Vilnius.
 74. Jadzgiewicz, Wacław, 56, locksmith, city of Vilnius.
 75. Miceika, Marijonas, 29, joiner, city of Vilnius.
 76. Paszkiewicz, Jan, 48, peasant, village Rudiskiai, county of Vilnius.
 77. Juchnevicius, Romualdas, 34, Director of theater, city of Vilnius.
 78. Budionovas, Ignas, 23, sergeant of the 1st Regiment, city of Vilnius.
 79. Latvis-Friedman, Berelis, 36, lawyer, city of Vilnius.⁷⁸

Regarding the elections to the People's Diet the following conclusions may be drawn :

1. In order to provide a legal pretext for incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union, Moscow ordered the so-called elections to the People's Diet.

2. The so-called elections to the People's Diet were made on the pattern provided by U. S. S. R. electoral practices.

3. The basic elements of the Soviet "elections," described by Julian Towster are as follows :

(a) Essentially, Soviet elections are regarded as neither a means of changing rulers at stated intervals nor a club over them to induce greater responsibility and accountability during their tenure of office.

(b) Soviet elections are viewed primarily as a school of political education and ideological indoctrination, in official verbage "a huge school in which millions of working people deepen and extend their understanding of the party and governmental policy."

(c) Actual practice shows, * * *, that representatives of the party take part in and influence every meeting for nomination of candidate. As a result the one nominee for office is, in accordance with the prevailing custom of putting up only one candidate, the choice of the party as well as of the particular district.

(d) After the candidates have been nominated, the election preparations enter into what the Soviet leaders regard as its most intensive phase: a propaganda campaign is unleashed, despite the fact that to all intents and purposes the election of registered candidate is assured.

(e) Unlike elections in democratic states, they offer no contest of candidates and programs and no determining role in selecting and controlling his governors. All they grant is a vote without choice.

4. The electoral system established by the Law on Elections to the People's Diet and electoral practice in Lithuania have the same essential characteristics as elections in the Soviet Union :

⁷⁸ Supreme Electoral Commission. Kaunas, July 16, 1940. Published in *Vyriausybes Zinios* on July 17, 1940, No. 717.

(a) According to the "prevailing custom" of the Soviet Union there were selected only as many candidates as should be elected in the electoral district.

(b) Only the Communist Party which used the name The Union of Working People's of Lithuania had the right to put up the candidates for the representatives to the People's Diet.

(c) The electoral Law granted to the electors "a vote without a choice".

5. According to the principle established by Lenin that "there could be any number of parties in the Soviet Union on one condition only: that the Communist Party must be in power and all others in jail", the "puppet" Government of Lithuania before elections proclaimed the Communist Party the only legal party, and the leaders of the former political parties were sent to jail on July 11-12, 1940.

6. The population of Lithuania, deprived of means to organize active resistance, expressed its disapproval of the Soviet plan by boycotting the elections. To save face, the "puppet" Government was obliged to extend the elections for one day. It took other measures to "persuade" the people. The negative attitude of the Lithuanian population toward elections was attested officially by the Supreme Electoral Commission which issued a public warning that "it is not at all permissible to throw ballots on the ground."

7. The officially published results on the elections in the districts of Kaunas and Telsiai stated that in the "district of Kaunas 106.18 percent of all who had the right to vote" voted and "In the district of Telsiai—104.84 percent." The results were greater than arithmetic permitted."

8. The Lithuanian people did not and could not express their will in this Soviet-type election; for this election was not an election in a real democratic sense, but it was in fact a selection of candidates made by the Communist Party.

XI. MOVEMENT TO INCORPORATE LITHUANIA INTO THE SOVIET UNION

A. AGITATION BEGINS

As soon as the Supreme Electoral Commission published its decision on the results of the elections, the Communist Party, conforming to the Moscow plan, inaugurated a new series of meetings. It presented as the "demands of the people" that the Stalin constitution be introduced into Lithuania, and that Lithuania become part of the Soviet Union. After all meetings the same conclusions were reached: "the people expressed their will to join their destiny with the happy peoples of the U. S. S. R.", "the people will not stop halfway", "the people undoubtedly had shown" etc. There had been no word about the introduction of the Soviet system in the electoral platform, or in the speeches of the campaign, nor mention of incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union. The agitators ignored the fact that the Lithuanian people abstained from voting on the first day in order to show their determination not to take part in the "elections".

B. FIRST SESSION OF THE PEOPLE'S DIET

On July 21, 1940, the People's Diet convened for its first session. Everything was ready for the consummation of the last act to terminate Lithuanian independence. Instructions were clear and to the point. The People's Diet, a most obedient servant of the Communist Party, executed them promptly and conscientiously.

1. *Declaration on the Form of Government*

In 1 hour and 3 minutes after the opening of the session, the People's Diet adopted the resolution on the form of government which introduced the Soviet system into Lithuania and declared Lithuania a

⁷⁹ XX Amzius, July 20, 1940.

Soviet Republic. As adopted by the People's Diet and proclaimed as a declaration by the Prime Minister, this first resolution stated :

The regime of Smetona, indifferent to the real interests of the people, pushed the Lithuanian internal and external policy into a hopeless impasse. The vital interests of the Lithuanian toilers were sacrificed to the selfish interests of small groups of wealthy people and exploiters. The destiny of the toiling people of the cities and villages were: unemployment, uncertainty for the future, privations, and inequality of ethnic groups. For many years the people were oppressed by this reactionary regime.

The gang of Smetona kept our toiling people in the chains of despotism. The toiling people were deprived of the most elementary freedoms. The people could not have their own political, labor, and cultural organizations. Anyone who dared to voice his honest opinion was mercilessly oppressed.

The aim of the national policy of Smetona was to provoke collisions between the different ethnic groups and to instigate one ethnic group against another. Such national policy was the basis of the usurping Government of Smetona and his gang. This is the reason why for 8 months after the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics recognized the city of Vilnius and its region as a part of Lithuania, national discord in the Vilnius region did not abate but grew stronger.

The interests of the Lithuanian people required the building up of constant and close relations with the U. S. S. R. However, Smetona and his accomplices cultivated a hostile policy toward the U. S. S. R. They pushed our country into semicolonial dependence on individual capitalist robbers, causing great injury to the Lithuanian people and preparing the field for further aggression against the U. S. S. R.

The Lithuanian people could no longer tolerate such arbitrariness and treachery in their relations with foreign governments. The people liquidated the hated Government together with the high administration and so cleared the way for the free elections of the People's Diet, which really could represent the interests of the toiling people and which was constructed by the people's own hands.

The days of July 14-15 were historic days in the life of the toiling people of Lithuania. In these days was born the alliance of workers, peasants, and working intelligentsia. These days marked the victory of the platform of the Union of the Working People of Lithuania. This platform rallied all honest patriots of the country and all who cherished Lithuanian interests.

In these days the Lithuanian people expressed its will to abolish the political domination of landlords and capitalists forever, and also to form a real people's Government and with its own hands to begin the reorganization of the governmental structure of our country. The victory of the Union of the Working People of Lithuania is a historic turning point, granting to the toiling people all civic and political rights, guaranteeing a better future for them and future generations.

The People's Diet, as representative of the sovereign will of Lithuania, being called upon to strengthen its victories achieved in the struggle with plutocrats, considers its main task and duty to resolve the question of the form of the Lithuanian regime on a new basis.

From the great historic experience of the people of the U. S. S. R., we have learned that only the Soviet government is a real representative and defender of the interests of the toiling people, that only the Soviet government is a real people's government, where the country is governed by the people itself without capitalists and landlords. Only the soviets (council of workers) represent a real incarnation of the alliance between workers and peasants.

In the Soviet Union the exploitation of man by man is abolished forever. The guiding principle of all life in the U. S. S. R. is the concern for the well-being of the citizens-human-beings. All working people are granted the right to work, rest, free education, free medical care, and security in old age. The Soviet government is the most democratic government. From the experience of capitalist countries we have learned that every other form of government is the domination of a small group of exploiters and unlimited arbitrariness directed against the toiling people. All toiling people take part in the government through the soviets on an equal basis and contribute to the building up of a free and happy life for all. Only the Soviet system provides the proper conditions to bring up from among the people the necessary leaders and organizers of the state, and of economic and public life. It gives an opportunity for the people to exercise their own talents and abilities. In the U. S. S. R. there is no oppression of ethnical

groups or inequality of those groups. This cursed inheritance is definitely abolished. The introduction of the soviet system in Lithuania, where the overthrown governing gang has initiated the struggle between ethnic groups, will be unique and the most effective guarantee of the equality of ethnic groups and national prosperity. Only the soviet system can assure us peace, work, and freedom and deliver the people of cities and villages from exploitation, misery, and despotism. Only the soviet system can assure us political, economic, and cultural prosperity. All this is proved by the example of the U. S. S. R.

The People's Diet, expressing the unanimous will of the toiling people, proclaims that the soviet system shall be introduced in Lithuania. Lithuania shall be proclaimed a Soviet Socialist Republic. Beginning today all power in the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic shall belong to the toiling people of the cities and villages, represented in the soviets by their own representatives.

The People's Diet is firmly convinced that all inhabitants of Lithuania will rally around the Soviet Government to assure welfare, economic and cultural prosperity, to give our country freedom and happiness, and to lead the country towards final victory of the people.

Long live the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic!

Long live the representatives of the Soviets toiling peoples!

Long live the Soviet Union—fatherland of all toiling people of the world!

Long live comrade Stalin—the Leader and Teacher of all toiling people of the world!

J. PALECKIS,

The Prime Minister, Acting as President of the Republic.

Prof. V. KREVE-MICKEVICIUS,

*Deputy Prime Minister.*⁸⁰

2. *Declaration on the Entrance of Lithuania into the U. S. S. R.*

After a brief intermission following adoption of the resolution on the form of government, the People's Diet adopted the second resolution. Like the previous resolution, this second resolution was proclaimed as a declaration by the Prime Minister on July 21, 1940. This resolution stated:

The Lithuanian people, pitilessly exploited and raped, condemned to misery, and vanishing, have established a new governmental system, a system where the lawful master of the house is the people. This system is the Soviet system. Lithuania has become a Soviet Socialist Republic.

For a long time both labor and intelligentsia in Lithuania suffered from unemployment, and oppressed by misery and lawlessness, they could find no way out. The landless and small peasants of Lithuania were smothered, because the largest part of the land was robbed by landlords and other big owners. In the old Lithuania the only ones who had good living conditions were exploiters, manufacturers, bankers, landlords, and top employees, and those hunting for high profits and incomes have enslaved the toiling people of Lithuania.

Treachorous rulers-Smetonists promoted foreign capital in Lithuania, which raped insatiably and lacerated with rapacious claws the body of the Lithuanian people. The political and economic dependence of Lithuania upon imperialistic robbers and upon foreign capitalists and bankers increased more and more. *Now, the people helped by the mighty Red Army, overthrew the yoke of slavery thrust upon them by Smetonists, and established the Soviet system in their own country.* [Italics furnished.]

The existing Soviet Socialist Republics are not closed and separated one from another, but they constitute an indestructible union. They entered in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics formed on an equal free basis.

From experience we have learned that collaboration between the Soviet republics gave them exceptional prosperity, huge economic and cultural development. In a short time they became the most progressive republics from a political, economic, and cultural point of view. Never would an individual republic achieve such results.

From experience we have learned that only united Soviet republics could oppose imperialistic efforts to enslave small people. Without a state's union of the Soviet republics, without gathering together their economic and military forces into a union it would be impossible to oppose the united forces of capitalists in either economic or in military fields.

⁸⁰ Kaunas, July 22, 1940. Published in the Vyriausybės Žinios on July 22, 1940, No. 719.

The Lithuanian people know that the policy of the Soviet Union toward Lithuania was friendly at all times. If Lithuania was not seized by the landlords of Poland, if the old Lithuanian capital Vilnius was returned to Lithuania, if Lithuania could stay away from World War fire, *if the Lithuanian people could establish in their country the only just system of government—Soviet Government—it is all due to the Soviet Union.* Therefore, the Lithuanian people in all times have seen a better future in closer relationship with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. [Italics furnished.]

The reactionary criminal clique of former Lithuanian rulers obstructed by every means the fraternal relationship between Lithuania and the U. S. S. R.

Now, the Lithuanian people, freed from violence and lawlessness and having established a new state and social order, shall ratify by law a firm friendship and union between the Lithuanian Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Lithuanian People's Diet is convinced that only entrance in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will guarantee the true sovereignty of the Lithuanian State, the real development of industry and economy, the real blossom of national culture, and the complete development of material and spiritual forces of the people.

Obedient to the will of the people, who overthrew the old regime of oppression and lawlessness, the regime of exploitation of man, the People's Diet resolved:

To ask the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. to admit the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic in the body of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a union republic on the same basis as the Ukrainian, the Byelorussian, and other union republics.

Long live the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Long live the great Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics.

J. PALECKIS,

Prime Minister, Acting as President of the Republic.

Prof. V. KREVE-MICKEVICIUS,

Deputy Prime Minister.

KAUNAS, July 22, 1940.⁸¹

At least 58 of the 79 members of the Diet were Communists. They knew upon whom the real authority rested. On July 13, the secretary of the Communist Party central committee stated openly:

Comrades. The People acquired their freedom not accidentally. During 22 years the working people of Lithuania struggled in the worst conditions of reaction. The best sons and daughters have lost their lives for freedom. *At all times, our best friend, the Soviet Union, has helped us * * ** [Italics furnished.]

Finally, *the Soviet Union helped us to overthrow the yoke of Smetonists* under which we suffered more than 13 years. For this paternal aid no gratitude would be too great * * * [Italics furnished.]

Today, the Communist Party, is a strong and decisive force in Lithuanian life. It became such because it was closely connected with the people and served them, because it always was led by the science of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin, because it was under the leadership of the Comintern, and finally because the pilot of the Comintern was Comrade Dimitrov. It is a guarantee that the Communist Party will not stop halfway and will not deceive the people.⁸²

Moreover, the People's Diet did not forget to render an expression of gratitude to the real power responsible for its success. In the Declaration on the Entrance of Lithuania into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics it stated formally:

*Now, the people, helped by the mighty Red Army * * * have established in their country the Soviet Government * * *. If the people have been able to establish in their country the only just order—the Soviet order—it is all due to the Soviet Union.*

On August 30, 1942, after the outbreak of the German-Soviet war and after the Red army was driven from Lithuania, eight members of the People's Diet—⁸³ together with Prof. V. Kreve-Mickevicius,

⁸¹ Published in the Vyriausybes Zinios on July 22, 1940, No. 719.

⁸² Lietuvos Aidas, July 13, 1940.

⁸³ Dr. A. Garmus; Agronomist Pr. Mickus; R. Juknevicius; St. Vaineikiene; L. Dovydenas; H. Kacinskas, V. Birzietis, and P. Milanclute.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs in the People's Government and Jurgis Glusauskas, former Commissar of Social Maintenance and Lumber Industry, adopted a resolution which dealt with the electoral procedure and various other activities of the People's Diet. After pointing out a number of broken Soviet promises to Lithuania, the resolution declared that:

(c) The majority of the deputies who did not belong to the Communist Party were constrained by threats to become members of the Diet and to vote for the incorporation of Lithuania into the U. S. S. R.;

(d) During the voting for this incorporation in the U. S. S. R., the ballots of the deputies were not counted, and persons who were strangers to the Diet were seated during the session with the deputies and voted with them;

5. No deputy of the People's Diet could protest against such an act of violence in view of the fact that all who protested during this state of things faced possible death. The delegate of Moscow, Mr. Dekanozov, and members of the Legation of the U. S. S. R. openly threatened those of the deputies of the People's Diet [and their families] who voiced their decision not to vote for the incorporation of Lithuania into the U. S. S. R. during the session of the Diet;

6. We, former deputies of the People's Diet, raise a public protest against the methods of violence and falsification which, on the part of the Bolshevik Government, were directed against the Republic of Lithuania and the Lithuanian Nation during its activity. Neither we, nor the other deputies of the Diet of the People, could express and did express the will of the Lithuanian Nation for incorporation in the U. S. S. R.⁸⁴

By the two resolutions which called for the introduction of the Soviet system in Lithuania and for admission of Lithuania into the Soviet Union, the People's Diet fulfilled the essence of the Soviet ultimatum. That was a logical consequence of the Soviet action, but in no way did this illegal proceeding represent the will of the Lithuanian Nation. The campaign was initiated by the Soviet Government and faithfully executed by the Lithuanian Communist Party under the direction of the Soviet emissaries Dekanozov and Pozdniakov. Events which took place in Lithuania after June 14, 1940, were the result of Soviet pressure. They constituted nothing but the history of the enslavement of Lithuania. The Lithuanian Nation made none of these decisions. Its will was paralyzed by the Soviet military and by NKVD agents. However, the decisions were carried out in the name of the Lithuanian people: in its name, the People's Government spoke and acted; in its name, meetings and demonstrations were organized; in its name, articles on electoral campaign were written, and in its name, candidates to the People's Diet were designated. Always behind the scene was the strong hand of Dekanozov. As one writer observed:

The decisions of July 21-23 mark the end of independent national government in the Baltic countries. An English author aptly characterised them as "violence masquerading as legal acts" and compared their contents with a document whereby a householder might have signed away all his silver to a burglar holding him at the point of a revolver.⁸⁵

C. DECISION OF THE SUPREME SOVIET OF THE U. S. S. R.

On August 3, 1940, the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. decided to "receive favorably the demand of the Lithuanian Diet and to admit the Soviet Socialist Republic of Lithuania into the Union."^{85a}

⁸⁴ Memorandum on the Restoration of Lithuania's Independence, published by the Lithuanian Executive Council, 1950, p. 75.

⁸⁵ Swettenham, John Alexander. *The Tragedy of the Baltic States*. London, Hillers and Carter, 1952, p. 78.

^{85a} For documents relating to the first Soviet occupation of Lithuania, see appendix B.

The law stated :

Law on the Admission of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Having heard the report of the Plenipotentiary Commission of the Seimas (Diet) of Lithuania, the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has decided :

1. to grant the request of the Seimas (Diet) of Lithuania and to admit the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as an equal Federal Soviet Socialist Republic ;
2. to accept the proposal of the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SRR on the cession of the rayon [District or County] of Svencionys and parts of the rayons of Vidziu, Godutiskiu, Ostroveckiu, Varonovskiu, and Rodunes of the Byelorussian SSR, territories with a predominantly Lithuanian population, to the Federal Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic ;
3. to ask the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Supreme Soviet of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic to submit for consideration a draft of the exact delimitation of the frontiers between the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic ;
4. to carry out elections, in accordance with sections 34 and 35 of the Constitution (basic law) of the U. S. S. R., to the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. in the Federal Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic ;
5. to authorize the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. to set the day of elections.

The Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R.—

U. Kalinin.

The Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R.—

A. Gorkin.⁸⁶

In a declaration made by Professor Kirsanov to the Lithuanian artists, writers, and musicians in May 1940 the Soviet plan for Lithuania, consummated by the above document, was set down in clear and definite terms :

Peter the Great was the first monarch who understood the interests of Russia : to occupy the Baltic countries and to come nearer to the Atlantic Ocean. Some people may call the Soviet Union an imperialist country. Yes, we are the vanguard the proletariat and in this sense imperialists. By destiny or by its spirit the peoples of the Soviet Union are marching by way of revolution and communism in order to save the world. The Baltic countries were occupied by force because they were not ripe for bolshevism, but we Bolsheviks, we shall not consider and we do not consider what means are to be used until every foot of land or every person is under the shadow of the red flag. The early and at the same time honorable incorporation of the Baltic peoples into the Soviet Union is not an accidental event but a logical consequence of the Communist-Bolshevik policy and its liberation of peoples.

And he warned :

Drop your dream of liberation. The Soviet Union will march through the world even through ruins and fire. Revolution shall be a revolution.⁸⁷

Thus, in the case of Lithuania the doctrine which was proclaimed by Lenin was totally applied. As William Bullitt, former United States Ambassador to the Soviet Union, observed :

This supreme moral end, the Communist believes, justifies all means for its achievement, including war, murder, character assassination, the pledged word given and broken. In the words of Lenin : "It is necessary * * * to use any ruse, cunning, unlawful method, evasion, concealment of truth."⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Sed'maja Sesija Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR, 1 avgusta—7 avgusta 1940 g. Stenograficheskii otchet, Izdanie Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR 1940, p. 186.

⁸⁷ L. Dovydenas, Mano kelias i Liaudies Selma in Lietuviu Archivas, Bolsevizmo Metal, vol. III, Kaunas, Studiju Biuro leidinys.

⁸⁸ W. Bullitt. Op. cit., p. 79. Lenin quotation in Lenin, The Infantile Sickness of Leftism in Communism, 1920.

D. PROTESTS OF LITHUANIAN DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES

The only authorized representatives of the Lithuanian Nation were the diplomatic representatives. Except for those representatives of Lithuania in Latvia, Estonia, and the Soviet Union who could not escape from Soviet control, all Lithuanian diplomatic representatives unanimously condemned the Soviet aggression and presented their solemn protests against the falsification of the will of the Lithuanian Nation.

Reproduced below are protests made by the Lithuanian diplomatic representatives abroad to the governments to which they were accredited and their protests sent to Kaunas:

No. 867

LITHUANIAN LEGATION,
Washington, D. C., July 22, 1940.

The Honorable CORDELL HULL,
Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

SIR: Referring to my communication of July 13, 1940, concerning the national crisis precipitated by the Soviet Union's unlawful intervention in Lithuania's internal affairs, I have the honor to invite your attention to the nature of that intervention and to the results that followed.

On October 10, 1939, Lithuania formally entered into a Mutual Assistance Pact with the Soviet Union, which was based on nonintervention in internal affairs of either High Contracting Party. Limited garrisons of Soviet troops in Lithuania were agreed upon. Lithuania, for obvious reasons, scrupulously observed all the requirements of the Pact and expected, naturally, reciprocal attitude from her colossal neighbor.

During the short period of comparative tranquility, satisfaction was expressed by Soviet authorities concerning the treatment accorded the Red Army garrisons in Lithuania. But on May 25, 1940, like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky came the news that Soviet officials advanced certain charges regarding mistreatment of Red Army soldiers in Lithuania, such as kidnappings and even death of a soldier, presumably a deserter; there were also accusations directed against the Entente of the Baltic States; charges and accusations not substantiated as yet.

All efforts on the part of the Lithuanian Government to wipe out all possible misunderstandings and suspicions and to placate the Soviet authorities, were in vain; even Prime Minister Merkys' trip to Moscow did not bring any betterment of the situation nor did it obtain the necessary cooperation of the Soviet authorities in clarifying their charges.

At midnight of June 14th, the Soviet Union Commissar for Foreign Affairs presented an ultimatum to Mr. Urbsys, the Lithuanian Minister for Foreign Affairs, who was in Moscow at that time by order of Prime Minister Merkys. Only nine hours were given in which to comply with the terms of the ultimatum which were as follows: (1) the prosecution of officials responsible for the alleged provocative acts against the Red Army garrisons; (2) the formation of a pro-Soviet government; (3) the admission into Lithuania of an unlimited number of Soviet troops.

If the government of Mr. Merkys could be accused of any guilt, it certainly was guilty not of provocative acts against the Red Army garrisons, but perhaps of too lenient an attitude towards them. In this instance it is well to recall an opinion of one great American statesman that, "The presence of troops of one country on the soil of another constitutes prima facie evidence of aggression."

Although the terms of the Soviet ultimatum were incompatible with the letter and spirit of the Mutual Assistance Pact and undoubtedly constituted an illegal intervention in Lithuania's internal affairs, the Lithuanian Government, under the circumstances and in view of the imminent invasion of the Red Army, complied with the terms and resigned. General Rastikis was designated by the President of the Lithuanian Republic to form a new government, but this move, which was the last act of the free government, failed because of the Soviet stand taken. Mr. Justas Paleckis, the Soviet's choice, was named Prime Minister instead.

Concerning the Soviet Union's demand for unlimited numbers of Red Army troops to be stationed in Lithuania, it must be observed that such a demand should have been prompted by some emergency or by an anticipated attack by some European Power, as stipulated by Article Five of the Mutual Assistance Pact. But the plain fact is that there was no emergency and no anticipated attack from anywhere. And if the Soviet Union's demand to increase her army garrisons in Lithuania were to constitute an extension of the Mutual Assistance Pact, there is no doubt that there was no formal agreement entered into and ratified as required by law.

On June 15, 1940, numerous Red Army divisions crossed Lithuania's frontiers at several points. H. E. Antanas Smetona, President of the Republic of Lithuania, as stated in my previous note, departed from the country and went abroad without tendering his resignation as President. A few hours later a special Commissar from Moscow arrived by plane to Kaunas to supervise the formation of a new government. Thus on June 17, 1940, the Paleckis government came into being, as related in my note of June 25, 1940.

The parliamentary elections of July 14 and 15 were guarded by devastating numbers of foreign troops, supervised by a special emissary from a foreign capital and managed exclusively by one Party (the Communist Party) with a single list of candidates, while other political parties that stand for the country's independence were barred from the polls. Therefore, such elections, regardless of the high voting rate, as reported by the press despatches are illegal in all respects as, under the above described circumstances, they not only cannot and do not represent the true will of the free people, but at the same time they aim at the very heart of national existence by usurping the sovereignty rights of the free Lithuanian Nation as defined in Article One of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania. This illegally elected body, the Seimas (Parliament), on July 21, 1940, according to telegraphic despatches from Kaunas, declared that from now on Lithuania is a Soviet Republic and requested membership in the Union which, of course, was granted in advance by the Soviet government.

Thus with the creation of the Paleckis government, with the Red Army present in all parts of Lithuania and new elections carried out to suit its purposes, the government of the Soviet Union, using the most modern methods of veiled aggression accomplished its task—the destruction of the independence of the Lithuanian Republic at such a time when peaceful conditions prevailed and the development of friendly relations had a fair chance of success. This evil act was committed by Soviet stratagem while the Lithuanian-Soviet Union Non-Aggression Treaty was still in effect and the clause of non-intervention in internal affairs only eight months old.

The Treaty of Non-aggression between Lithuania and the Soviet Union sounds rather ironical in present circumstances:

ARTICLE 2. The Republic of Lithuania and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics mutually undertake to respect in all circumstances the sovereignty and territorial integrity and inviolability of each other.

ARTICLE 3. Each of the two contracting parties undertakes to refrain from any aggressive action whatsoever against the other party."

And another document worth while recalling at this time is the Convention for the Definition of Aggression, signed in London, July 4, 1933, of which the Soviet Union was the initiator and signatory. Article 2 of the Convention reads as follows:

"Accordingly, the aggressor in an international conflict shall, without prejudice to the agreements in force between the Parties to the dispute, be considered to be that State which is the first to commit any of the following actions:

"(a) * * *

"(b) Invasion by its armed forces, with or without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State;

"(c) * * *

ARTICLE 3. No political, military, economic or other considerations may serve as an excuse or justification for the aggression referred to in Article 2."

The Soviet Union, concerned solely with her own interests, found it expedient to deny even the elementary rights to her smaller neighbor. This, evidently, is the common way of an aggressor.

As a duly appointed representative of the sovereign State of Lithuania, I voice my solemn protest against the unprovoked aggression and occupation of Lithuania by the Red Army of the Soviet Union and subsequent incorporation of Lithuania into that Union, engineered by the Government of the Union of

the Soviet Socialist Republics. Lithuania, with her rich historic traditions dating back from the XII century, her ancient language, her devotion to religion and western culture, has the undisputable right to independence and free economic development. During twenty-two years of independent existence, Lithuania, comprising 24,000 square miles of territory and with her population of three million souls, who differ racially and linguistically from the Soviet Russians, thanks only to the spirit of independence was able to convincingly demonstrate to her neighbors and to the world her ability of self-government and to achieve rapid progress in every respect.

In view of the foregoing, I deem it my duty to register my plea and my hope that the Government of the United States of America, champion of legal intercourse among nations, will consider this present Soviet occupation of Lithuania as an illegal act contrary to the spirit of International Law, and will accord, if possible, every assistance to Lithuanian citizens wherever there are no legal representatives of the Lithuanian State.

Accept, Sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

P. ZADEIKIS,
*Minister of Lithuania.*⁸⁵

No. 1009

LITHUANIAN LEGATION,
Washington, D. C., August 3, 1940.

The Honorable CORDELL HULL,
Secretary of State, Washington, D. C.

SIR: According to information available, the supreme Soviet authority of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics on August 3, 1940 made a move to incorporate the Republic of Lithuania into the Soviet Union, thus not only completing a process whereby the Lithuanian nation has been deprived, temporarily at least, of her independence and the possibility of exercising her sovereignty rights, but also inflicting untold suffering and misery upon the innocent people.

The government of the Soviet Union, in order to camouflage its devious methods of aggression and to confuse world opinion, was eager to base this ignominious move against Lithuania's integrity on a resolution made in Moscow but adopted in Kaunas on July 21, 1940 by the Seimas (Parliament) which, in fact, was elected illegally and was one of the byproducts of the Soviet invasion. But the Soviet leaders for obvious reasons failed to mention the Lithuanian-Soviet treaties broken by them: the Treaty of Nonaggression, for example, extended to 1945; the Lithuanian-Soviet Russian Peace Treaty of July 12, 1920, the first Article of which reads as follows:

"Relying on the strength of a declaration made by the Federal Soviet Socialist Republic of Russia to the effect that all peoples of every nationality have the right of self-determination and complete separation from the State to which they belonged previously, Russia, without any reservation whatsoever, recognizes Lithuania as a self-governing and independent State with all juridical consequences that follow from such a recognition and in a spirit of free and good will renounces all sovereignty rights of Russia concerning the Lithuanian nation and Lithuanian territory which previously belonged to her. The fact that Lithuania for some time was under Russian sovereignty does not impose on the Lithuanian people and their territory any obligations towards Russia."

As the so-called Parliamentary elections of July 14 and 15, 1940, and the forced adoption of a resolution to join the Soviet Union were utterly void of legality, as referred to in my previous note of July 22, 1940, so is the incorporation of Lithuania, together with her historic capital Vilnius and the Vilnius District, into the Soviet system a lawless act, contrary to elementary rules of international conduct—an act that is in fact the final phase of veiled aggression and imposition by threat of force of the Soviet's will upon its weaker neighbor.

As the duly accredited representative of the Sovereign Republic of Lithuania near the Government of the United States of America I repeat my protest against the unprovoked aggression and illegal incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union and at the same time express the hope of the Lithuanian nation that no State in the world will recognize this international outrage as having any legality or bona fide excuse.

I take this opportunity to express my most profound gratitude to the American Government for the stand taken in this matter as evidenced in the statement by

⁸⁵ From the Archives of the Lithuanian Legation, Washington, D. C.

the Honorable Acting Secretary of State on July 23, 1940, and hope that the American Government will continue to refuse legal recognition of the Soviet's aggressive acts against Lithuania's integrity and independence.

Accept, sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

P. ZADEIKIS,
Minister of Lithuania.⁸⁹

1153

23d JULY, 1940.

The Rt. Hon. VISCOUNT HALIFAX, K. G., P. C., G. S. C. I., G. C. I. E.,
His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,
*Foreign Office, London, S. W. 1.*⁹⁰

MY LORD: I consider it my painful duty to inform you that my country has become a victim of unprovoked aggression committed by the Soviet Government in violation of a series of treaties by which the Soviet Government had solemnly undertaken to abstain from direct or indirect aggression against Lithuania.

2. As late as 10th October, 1939, a treaty was concluded between the Soviet Union and Lithuania, providing for the stationing of a limited number of Russian garrison troops in Lithuania, ostensibly for the mutual protection of both States. This treaty contains the following provision:

"The fulfilment of the present treaty shall not in any way affect the sovereign rights of the contracting parties, particularly their State organization, economic and social system, military methods, and generally, the principle of nonintervention in internal affairs. (Article VII)."

3. On June 14, 1940, on the pretext of entirely false charges, the Soviet Government abruptly confronted my Government with an ultimatum, presented at midnight of that day and expiring nine hours later; demanding unlimited occupation of Lithuania by Soviet military forces and the formation of a new Government acceptable to the U. S. S. R. while the entire country came under the rigid occupation of the Soviet military forces.

5. On July 14th and 15th, elections were staged for the return of a new Parliament which, on July 21st, decided unanimously, it is claimed, to surrender the independence of Lithuania and asked for incorporation into the U. S. S. R.

6. It must be obvious to any impartial and unprejudiced observer that neither the "elections" held under the pressure of foreign occupational troops nor the so-called Parliament constituted under such conditions can in any manner whatsoever reflect the will of the Lithuania people: they did not possess a shred of electoral liberty or the remotest possibility of expressing their true wishes.

7. In these circumstances, my duty as a representative of the Lithuanian people in this country, is to voice a most solemn protest against this wanton act of aggression against my country. At the same time, I wish to declare that I am unable to recognize as valid and binding any decision of the Parliament elected under foreign domination or any act of the Government formed and acting under duress.

8. Bringing the above to the notice of His Majesty's Government, I venture to hope that His Majesty's Government, themselves engaged in a struggle "till freedom for ourselves and others is secured" (to use your Lordship's own inspiring words of yesterday) will decline to recognize the acts depriving Lithuania of her freedom.

I have the honour to be,

With the highest consideration,

My Lord,

Your obedient Servant,

B. K. BALUTIS.

The Lithuanian Minister in Germany (Skirpa) to the Reich Foreign Minister:
3991

BERLIN, July 21, 1940.

Herr Reich Minister: I have the honor, Excellency, to bring the following to your attention:

As is already known, on June 14, 1940, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics presented an ultimatum to Lithuania under flimsy and unjustified pretexts, in which it was demanded:

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

1. that the constitutional government of Lithuania be forced to resign immediately ;
2. that the Minister of the Interior and the Chief of the State Security Police be tried without preferring charges based on law, and
3. that free and unlimited entry of Soviet military forces into Lithuania be granted.

On the following day the Russian Red Army, after having attacked the Lithuanian frontier guards, crossed the Lithuanian border and occupied all of Lithuania. Furthermore, a puppet government was forced upon us by a high Soviet official sent from Moscow for this purpose, and the entire administration was put under the control of the Government of the Soviet Socialist Republics.

In order to incorporate Lithuania fully into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, elections to the Seim (Parliament) were ordered on July 14, resulting in the greatest falsification of the will of the Lithuanian population.

In order to quell any expression of resistance, even before the elections, all Lithuanian clubs and organizations were suppressed, the Lithuanian press was seized and its editors removed by force, and the more or less influential personalities in public life were arrested. People who previously were considered open enemies of the Lithuanian State were appointed to Government offices, particularly in the State Security Police.

The Communist Party was the only political organization which was allowed to function legally. And it then exerted the decisive influence on the scheduled elections. Only one list of candidates was permitted, namely, the one that was agreeable to the Communist Party.

In order to force the necessary participation in the elections anybody who did not wish to vote was threatened with being declared an enemy of the people, and personal attendance was strictly checked.

It was immediately obvious that the Seim, elected under such circumstances, was only a blind tool in the hands of the Communist Party and thereby of the Government of the Soviet Socialist Republics. Today, on July 21, 1940, the Seim adopted a resolution to establish the Soviet system within the country and to incorporate Lithuania into the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics of Russia.

All these measures of the Government of the U. S. S. R. amount to a flagrant violation of all treaties signed between the Republic of Lithuania and the U. S. S. R., in particular however :

1. of the Peace Treaty of July 12, 1920, by which the U. S. S. R. as successor of the former Russian Czarist Empire recognized unconditionally the independence and autonomy of Lithuania, and by which she renounced forever all rights of sovereignty which Russia previously had over Lithuania (see article 1) ;

2. of the Nonaggression Pact of September 22, 1926, and its renewals of May 6, 1931, and of April 4, 1934. In this Pact the U. S. S. R. obligates herself to respect the sovereignty of Lithuania as well as her territorial integrity and inviolability under all circumstances (see article 2) and to refrain from any use of force (article 3) ;

3. of the Mutual Assistance Pact of October 10, 1939, in which the Government of the U. S. S. R. repeats a solemn assurance to Lithuania not to violate in any way the sovereignty of the Lithuanian State, as well as its internal order.

In view of all these circumstances I feel compelled as the Minister appointed by the constitutional agencies of the Republic of Lithuania and accredited to the German Reich to lodge the most solemn and determined protest against the oppression of my country and the deprivation of sovereignty and national independence of Lithuania by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and to declare that because the above-mentioned resolution of the Seim was imposed by Russian occupation authorities, it amounts to nothing but the most outrageous falsification of the expression of the will of the Lithuanian people and that it is in the sharpest conflict with the constitution and interests of the Lithuanian State, as well as the free right of self-determination of nations, and that, therefore, it cannot be recognized as valid in any way.

I avail myself of the opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurance of my highest consideration.

K. SKIRPA.⁹¹

⁹¹ Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-1941. P. 169.

No. 200

LITHUANIAN LEGATION AT THE HOLY SEE,
*Rome, July 22, 1940.*To His Eminence LOUIS CARDINAL MAGLIONE,
*Secretary of State of His Holiness,
Vatican City.*

EMINENCE: On July 21 (1940), a gathering in Kaunas, assuming the name of the People's Seimas, passed a resolution, asking the Muscovite Government to accept Lithuania into the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics. This Seimas was constituted under direct pressure from the Soviet Government, which, on June 15, as we remember, ordered a very great number of troops to invade the whole territory of the Republic of Lithuania. Thus the carrying on of administrative functions, provided by the Constitution and laws, became impossible. The Soviet Union took into its own hands control of the administration of the Republic.

Therefore, the Muscovite Government has flagrantly violated the Peace Treaty of July 12, 1920, the Non-aggression pact of September 28, 1926, which was to remain in force until December 31, 1945, the Convention on Definition of the Aggressor of July 5, 1933, the Mutual Assistance Pact of October 10, 1939, and the universally recognized principles of international law.

Under such circumstances, I, as the Minister to the Holy See, duly accredited by the constitutional authorities of Lithuania, deem it my honor to

state that the resolution of the so-called Seimas which has been imposed by a foreign government, is illegal and completely inconsistent with the will of the Lithuanian people, who will never recognize this violation of its right to be free, independent and sovereign in its own country;

to protest publicly against the unprovoked aggression by the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, which had violated the treaties, the principles of international law and the sovereignty of Lithuania;

to ask the Holy See not to recognize the incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union.

On this occasion it is my honor to beg Your Eminence to accept the assurance of my highest respect and consideration.

GIRDVAINIS,
*Minister of Lithuania.*⁹²

No. 200

LITHUANIAN LEGATION IN ITALY,
*Rome, July 22, 1940.*To His Excellency Count GALEAZZO CIANO,
*Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Rome.*

EXCELLENCE: On July 21 (1940), a gathering in Kaunas, assuming the name of the People's Seimas, passed a resolution, asking the Muscovite Government to accept Lithuania into the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics. This Seimas has been constituted under direct pressure from the Soviet Government, which, on June 15, as we remember, ordered a very great number of troops to invade the whole territory of the Republic of Lithuania. Thus the carrying on of the administrative functions, provided for by the Constitution and the laws, became impossible. The Soviet Union took into its own hands control of the administration of the Republic.

Therefore, the Muscovite Government has flagrantly violated the Peace Treaty of July 12, 1920, the Non-aggression Pact of September 28, 1926, which was to remain in force until December 31, 1945, the Convention on Definition of the Aggressor of July 5, 1933, the Mutual Assistance Pact of October 10, 1939, and the universally recognized principles of international law.

Under such circumstances, I, as the duly accredited Minister to His Majesty the King of Italy and Albania and the Emperor of Ethiopia by the constitutional authorities of the Lithuanian state, deem it my honor to

⁹² Is Bolsevistines Vergijos i Navja Lietuva Vilnius, Lietuvos Informacijos Biuras.

protest publicly against the unprovoked aggression by the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, which had violated the treaties, the principles of the international law and the sovereignty of Lithuania;

to state that the resolution of the so-called Seimas, which has been imposed upon by a foreign government, is illegal and completely inconsistent with the will of the Lithuanian people, which will never recognize this violation of its right to be free, independent and sovereign in its own country;

I beg you, dear Minister, to accept the assurance of my highest consideration.

ST. LOZORAITIS.⁸⁸

No. 909

LITHUANIAN LEGATION,
Buenos Aires, July 22, 1940.

To His Excellency Mr. JOSE MARIA CANTILLO,
Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Buenos Aires.

DEAR MINISTER: After the so-called Lithuanian Seimas had yesterday decided to ask for the incorporation of Lithuania into the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, it is my honor, as Minister of Lithuania to Argentina, to forward to the attention of the Government of Argentina the following statement:

(1) The so-called Seimas does in no way represent the will of the Lithuanian people;

(2) The elections to this Seimas and the resolution, passed by it, was made under the oppression of the Soviet Russian army which, as it may be remembered, had in advance occupied the territory of the Republic of Lithuania;

(3) Under such circumstances and following the true will of the Lithuanian people, I deem it my honor to express my most open and extremely urgent protest against the violation of the independence of Lithuania, perpetrated by the Soviet Union;

(4) All the ministers of Lithuania, accredited to foreign governments in accordance with the unquestionable will of the people, with all means in their possession, to preserve and to defend their own nation, refuse to recognize this illegal incorporation of Lithuania into the U. S. S. R. I firmly believe that the Government of Argentina will graciously support our attitude.

In forwarding this statement to Your Excellency, I reserve my right to explain more precisely in which way the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics had violated its treaties and solemn obligations with Lithuania.

Please accept, dear Minister, the assurance of my highest consideration.

DR. KAZIMIERAS GRAUZINIS.⁸⁹

NOTE.—On the same day similar notes were addressed to Mr. Alberto Guani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uruguay, Mr. Oswaldo Arana, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brazil and to many ambassadors and envoys in the capital of Argentina.

BERNE, July 23, 1940.

DEAR PRESIDENT: It is my honor to bring to the attention of the Federal Government of Switzerland the following:

On July 14, of this year, the so-called Government of Lithuania, imposed by the Muscovite army, which on June 15 of this year had invaded my country, held the "elections" to the Seimas.

These elections were a sad farce and a clear falsification of the intentions of the Lithuanian people. The Communist Party, legalized after the Red Army had invaded the country, was the only political party, which had monopolized all rights and liberties. Only a single candidate list of the "Union of Working Peoples of Lithuania," dominated by the Communists and their fellow-travellers, was permitted.

On July 21 of this year this "assembly," constituted under the armed terror of the Soviets and controlled and directed by the emissaries from the USSR, had voted to incorporate the Republic of Lithuania into the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

By this action the government of the U. S. S. R. had flagrantly violated the following treaties, duly concluded with the Republic of Lithuania :

The Peace Treaty of July 12, 1920,

The Non-aggression Treaty of September 28, 1926,

The Convention on the Definition of Aggression of July 3, 1933,

The Mutual Assistance Pact and the Treaty on returning Vilnius and the Vilnius region to Lithuania of October 10, 1939.

In view of the foregoing, as a duly accredited Extraordinary Envoy and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Lithuania to the Federal Government of Switzerland, I deem it my honor to declare that the above-mentioned resolution of the so-called Seimas, imposed by the Soviet Government,

(1) is completely inconsistent with the will of the Lithuanian people,

(2) is unlawful and illegal and as such must be regarded as null and void.

The people of Lithuania will never recognize the violation of its most sacred and inalienable right to Independence and Sovereignty.

Thus, being faithful to the idea of national independence and to the duties of a qualified representative of his country, I voice my most solemn protest against the unprovoked and flagrant act of aggression on the part of the U. S. S. R., in violation of valid treaties, the formal obligations of international law and the sovereignty of the Republic of Lithuania.

Therefore I express my solidarity with all the representatives of Lithuania, accredited to the foreign governments, in their refusal to recognize this aggression and the violation of the sovereignty of the Republic of Lithuania, and I permit myself to express hope that the Swiss Federal Government will meet this attitude with sympathy.

I beg you, Mr. President, to accept the assurance of my highest consideration.

DR. J. SAULYS.⁹⁵

NOTE.—Mr. Saulys addressed a similar note to the Government of Hungary, and Mr. Turauskas to the Governments of Rumania and Yugoslavia.

No. 657 5/4 A72

LITHUANIAN LEGATION,
Stockholm, July 23, 1940.

DEAR MINISTER: In connection with the declaration of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic and the resolution, asking that it be admitted into the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics of July 21, 1940, I as the duly accredited Envoy of the constitutional and independent Republic of Lithuania to Sweden, deem it my duty to forward to the Swedish Government the following statement :

According to the Lithuanian-Soviet treaty of October 10, 1939, § 7, the Government of the Soviet Union had solemnly promised not to interfere in the internal affairs of Lithuania. On June 15 of this year the Government of the Soviet Union has disgracefully broken its promises, by occupying the whole territory of Lithuania, by forcing the legal government to resign and by forming in its place the puppet government, the members of which have been selected by the Soviet Union. From the legal point of view, this puppet government was unconstitutional because, after the elected President had left the country, the new government was appointed by the former chief of government, who had resigned and did not hold any constitutional powers.

This pro-Soviet government soon proclaimed elections to the Seimas, i. e., to the Representative Body of Lithuania. Only one political party was permitted in the pre-election campaign, and the single list of candidates, proposed by this party, was distributed to the election districts. By terror and force, the people of Lithuania were then pushed to the polls. Finally, by falsifying the election results, the Soviet Government succeeded in forming this prearranged Seimas, even by the so-called large participation of voters.

The fatal resolutions, passed by this so-called parliament on July 21, are inconsistent with the true will of the people, with their most sacred interests, and with the constitution of a free Republic. It is easy, even for a foreigner, to understand that a people, which for centuries fought for national, cultural, and political freedom, could not voluntarily accept the Russian yoke, being under no illusions of the consequences.

In the same manner, as the Czarist regime, which allowed our fighters for freedom to suffer the hardships in Siberia, its successor—the Soviet regime—

⁹⁵ Ibid.

embarked upon the same road, even more outrageously, by jailing and deporting for an unlimited term the leaders of free Lithuania.

My countrymen, living in an oppressed and sorrowful country, are deprived of the possibility to appeal to worldwide public opinion against the methods of violence, perpetrated by the Soviet government, methods which are unknown to the civilized world.

I respectfully ask Your Excellency to bring to the attention of his Majesty's Government of Sweden that—

(1) the Soviet Union, by occupying Lithuania, had outrageously broken its solemn obligations,

(2) the elections to the Seimas were carried out by terror,

(3) the resolution, passed by the pro-Muscovite people's representatives, establishing the Soviet regime in our country and incorporating it into the Soviet Union, is inconsistent with the will and interests of our people.

In view of the foregoing, I voice my most vigorous protest.

I firmly hope that His Majesty's Government of Sweden will not recognize the change in the status of the Republic of Lithuania, which brought about by force, and I beg Your Excellency to accept the assurance of my most respectful consideration.

VYTAUTAS GYLIS.*

NOTE.—A similar note was sent to His Majesty's Danish Government.

HOTEL DE LILAS,
Vichy, August 4, 1940.

To His Excellency Mr. BAUDOIN,
Minister of Foreign Affairs.

DEAR MINISTER: According to the official Soviet News Agency, the Supreme Soviet of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, complying with the will, expressed by the so-called representatives of the Lithuanian people, elected on July 14 and 15 and assembled in Kaunas on July 21, had decided to incorporate the independent State of Lithuania into the U. S. S. R.

It is my honor to point out to Your Excellency, in addition to my verbal explanations, that these people's representatives were appointed, after the territory of the Republic of Lithuania had been occupied by the army of the U. S. S. R. which, in violation of every right, on June 15, 1940, had entered, in great numbers, into Lithuania. The elections were imposed by a single, specially selected, list of candidates. The people were deprived of the possibility to offer any other list of candidates. The freedom of assembly and discussions were abolished. There was no provision guaranteeing the regularity of voting and ballot counting. The desired results were published in advance, even before the elections were over.

It is clear that under such circumstances the elected body of representatives cannot be regarded as expressing the true will of the people. Neither the resolution passed by this body of the so-called people's representatives, and requesting the incorporation of Lithuania into the U. S. S. R., may in any way be regarded as consistent with the will of the Lithuanian nation, which for centuries had fought for freedom and independence.

From this viewpoint, the government of the U. S. S. R. had committed an act of aggression, by using military force and by violating the principles of international law and the obligations expressed in the Peace Treaty on July 12, 1920, the Non-aggression Pact of 1926, which had been reaffirmed many times hereafter, the Briand and Kellogg Pact of 1928, the Convention on Definition of Aggression of 1933, and, finally, the recently concluded Pact of Mutual Assistance and Non-interference in internal affairs of October 10, 1939.

I deem it my duty to bring to your attention this flagrant violation of international law perpetrated by the Government of the U. S. S. R. As the duly accredited Minister of the free and independent State of Lithuania to France which had recognized Lithuania *de jure* and with which Lithuania had always entertained the most cordial and friendly relations, I ask the French Government not to recognize this act of violence, by which the U. S. S. R. had occupied my country.

* Ibid.

I firmly hope that the French Government will acknowledge the right of the Lithuanian people to live in freedom and independence, and I beg you, Sir, to accept the assurance of my highest and most cordial consideration.

P. KLIMAS,
Extraordinary Envoy and Minister Plenipotentiary of Lithuania.

N. B. A similar note was sent to the Government of Portugal.⁷⁷

BERN, July 23, 1940.

To Professor KREVE-MICKEVICIUS,
Minister of Foreign Affairs.

DEAR PROFESSOR: As one of the founders of Lithuanian Independence and the duly accredited representative of the Republic of Lithuania, I am forced by the events in Lithuania, which have received a response all over the world and especially in the hearts of all Lithuanians, to address to you, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, the following statement.

When after the Russian invasion you took over the Foreign Ministry, I hoped that you would watch and defend the interests of Lithuania.

This was the reason why I sent a telegram wishing you success in your work for the welfare of Lithuania.

In my subsequent letter I warned you against the danger, which arose under new circumstances, and brought to your attention the necessity of a united resistance against the hurricane, coming from the East.

You did not deem it necessary to respond either to my telegram or my letter, I became gravely concerned, especially because of the changing character of speeches and demonstrations on the part of the Council of Ministers which itself, little by little, had changed and became more Communist. The Ministers were placed there by the Muscovite agents. Thus a certain Glovackas was attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, though I was not officially informed by you on his appointment. I learned from the newspapers that he had been educated in Moscow and was a fullblooded Communist. You will understand why I could not respond to his wireless instructions.

This would not be so important, if there were not some more serious things.

As soon as the Russian Bolsheviks had occupied Lithuania, the Bolshevik began to monopolize all activities. The army was disorganized, many were arrested and deported. In short, preparations were pushed ahead, under cover and by the pressure of foreign occupation, to make the people accept the Bolshevik "paradise." Finally the so-called "elections" were completed, and by a vote of this pro-Muscovite "Seimas" the bolshevization and incorporation of Lithuania into the Bolshevik Russia had been decided.

Thus ended the fraternization between our parlor Bolsheviks and Bolshevik Russia, along the line of the proverb "tell me who are your friends, I'll tell you who you are." In other words—under disguise of bolshevism and with the cooperation of our greenhorn Communists and fellow-travellers, the Russian imperialist policy had achieved its goal by suppressing our independence for which our unfortunate people so laboriously fought and built up by their united efforts.

Obviously not everything was perfect in our independent Lithuania. Many things had to be altered. But whoever tries to justify the present oppression of Lithuania by the Bolshevik Russia by her former shortcomings, will soon learn what those almonds of the so-called Russian paradise do really mean.

I hardly need to say that, as a citizen of independent Lithuania and her legal representative, I cannot recognize the institutions and the acts of the institutions passed under pressure of a foreign State, be it the falsification of the people's will in the so-called elections, be it the resolution passed by the so-called Seimas, which aimed at the bolshevist Russia. On the contrary, I deem it my duty to protest most vigorously against all the acts perpetrated under the pressure of Russian military forces of occupation, which lead to the destruction of the Independence of Lithuania, and to declare that those acts are illegal and do not bind either the Lithuanian people, State, or myself, as representative and citizen of Independent Lithuania.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

Accordingly, my future activities will be directed against the occupation of Lithuania and for restoration of her Independence.

Up until now, Professor, I respected you as a Lithuanian writer and patriot, and I thought that cooperation with you might be possible for the sake of Lithuania, even under unpleasant circumstances of foreign occupation. Now I see our roads went clearly apart: you went along with the oppressors of Lithuania; I must fight them with all my soul.

Therefore, I cannot wish you good luck.

I wish from all my heart: let the curse of the Lithuanian people fall upon its oppressors and their lackies!

DR. J. SAULYS.⁹⁸

To The Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

Whereas the Soviet Union, despite the whole series of nonaggression pacts, including the Treaty on definition of aggressor, had violated the Independence of Lithuania and actually occupied (her) by sending in its military forces, and whereas the so-called elections to the Seimas were carried out under the pressure of these forces, without permitting the people of Lithuania to express their true will, and whereas the so elected Seimas, without being able to represent the true will of Lithuanian people, had to yield to the will imposed upon it by forceful action of a foreign country, and to pass a resolution destroying the Independence of Lithuania and delivering her under the yoke of a foreign power, the liberation from which had been achieved through the blood of her sons in a life-long struggle. I, therefore, cannot consider, under the present circumstances, that these elections were legal and that this Seimas was competent to decide upon the future of Lithuania. As the duly accredited representative of independent and free Lithuania, whose duties are to defend her interests abroad, I would fail to fulfill my sacred obligations, if I had not protested against this outrageous act of a foreign country, or against the resolution of the Seimas which had destroyed the freedom and Independence of Lithuania so laboriously achieved. I regard all these resolutions and acts of the Seimas and the government as illegal and unjust, and not binding either upon myself or upon any decent Lithuanian. Thus, in fulfilling my duties of the Representative of Independent Lithuania, I presented a note of protest to the British Government on this violent action of the Soviet Union against Lithuania. Long live free and independent Lithuania!

JULY 25, 1940.

BALUTIS 138.⁹⁹

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kaunas

The so-called Seimas, elected under the pressure of Russian troops and composed solely of the Bolsheviks, cannot express the true will of the Lithuanian people. I protest against the unlawful and obviously treacherous resolutions, seeking to sovietize and to subjugate Lithuania under the Russians. I will never stop fighting for the Independence of Lithuania.

BUENOS AIRES, July 31, 1940.

GRAUZNIS,
Envoy of Lithuania.¹

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kaunas:

In view of the resolution of July 21, (1940), passed by the so-called Seimas and incorporating Lithuania into the Soviet Union I declare:

primo: the so-called Seimas, constituted under military occupation, oppression and terror of a foreign country which had broken treaties and principles of international law and committed an act of aggression, is not a representative body, but a tool in the hands of oppressors;

secundo: its resolutions do not express the will of the Lithuanian nation, and bind neither the people of Lithuania nor myself, the legal representative of the independent and sovereign state of Lithuania;

tertio: I protest with horror against the treacherous resolution, aiming at the destruction of the Independence of Lithuania, which was restored after centuries—long sacrifices, devotion and battles.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹ Ibid.

As long as the hearts of Lithuanians will beat, they will fight for the restoration of the old and noble State of Lithuania. The Independence of Lithuania will be restored.

LOZORAITIS,
*Minister of Lithuania.*³

ROME, August 1, 1940.

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kaunas:

Long live free and independent Lithuania which you are burying. The spirit of our forefathers, the deeds of Daukantas and Basanavicius, the songs of Malronis, the efforts of all Lithuanians will restore her, independent and great.

She will be still greater when she is smirched by the mercenary traitors; she will be still purer after she has washed her face with the blood of her martyrs and heroes. Protesting against the transgressors who want to sell out Lithuania, I am confident that the whole country, from the Gates of Dawn to the Mountain of Birute, from the birthplace of Vaizgantas to the grave of Kudirka, agrees with me despite your efforts to suppress their voice with foreign bayonets.

MINISTER OF LITHUANIA AT THE HOLY SEE [GIRDVAINIS].⁴

ROME, August 1, 1940.

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kaunas:

I regard the occupation of our Fatherland and its incorporation into Russia, by deceit and violence, as illegal acts, contrary to the will of the people and pernicious to Lithuania. I agree with the whole civilized world that the last elections were incompatible with the principles of law and the principle of free elections. In the July 21 resolution of the Seimas I see the fulfillment of Czarist imperialism, and not the realization of our ideals. Therefore, I deem it my duty to protest against the oppression of our Fatherland.

GYLYS,
*Envoy of Free Lithuania.*⁴

STOCKHOLM, August 1, 1940.

E. DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES DEPRIVED OF LITHUANIAN CITIZENSHIP

The so-called "People's" Government reacted against the protests of the Lithuanian diplomatic representatives by depriving them of citizenship, by forbidding them to return to Lithuania, and by confiscating their property. On August 14, 1940, the decision of the Council of Ministers was published and the names of the following Lithuanian diplomatic representatives were listed:⁵

Kazys Skirpa, as of July 23, 1940
Bronius Balutis, as of July 26, 1940
Povilas Zadeikis, as of July 26, 1940
Vytautas Gylys, as of August 2, 1940
Stasys Lozoraitis, as of August 2, 1940
Stasys Girdvainis, as of August 2, 1940
Kazys Griauzintis, as of August 2, 1940
Jurgis Saulys, as of August 2, 1940

³ Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ In *Vytautas Zinios*, No. 725, Aug. 15, 1940.

APPENDIX A

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE BALTIC STATES¹

I. Baltic States

1. TREATY OF DEFENSIVE ALLIANCE BETWEEN ESTONIA AND LATVIA, SIGNED AT TALINN, NOVEMBER 1, 1923, RATIFIED ON FEBRUARY 21, 1924²

THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA and the REPUBLIC OF LATVIA, being firmly resolved to maintain the national sovereignty and independence which they have gained at the cost of heavy sacrifices, and to preserve their territorial integrity, have decided to conclude a treaty of defensive alliance.

For this purpose they have appointed as their plenipotentiaries:

ESTONIA:

M. FR. AKEL, Minister for Foreign Affairs;

LATVIA:

M. Z. A. MEIEROVICS, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Who, having communicated their full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed upon the following provisions:

Article 1.

The High Contracting Parties undertake to follow a wholly pacific policy, directed towards maintaining and strengthening the bonds of friendship and developing their economic relations with all nations, more particularly with the Baltic and neighboring countries.

Article 2.

The two Governments undertake to coordinate their efforts for peace by consulting each other on such questions of foreign policy as are important to both, and by affording each other political and diplomatic assistance in their international relations.

Article 3.

The High Contracting Parties undertake to afford each other assistance should either of them suffer an unprovoked attack on its present frontiers.

Accordingly, should one of the High Contracting Parties suffer an unprovoked attack, the other shall consider itself in a state of war and shall furnish armed assistance.

Article 4.

The competent technical authorities of the Estonian Republic and of the Latvian Republic shall determine by common agreement the manner in which the two countries will assist each other, and shall establish the necessary provisions for the execution of Article 3 of the present Treaty.

¹ For other important documents bearing on Baltic domestic and international relations, see U. S. Congress. House. Select Committee To Investigate the Incorporation of the Baltic States into the U. S. S. R. of the Committee on Rules and Administration, House of Representatives. Hearings. Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1954. Pt. 1. pp. 473-537.

² League of Nations. Treaty series, vol. 23 (1924), No. 578, pp. 82-85.

Article 5.

Should the High Contracting Parties, notwithstanding their efforts for peace, find themselves in a state of defensive war, as defined in Article 3, they undertake that neither will separately negotiate or conclude an armistice or peace.

Article 6.

All disputed questions which may arise between the High Contracting Parties, and which cannot be settled by diplomatic means, shall be laid before the Court of International Justice or submitted to international arbitration.

Article 7.

Neither of the High Contracting Parties shall conclude an alliance with a third power without the consent of the other Party. Each undertakes to communicate to the other forthwith the text of any treaties which it may have concluded with any other State or States.

Article 8.

The present Treaty shall remain in force for ten years from the date of the exchange of ratifications, thereafter either of the two Contracting Parties may denounce it on giving one year's notice to the other Party.

Article 9.

The present Treaty shall be communicated to the League of Nations for registration and publication.

Article 10.

The present Treaty shall be ratified, and the instruments of ratification shall be exchanged at Riga as early as possible.

In faith whereof the plenipotentiaries have signed the present Treaty and have thereto affixed their seals.

Done in duplicate at Tallinn on November 1st, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-three.

(Signed) FR. AKEI.

(Signed) Z. A. MELEROVICHS

2. TREATY OF PARIS²

PROTOCOL, SIGNED AT MOSCOW, FEBRUARY 9, 1929, BETWEEN ESTONIA, LATVIA, POLAND, ROUMANIA AND THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS, FOR THE IMMEDIATE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE TREATY OF PARIS OF AUGUST 27, 1928, REGARDING RENUNCIATION OF WAR AS AN INSTRUMENT OF NATIONAL POLICY

French official text communicated by the Polish Delegate accredited to the League of Nations and the Estonian Minister for Foreign Affairs. The registration of this Protocol took place June 3, 1929.

The Government of the Estonian Republic, the President of the Latvian Republic, the President of the Polish Republic, His Majesty the King of Roumania and the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, being desirous of promoting the maintenance of peace between their respective countries and for this purpose of putting into force without delay, between the peoples of those countries, the Treaty for the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy, signed at Paris on August 27, 1928, have decided to achieve this purpose by means of the present Protocol and have appointed as their Plenipotentiaries:

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ESTONIAN REPUBLIC:

M. Julius SELJAMAA, Estonian Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Moscow;

² League of Nations. Treaty Series, 1929, #2028, pp. 371-379. Deposit of ratifications: Latvia, March 5, 1929; Estonia, March 16, 1929; Poland, March 30, 1929; Roumania, March 30, 1929.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LATVIAN REPUBLIC:

M. Charles A. DAVILA, His Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister plenipotentiary at Warsaw and

THE PRESIDENT OF THE POLISH REPUBLIC:

M. Stanislaw PATEK, Polish Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Moscow;

HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF ROUMANIA:

M. Charles A. DAVILA, His Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at Warsaw and

THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS:

M. Maxime LITVINOFF, Member of the Central Executive Committee, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs *ad interim*,

Who, having communicated their full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed as follows:

Article I.

The Treaty for the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy, signed at Paris on August 27, 1928, a copy of which is attached to the present Protocol as an integral part of that instrument, shall come into force between the Contracting Parties after the ratification of the said Treaty of Paris of 1928 by the competent legislative bodies of the respective Contracting Parties.

Article II.

The entry into force in virtue of the present Protocol, of the Treaty of Paris of 1928 in reciprocal relations between the Parties to the present Protocol shall be valid independently of the treaty into force of the Treaty of Paris of 1928 as provided in Article III of the last named Treaty.

Article III.

1. The present Protocol shall be ratified by the competent legislative bodies of the Contracting Parties, in conformity with the requirements of their respective constitutions.

2. The instruments of ratification shall be deposited by each of the Contracting Parties with the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics within one week of the ratification of the present Protocol by the respective Parties.

3. As from the date of the deposit of the instruments of ratification by two of the Contracting Parties, the present Protocol shall come into force between those two Parties. In reciprocal relations between the other Contracting Parties and the States for which it has already come into force, the Protocol shall come into force as and when their instruments of ratification are deposited.

4. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall immediately notify the deposit of the several ratifications to all the signatories to the present Protocol.

Article IV.

In order to give effect to Article I of the present Protocol, each of the High Contracting Parties, after ratification by its legislative bodies of the Treaty of Paris of 1928, shall immediately notify the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and all the other Parties to the present Protocol, through the diplomatic channel.

Article V.

The present Protocol shall be open for the accession of the Government of all countries. Notification of final accession shall be made in the name of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which shall duly notify all the other Parties to the present Protocol. Immediately on receipt of such notification of accession, the present Protocol shall be put into force in reciprocal relations between the acceding State and all the other Parties to the present Protocol.

Article VI.

The entry into force, in virtue of the present Protocol, of the Treaty of Paris of 1928, in reciprocal relations between the acceding State and all the other Parties to the said Protocol, shall be effected in the way laid down in Article IV of the Protocol.

Article VII.

The present Protocol has been drawn up in a single copy, an authentic copy of which shall be communicated by the Government of the Soviet Socialist Republics to each of the signatory or acceding States.

In faith whereof the above-mentioned Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Protocol and affixed their seals thereto.

Done at Moscow, February 9, 1929.

(L. S.)	(Signed)	Jul. SELJAMAA.
(L. S.)	(Signed)	C. OZOLS.
(L. S.)	(Signed)	St. PATEK.
(L. S.)	(Signed)	DAVILA.
(L. S.)	(Signed)	MAXIME LITVINOFF.

ANNEX.

The President of the German Reich, the President of the United States of America, His Majesty the King of the Belgians, the President of the French Republic, His Majesty the King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, His Majesty the King of Italy, His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, the President of the Republic of Poland, the President of the Czechoslovak Republic, deeply sensible of their solemn duty to promote the welfare of mankind;

Persuaded that the time has come when a frank renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy should be made to the end that the peaceful and friendly relations now existing between their peoples may be perpetuated;

Convinced that all changes in their relations with one another should be sought only by pacific means and be the result of a peaceful and orderly process, and that any signatory Power which shall hereafter seek to promote its national interests by resort to war should be denied the benefits furnished by this Treaty;

Hopeful that, encouraged by their example, all the other nations of the world will join in this humane endeavour and by adhering to the present Treaty as soon as it comes into force bring their peoples within the scope of its beneficent provisions, thus uniting the civilized nations of the world in a common renunciation of war as an instrument of their national policy;

Have decided to conclude a Treaty and for that purpose have appointed as their respective Plenipotentiaries:

THE PRESIDENT OF THE GERMAN REICH:

Dr. Gustav STRESEMANN, Minister for Foreign Affairs;

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA;

The Honorable Frank B. KELLOGG, Secretary of State;

HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF THE BELGIANS:

Mr. Paul HYMANS, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister of State;

THE PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC:

Mr. Aristide BRIAND, Minister for Foreign Affairs;

HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF GREAT BRITAIN, IRELAND AND THE BRITISH DOMINIONS BEYOND THE SEAS, EMPEROR OF INDIA:

FOR GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND AND ALL PARTS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE WHICH ARE NOT SEPARATE MEMBERS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS:

The Right Honourable Lord CUSHENDUN, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs;

FOR THE DOMINION OF CANADA.

The Right Honourable William Lyon Mackenzie KING, Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs;

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA:

The Honourable Alexander John McLACHLAN, Member of the Executive Federal Council;

FOR THE DOMINION OF NEW ZEALAND:

The Honourable Sir Christopher James PARR, High Commissioner for New Zealand in Great Britain;

FOR THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA:

The Honourable Jacobus Stephanus SMIT, High Commissioner for the Union of South Africa in Great Britain;

FOR THE IRISH FREE STATE:

Mr. William Thomas COSGRAVE, President of the Executive Council;

FOR INDIA :

The Right Honourable Lord CUSHENDUN, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs ;

HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF ITALY :

Count Gaetano MANZONI, His Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at Paris ;

HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR OF JAPAN :

Count UCHIDA, Privy Councillor ;

3. TREATY OF GOOD UNDERSTANDING AND CO-OPERATION BETWEEN ESTONIA, LATVIA AND LITHUANIA. SIGNED AT GENEVA, SEPTEMBER 12, 1934. RATIFIED ON NOVEMBER 10, 1934*

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA, THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA and the PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA.

Having decided to develop co-operation between the three countries and to promote closer understanding between the Baltic States,

Being firmly determined to play their part in maintaining and guaranteeing peace and to co-ordinate their foreign policy in the spirit of the principles of the Covenant of the League of Nations,

Have resolved to conclude a Treaty and have appointed as their Plenipotentiaries for that purpose :

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA :

His Excellency Monsieur STASYS LOZORAITIS, Minister for Foreign Affairs ;

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA :

His Excellency Monsieur JULIUS SELJAMAA, Minister for Foreign Affairs ;

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA :

Monsieur VILHELMS MUNTERS, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ;

Who, having communicated their full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed as follows :

Article 1.

In order to co-ordinate their efforts in the cause of peace, the three Governments undertake to confer together on questions of foreign policy which are of common concern and to afford one another mutual political and diplomatic assistance in their international relations.

Article 2.

For the purpose set forth in Article 1, the High Contracting Parties hereby decide to institute periodical conferences of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the three countries, to take place at regular intervals, at least twice a year, in the territories of each of the three States in turn. At the request of one of the High Contracting Parties and by joint agreement, extraordinary conferences may be held in the territory of one of the three States or elsewhere.

Each Conference shall be presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State in whose territory it takes place ; if, however, a Conference meets outside the territory of the three States, its President shall be the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the country in whose territory the previous Conference was held.

The President in office shall be responsible for the execution of the decisions taken by the Conference over which he has presided, and, when necessary, shall be instructed to provide for the application of such decisions in the field of international relations.

The periodical Conferences of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Estonia and Latvia provided for in Articles 1 and 2 of the Treaty between Latvia and Estonia for the organization of the Alliance, signed at Riga on February 17, 1934, shall be placed by the above-mentioned Conferences for the duration of the present Treaty.

* League of Nations *Treaty Series*. Vol. 154, page 98 and foll.

Article 3.

The High Contracting Parties recognize the existence of the specific problems which might make a concerted attitude with regard to them difficult. They agree that such problems constitute an exception to the undertakings laid down in Article 1 of the present Treaty.

Article 4.

The High Contracting Parties shall endeavor to settle amicably and in a spirit of justice and equity any questions in respect of which their interests may clash and also to do so in the shortest possible time. They agree to negotiate with each other such agreements as may appear suitable for attaining this end.

Article 5.

The three Governments shall give instructions to their diplomatic and consular representatives abroad and to their delegates to international conferences to establish appropriate contact.

Article 6.

The High Contracting Parties undertake to communicate to one another forthwith the text of the treaties concluded between one of them and one or more other States.

Article 7.

The present Treaty is open for accession by other States, such accession to take place only if all the High Contracting Parties consent thereto.

Article 8.

The present Treaty shall be ratified; it shall come into force upon the deposit of ratifications which shall take place at Riga. The Government of Latvia shall transmit to each of the two other High Contracting Parties a certified true copy of the process-verbal of the deposit of ratifications.

Article 9.

The present Treaty shall be in force for ten years. Should the Treaty not be denounced by one of the High Contracting Parties one year before the expiry of that period, it shall be extended by tacit consent and shall cease to have effect one year after its denunciation by one of the High Contracting Parties.

In faith whereof the above-mentioned Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Treaty and have affixed their seals thereto.

Done at Geneva, in triplicate, this 12th day of September, 1934.

(Signed) ST. LOZORAITIS
J. SELJAMAA
V. MUNTERS

DECLARATION

Upon signing the Treaty of this day's date, the Plenipotentiaries of Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia hereby declare that their respective Governments will foster the growth and general diffusion in their respective countries of the spirit of mutual understanding and friendship among the three nations and they bind themselves to take or to promote all suitable measures and efforts to that end.

Done at Geneva, in triplicate, this 12th day of September, 1934.

(Signed) ST. LOZORAITIS
J. SELJAMAA
V. MUNTERS

4. TREATY OF NONAGGRESSION BETWEEN GERMANY AND THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS^{*}

The Government of the German Reich and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics desirous of strengthening the cause of peace between Germany and the U. S. S. R., and proceeding from the fundamental provisions of the Neutrality Agreement concluded in April 1926 between Germany and the U. S. S. R., have reached the following agreement:

ARTICLE I

Both High Contracting Parties obligate themselves to desist from any act of violence, any aggressive action, and any attack on each other, either individually or jointly with other powers.

ARTICLE II

Should one of the High Contracting Parties become the object of belligerent action by a third power, the other High Contracting Party shall in no manner lend its support to this third power.

ARTICLE III

The Governments of the two High Contracting Parties shall in the future maintain continual contact with one another for the purpose of consultation in order to exchange information on problems affecting their common interests.

ARTICLE IV

Neither of the two High Contracting Parties shall participate in any grouping of powers whatsoever that is directly or indirectly aimed at the other party.

ARTICLE V

Should disputes or conflicts arise between the High Contracting Parties over problems of one kind or another, both parties shall settle these disputes or conflicts exclusively through friendly exchange of opinion or, if necessary, through the establishment of arbitration commissions.

ARTICLE VI

The present treaty is concluded for a period of ten years, with the proviso that, in so far as one of the High Contracting Parties does not denounce it one year prior to the expiration of this period, the validity of this treaty shall automatically be extended for another five years.

ARTICLE VII

The present treaty shall be ratified within the shortest possible time. The ratifications shall be exchanged in Berlin. The agreement shall enter into force as soon as it is signed.

Done in duplicate, in the German and Russian languages.

Moscow, August 23, 1939.

For the Government
of the German Reich:
V. RIBBENTROP

With full power of the
Government of the U. S. S. R. :
V. MOLOTOV

Secret Additional Protocol

On the occasion of the signature of the Nonaggression Pact between the German Reich and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics the undersigned plenipotentiaries of each of the two parties discussed in strictly confidential conversations the question of the boundary of their respective spheres of influence in Eastern Europe. These conversations led to the following conclusions:

^{*} U. S. Department of State. Nazi-Soviet relations, 1939-1941. Documents from the Archives of the German Foreign Office. Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1948. Pp. 76-78.

1. In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement in the areas belonging to the Baltic States (Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), the northern boundary of Lithuania shall represent the boundary of the spheres of influence of Germany and the U. S. S. R. In this connection the interest of Lithuania in the Vilna area is recognized by each party.

2. In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement of the areas belonging to the Polish state the spheres of influence of Germany and the U. S. S. R. shall be bounded approximately by the line of the rivers Narew, Vistula, and San.

The question of whether the interests of both parties make desirable the maintenance of an independent Polish state and how such a state should be bounded can only be definitely determined in the course of further political developments.

In any event both Governments will resolve this question by means of a friendly agreement.

3. With regard to Southeastern Europe attention is called by the Soviet side to its interest in Bessarabia. The German side declares its complete political disinterestedness in these areas. (The following footnote was made by editors of Nazi-Soviet relations:)

The German text of this article of the Protocol is as follows: "Hinsichtlich des Südostens Europas wird von sowjetischer Seite das Interesse an Bessarabien betont. Von deutscher Seite wird das völlige politische Desinteressement an diesen Gebieten erklärt." For a statement by the Reich Foreign Minister concerning the discussion of these subjects at the time of the conclusion of the Nonaggression Pact, see Ribbentrop's memorandum for Hitler of June 24, 1940, *post*, p. 157.

4. This protocol shall be treated by both parties as strictly secret.

Moscow, August 23, 1939.

For the Government
of the German Reich:
V. RIBBENTROP

Plenipotentiary of the
Government of the U. S. S. R.:
V. MOLOTOV

5. GERMAN-SOVIET BOUNDARY AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY.*

The Government of the German Reich and the Government of the U. S. S. R. consider it as exclusively their task, after the collapse of the former Polish state, to re-establish peace and order in these territories and to assure to the peoples living there a peaceful life in keeping with their national character. To this end, they have agreed upon the following:

ARTICLE I.

The Government of the German Reich and the Government of the U. S. S. R. determine as the boundary of their respective national interests in the territory of the former Polish state the line marked on the attached map, which shall be described in more detail in a supplementary protocol. (Not printed here.)

ARTICLE II.

Both parties recognize the boundary of the respective national interests established in article I as definitive and shall reject any interference of third powers in this settlement.

ARTICLE III.

The necessary reorganization of public administration will be effected in the areas west of the line specified in article I by the Government of the German Reich, in the areas east of this line by the Government of the U. S. S. R.

ARTICLE IV.

The Government of the German Reich and the Government of the U. S. S. R. regard this settlement as a firm foundation for a progressive development of the friendly relations between their peoples.

* *Ibid.*, pp. 105-108.

ARTICLE V.

This treaty shall be ratified and the ratifications shall be exchanged in Berlin as soon as possible. The treaty becomes effective upon signature.

Done in duplicate, in the German and Russian languages.

Moscow, September 28, 1939.

For the Government
of the German Reich:
J. RIBBENTROP

By authority of the
Government of the U. S. S. R. :
W. MOLOTOW

Confidential Protocol

The Government of the U. S. S. R. shall place no obstacles in the way of Reich nationals and other persons of German descent residing in the territories under its jurisdiction, if they desire to migrate to Germany or to the territories under German jurisdiction. It agrees that such removals shall be carried out by agents of the Government of the Reich in cooperation with the competent local authorities and that the property rights of the emigrants shall be protected.

A corresponding obligation is assumed by the Government of the German Reich in respect to the persons of Ukrainian or White Russian descent residing in the territories under its jurisdiction.

Moscow, September 28, 1939.

For the Government
of the German Reich:
J. RIBBENTROP

By authority of the
Government of the U. S. S. R. :
W. MOLOTOW

Secret Supplementary Protocol

The undersigned Plenipotentiaries declare the agreement of the Government of the German Reich and the Government of the U. S. S. R. upon the following:

The Secret Supplementary Protocol signed on August 23, 1939, shall be amended in item 1 to the effect that the territory of the Lithuanian state falls to the sphere of influence of the U. S. S. R., while, on the other hand, the province of Lublin and parts of the province of Warsaw fall to the sphere of influence of Germany (cf. the map attached to the Boundary and Friendship Treaty signed today). As soon as the Government of the U. S. S. R. shall take special measures on Lithuanian territory to protect its interests, the present German-Lithuanian border, for the purpose of a natural and simple boundary delineation, shall be rectified in such a way that the Lithuanian territory situated to the southwest of the line marked on the attached map should fall to Germany.

Further it is declared that the economic agreements now in force between Germany and Lithuania shall not be affected by the measures of the Soviet Union referred to above.

Moscow, September 28, 1939.

For the Government
of the German Reich:
J. RIBBENTROP

By authority of the
Government of the U. S. S. R. :
W. MOLOTOW

Secret Supplementary Protocol

The undersigned plenipotentiaries, on concluding the German-Russian Boundary and Friendship Treaty, have declared their agreement upon the following:

Both parties will tolerate in their territories no Polish agitation which affects the territories of the other party. They will suppress in their territories all beginnings of such agitation and inform each other concerning suitable measures for this purpose.

Moscow, September 28, 1939.

For the Government
of the German Reich:
J. RIBBENTROP

By authority of the
Government of the U. S. S. R. :
W. MOLOTOW

Declaration of the Government of the German Reich and the Government of the U. S. S. R. of September 28, 1939

After the Government of the German Reich and the Government of the U. S. S. R. have, by means of the treaty signed today, definitively settled the problems arising from the collapse of the Polish state and have thereby created a sure foundation for a lasting peace in Eastern Europe, they mutually express their conviction that it would serve the true interest of all peoples to put an end to the state of war existing at present between Germany on the one side and England and France on the other. Both Governments will therefore direct their common efforts, jointly with other friendly powers if occasion arises, toward attaining this goal as soon as possible.

Should, however, the efforts of the two Governments remain fruitless, this would demonstrate the fact that England and France are responsible for the continuation of the war, whereupon, in case of the continuation of the war, the Governments of Germany and of the U. S. S. R. shall engage in mutual consultations with regard to necessary measures.

Moscow, September 28, 1939.

For the Government
of the German Reich:
J. RIBBENTROP

By authority of the
Government of the U. S. S. R. :
W. MOLOTOW

6. BALTIC REPUBLICS¹

Statement by the Acting Secretary of State, Mr. Welles, relating to the incorporation of the Baltic states

[Released to the press July 23]

During these past few days the devious processes whereunder the political independence and territorial integrity of the three small Baltic republics—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—were to be deliberately annihilated by one of their more powerful neighbors, have been rapidly drawing to their conclusion.

From the day when the peoples of these republics first gained their independent and democratic form of government the people of the United States have watched their admirable progress in self-government with deep and sympathetic interest.

The policy of this Government is universally known. The people of the United States are opposed to predatory activities no matter whether they are carried on by the use of force or by the threat of force. They are likewise opposed to any form of intervention on the part of one state, however powerful, in the domestic concerns of any other sovereign state, however weak.

These principles constitute the very foundations upon which the existing relationship between the 21 sovereign republics of the New World rests.

The United States will continue to stand by these principles, because of the conviction of the American people that unless the doctrine in which these principles are inherent once again governs the relations between nations, the rule of reason, of justice, and of law—in other words, the basis of modern civilization itself—cannot be preserved.

¹ U. S. Department of State. The Department of State Bulletin. Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, July 27, 1940. Vol. III, No. 57, p. 48.

II. Estonia

[Translation from Estonian]

1. RESOLUTION OF ESTONIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE SUPREME POWER *

November 15/28, 1917

Since the governmental authority in Russia has been completely destroyed as the result of general disorder and the fight between various factions, and since there is no central authority recognized in all parts of the State, the Provisional Estonian National Council as the legitimate and democratically elected representative of Estonia and its people considers that it is its duty, in order to protect Estonia from further increasing disorder in Russia and the dangerous results of civil war, and to secure the political future of the Estonian people, to proclaim the following:

1. Estonian National Council proclaims itself the sole depository of supreme power in Estonia; its regulations and resolutions are obligatory in Estonia until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly which shall be elected without delay by democratic suffrage, after having determined the form of government, it shall establish definitely the legislative and executive branches [powers].

2. All regulations, orders and edicts, without regard to their source, shall be considered effective in Estonia until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly only when published by the Estonian National Council; otherwise such acts shall not be followed.

3. During the intervals between its sessions the Estonian National Council authorizes the Presidium of the National Council and the Committee of Elders jointly with the Administration of the country as the representative of supreme power in Estonia to issue and put into effect, pending their definitive confirmation by the National Council, urgent regulations and orders for the regulation of public life of the country.

[Translation from Estonian]

2. MANIFESTO TO THE PEOPLES OF ESTONIA *

Never during the past centuries have the Estonian people abandoned their striving for independence. From generation to generation the secret hope has existed that some day the time will arrive when, despite conditions of slavery and foreign domination, "all the torches will burst into flame at both ends" and that "the Kalev will return home to bring happiness to his children."

This day has now arrived.

An unprecedented war between nations has caused the final destruction of the rotten foundations of the Russian czarist regime. Destructive anarchy is spreading over the Sarmatian plains and threatening to bury under it all peoples within the borders of the former Russian state. From the west the victorious German armies are approaching, ready to claim their share of the Russian estate and, as a first step, to secure for themselves the Baltic shores.

At this fateful hour the Estonian National Council as the legal representative of Estonia and its people has found it necessary, in agreement with democratic Estonian political parties and organizations and on the basis of the self-determination of nations, to proclaim, in determination of the future of Estonia and its people, the following decisions:

As of today, Estonia, within its historical and ethnic boundaries, is proclaimed an independent democratic republic.

The territory of the independent State of Estonia includes: [the counties of] Harjumaa, Läänemaa, Järvamaa, Virumaa, together with the city of Narva and its environs, Tartumaa, Võrumaa, Viljandimaa, and Pärnumaa, together with islands in the Baltic Sea, Saaremaa, Hiiumaa, and Muhumaa and others, inhabited by an Estonian population. A definite determination of the boundaries with Latvia and Russia will be based on a referendum in border regions after the end of the present World War.

In the afore-mentioned territory the supreme governmental power is vested in the Estonian Liberation Committee, set up by the Estonian National Council.

* Maanõukogu Protokollid (Records of the Estonian National Council), 1917-1919 Tallinn, 1935, pp. 273-274; RT 1918, 1.

* Riigi Teataja, 1918, 1.

The Republic of Estonia will be politically neutral in relation to its neighboring countries and nations, and believes firmly that this neutrality will be rewarded by their neutrality toward Estonia.

The Estonian Army will be reduced to a size necessary to guarantee internal order. Estonian soldiers serving in the Russian army will be called home and demobilized.

Until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, which shall be elected by universal and direct suffrage, by secret ballot, and on the basis of proportional representation, and shall determine definitely the form of government for the country, executive and legislative power shall be vested in the Estonian National Council and in the Estonian Provisional Government formed by it; in their activities they must abide by the following principles.

1. All citizens of the Republic of Estonia, irrespective of their creed, ethnic origin, or political beliefs, shall enjoy equal protection before the laws and the courts of the Republic.

2. National minorities within the territory of the Republic—Russians, Germans, Swedes, Jews, and others—shall be guaranteed the right to national cultural autonomy.

3. All civil liberties—freedom of speech, of press, of religion, of assembly, of association, of federation, and the right to strike, as well as the inviolability of one's person and home, shall be effective in Estonia on the basis of laws to be drafted by the government without delay.

4. The Provisional Government is charged with the establishment, without delay, of courts for the protection of citizens. All political prisoners shall be released immediately.

5. The local agencies of self-government in counties, cities, and rural communities are urged to return to their work, which was forcibly interrupted.

6. For the maintenance of public order a militia under the jurisdiction of the local governments shall be organized immediately, also citizens' self-defense organizations in town and country.

7. The Provisional Government shall draft without delay bills concerning land reform, labor problems, food supply, and finances—all broadly based on democratic principles.

Estonia: You are standing at the threshold of a hopeful future where you shall be free and independent in determining and guiding your fate: Start building your home, which shall be governed by law and order, so you may be a worthy member in the family of civilized nations! All sons and daughters of Estonia, let us unite as one man in the sacred task of building up our fathers' country! The blood and sweat which our ancestors have shed for this country require it, and our future generations oblige us to do it.

May God watch over thee and amply bless whatever thou undertakest, my dear homeland.

Long live the independent democratic Republic of Estonia!

Long live peace between nations!

COMMITTEE OF ELDERS OF THE ESTONIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL.

TALLINN, February 24, 1918.

[Translation from Russian]

3. DECREE OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS OF R. S. F. S. R. ON THE RECOGNITION OF THE ESTONIAN SOVIET REPUBLIC, DECEMBER 8, 1918¹⁰

In answer to the request of the Estonian Soviet Government the Council of People's Commissars declares:

(1) The Russian Soviet Government recognizes the independence of the Estonian Soviet Republic. The Russian Soviet Government recognizes the Soviets of Estonia as the supreme power in Estonia and, until the Congress of Soviets meets, as such the Council of People's Commissars of Estonia headed by its chairman, comrade Anvelt.

(2) The Russian Soviet Government orders all civil and military authorities of the Russian Soviet Republic, in contact with Estonia, to lend all kind of support to the Estonian Soviet Government and its military forces in the struggle for the liberation of Estonia from the yoke of the bourgeoisie.

¹⁰ Izvestia, No. 269 of December 8, 1918.

(3) The People's Commissariat of Finance is ordered to lend ten million rubles to the National Bank of Estonian Soviet Republic.

(4) The People's Commissariat of Food and the Supreme Council of National Economy are ordered to enter into agreements with the corresponding agencies of the Estonian Soviet Republic on the subject of establishing trade between the two republics.

V. ULYANOV (LENIN)
The Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars
 V. BONCH-BRUEVICH
Director of Affairs of the Council of People's Commissars
 L. FOTIEVA
Secretary of the Council of People's Commissars

[Translation]

4. NO. 4622.—TREATY OF NONAGGRESSION BETWEEN THE GERMAN REICH AND THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA, SIGNED AT BERLIN, JUNE 7TH, 1939¹¹

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
 and

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE GERMAN REICH,
 Being firmly resolved to maintain peace between Estonia and Germany in all circumstances.

Have agreed to confirm this resolve by means of a Treaty and have appointed as their Plenipotentiaries:

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA:
 M. KARL SELTER, Minister for Foreign Affairs:

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE GERMAN REICH:
 M. JOACHIM VON RIBBENTROP, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Reich;

Who, having exchanged their full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed on the following provisions:

Article 1.

The Republic of Estonia and the German Reich shall in no case resort to war or to any other use of force one against the other.

Should action of the kind referred to in paragraph 1 be taken by a third Power against one of the Contracting Parties, the other Contracting Party shall not support such action in any way.

Article 2.

The present Treaty shall be ratified and the instruments of ratification shall be exchanged as soon as possible in Berlin.

The Treaty shall come into force on the exchange of the instruments of ratification and shall remain in force for a period of ten years from that date. Should the Treaty not be denounced by one of the Contracting Parties at least one year before the expiry of that period its validity shall be extended for a fresh period of ten years. The same shall apply to subsequent periods.

Nevertheless, the Treaty shall not remain in force longer than the corresponding Treaty signed this day between Germany and Latvia. Should the Treaty lapse on these grounds before the expiry of the period specified in paragraph 2, the Estonian Government and the German Government shall, at the request of either Party, at once enter into negotiations for the renewal of the Treaty.

In witness whereof the Plenipotentiaries of both Parties have signed the present Treaty.

Done in original duplicate, at Berlin, in Estonian and German, this 7th day of June, 1939.

K. SELTER.

J. RIBBENTROP.

¹¹ League of Nations. Treaty Series. Treaties and international engagements registered with the Secretariat of the League of Nations. Geneva, 1939. Vol. CXCVIII, No. 4622, pp. 52-53.

PROTOCOL OF SIGNATURE

On the signature, this day, of the Treaty between Estonia and Germany, the agreement existing between the two Parties on the following points has been put on record:

The Contracting Party which is not participating in the conflict shall not be deemed to be giving support, within the meaning of paragraph 2 of Article 1 of the Treaty, if the attitude of that Party is in harmony with the general rules of neutrality. Therefore, the fact of a normal exchange of goods and transit of goods continuing between the Contracting Party not involved in the conflict and the third Power shall not be regarded as constituting illicit support.

BERLIN, June 7th, 1939.

K. SELTER.

J. RIBBENTROP.

[Translation from Russian]

5. THE INITIAL SOVIET PROJECT OF A MUTUAL ASSISTANCE PACT BETWEEN ESTONIA AND THE SOVIET UNION, HANDED OVER TO ESTONIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, MR. K. SELTER, BY MOLOTOV ON SEPTEMBER 24, 1939¹²

Pact of Mutual Assistance Between U. S. S. R. and Estonia

With a view to establishing a comprehensive and friendly collaboration between the Soviet Union and the Republic of Estonia, and in the interest of guaranteeing reciprocal security, the government of the Soviet Union and the government of the Republic of Estonia have agreed to the necessity of concluding a mutual assistance pact as stated below:

I.

Both contracting parties undertake to give each other every assistance, including military aid, if one of the contracting parties is menaced or directly attacked by any third European power.

II.

The U. S. S. R. is obliged to render aid to the Estonian army in providing it on favorable terms with arms and other military equipment, also to assist the Republic of Estonia economically and in the field of foreign policy and diplomacy.

III.

The Republic of Estonia grants the Soviet Union the right to have naval bases for its fleet in Estonian ports and some aerodromes for her air force on Estonian islands.

IV.

Both parties will not participate in any agreements or coalitions directed against one of the contracting parties.

V.

This pact will remain in effect for 10 years and if one of the contracting parties does not find it necessary to give notice it shall continue in effect for the following 5 years.

Protocol.

It is agreed that the present agreement in no way shall affect the economic system of form of government of the contracting parties.

¹² Archives of the Estonian Consulate-General in New York.

[Translation from Russian]

**6. SECRET SUPPLEMENTARY PROTOCOL TO ESTONIAN-SOVIET
MUTUAL ASSISTANCE PACT OF SEPTEMBER 28, 1939¹³**

1.

It is agreed that in the interests of averting and debarring any attempts to draw the Contracting Parties into the war at present going on in Europe, the U. S. S. R. has the right, for the duration of this war, to keep separate garrisons of land and air forces totalling up to 25,000 men in the sites appropriated to aerodromes and bases (Article 3 of the Pact).

2.

Temporarily, until the construction of a base in the town of Paldiski (Article 3 of the Pact), however, no longer than a period of 2 years from the signing of the present protocol, the vessels of the Soviet navy may put in at the port of Tallinn to complete their stocks of provisions and fuel and for shelter. The detailed rules for the exercise of this right will be determined by a special agreement.

3.

The assistance stipulated in Article 1 of the Pact is rendered at the express desire of the other Party, while the Party which is obliged to render assistance may, on mutual agreement, remain neutral in a war of the other Party with a third power.

4.

For the implementation of the present pact and the solution of problems arising therefrom a Mixed Commission on the principle of parity is to be established, which will evolve its own rules of procedure.

5.

The present Confidential Protocol is an annex to the Pact of Mutual Assistance concluded between the U. S. S. R. and Estonia on September 28, 1939.

V. MOLOTOV

K. SELTER

SEPTEMBER 28, 1939.

[Translation from Estonian]

**7. AGREEMENT ON THE EXCHANGE OF COMMODITIES BETWEEN THE
REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA AND THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST
REPUBLICS¹⁴***Ratified by the President of the Republic on October 7, 1939*

Desirous to further the strengthening and further improvement of economic relations between Estonia and the USSR and the development of the provisions of the Commercial Treaty between Estonia and the Union of SSR, concluded on May 17, 1929, the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Estonia, K. Selter, and the People's Commissar for Foreign Trade of the Union of SSR, A. Mikojan, signed the following agreement.

ARTICLE 1.

The Contracting Parties agreed to expand considerably the exchange of commodities between them. In pursuance thereof the export of the Union of SSR to Estonia, during the duration of the present agreement, shall amount to 18 million Estonian Kronas and the Estonian export to the Union of SSR shall also amount to 18 million Estonian Kronas.

In addition, the Soviets are entitled to a supplemental export to Estonia in value of 3 million Kronas to be accounted against the passive balance accumulated during the period preceding the conclusion of the present agreement.

¹³ *Ibid.*¹⁴ Riigi Teataja II 1939, 16, 27.

ARTICLE 2.

The exchange of commodities shall include disbursements made by all ships flying the flag of the Contracting Parties, all expenditures occurred in Estonia in transit, reloading and storage and in repair and construction of ships as well as expenditures in Estonia by the Trade Representation of the Union of SSR and all Soviet economic organizations. The Soviets are entitled to an additional export in the amount of the passive balance resulting from expenditures listed above in this article.

ARTICLE 3.

In case one of the Contracting Parties has a passive balance in the exchange of commodities at the end of the duration of the present agreement, it is entitled to balance the passivity within the period of the next twelve months.

ARTICLE 4.

The computation of the value of export from the Union of SSR to Estonia shall be based on prices *franco* Estonian border or *cif* Estonian harbors according to Estonian governmental statistics. The import of commodities to Estonia by the Trade Representation of the USSR and by Soviet economic organizations is considered as export from the Union of SSR under the present agreement.

The value of the import to the Union of SSR from Estonia shall be computed on the basis of prizes *franco* the Soviet border or *cif* the Soviet harbors, according to Soviet customs statistics.

On the basis of documentary records both parties are entitled to make corrections in the statistical data of the other party.

ARTICLE 5.

The present agreement replaces the Agreement on the Exchange of Commodities of February 26, 1938, becomes effective on October 1, 1939 and remains in effect until December 31, 1940.

Drawn up in two Russian copies at Moscow on September 28, 1939.

An Estonian translation shall be prepared within the shortest time possible and, subject to check by both parties, thereafter both texts shall have equal authority.

K. SELTER
A. MIKOJAN

[Translation from Russian]

8. REFUTATION BY TASS ¹⁵

2. The French agency Havas, some French and English, and also a few German newspapers have been spreading rumors that the Soviet Union has made demands to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania for transfer to the USSR new naval bases, for increase of the number of "military bases" and so forth.

TASS is authorized to declare that all these reports are altogether baseless and entirely invented.

9. ORALLY TRANSMITTED PART OF THE SOVIET ULTIMATUM TO ESTONIA JUNE 16, 1940 ¹⁶

I, the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Estonian Republic in Moscow, August Rei, who on June 16 of the present year at 14,30 o'clock (Moscow time) received from the Foreign Commissar of the U. S. S. R., V. Molotov, an ultimatum bearing the same date for presentation to the Government of the Estonian Republic, hereby declare the following:

In the written text of the above ultimatum its authors have omitted two most essential points which were made to me orally by Mr. Molotov for communication

¹⁵ *Pravda* No. 54, February 24, 1940, p. 2.

¹⁶ Rei, August, *Comp. Nazi-Soviet Conspiracy and the Baltic States*; diplomatic documents and other evidence. London, Boreas Publishing Co., 1948, pp. 47-48, under No. 42.

to the Government of the Estonian Republic. The substance of these points was as follows:

1. The ultimatum had to be answered by 23 o'clock of the same day, viz. June 16 (Moscow time), i. e., within 8½ hours, including the time needed to get in touch by telephone with my Government and to communicate to it the text of the ultimatum, as well as the time required for communicating the answer to me and to hand it on to Mr. Molotov.

2. A plain threat that in case no answer indicating submission to the ultimatum would be received by the stated time the Red Army units, concentrated at the frontier of the Estonian Republic, would be ordered to march into Estonia, suppressing all resistance by armed force.

Both the text of the ultimatum and the statements made to me orally and referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 were communicated by me to my Government as soon as I established contact with it by telephone.

The Latvian Minister, F. Kocins, told me on the following day that Mr. Molotov had made to him oral statements of exactly the same import as those referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2. He likewise immediately communicated them to his Government together with the text of the ultimatum.

I have made the present statement in order to put down in a written document the aforementioned facts. I confirm the correctness of this statement with my signature and am always prepared to corroborate it on oath.

(Signed) A. REI

STOCKHOLM, September 26, 1940.

[Translation from Russian]

10. ANNOUNCEMENT OF TASS ON SOVIET-LATVIAN AND SOVIET-ESTONIAN RELATIONS¹⁷

On June 16th the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the U. S. S. R., comrade Molotov, in the name of the government handed to the Latvian envoy Mr. Kotsinsh, for transmittal to the government of Latvia, the following statement:

On the basis of factual materials at the disposal of the Soviet Government, and also as a result of negotiations which recently took place in Moscow between V. M. Molotov, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the U. S. S. R., and Mr. Merkys, the Prime Minister of Lithuania, the Soviet Government considers it proved that the Latvian [Estonian] Government has not only failed to dissolve her military alliance with Estonia [Latvia], which was concluded before the signing of the Soviet-Latvian [Estonian] mutual assistance pact and directed against the Soviet Union, but has expanded this alliance, drawing Lithuania into it and attempting to attract also Finland.

Prior to the signing of the Soviet-Latvian [Estonian] mutual assistance pact in the autumn of 1939, the Soviet Government was still able to close its eyes to the existence of such a military alliance, although in its essence it was inconsistent with the previously concluded Soviet-Latvian [Estonian] non-aggression pact. However, after the conclusion of the Soviet-Latvian [Estonian] mutual assistance pact, the Soviet Government considers a military alliance between Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania, which is directed against the Soviet Union, not only inadmissible and intolerable, but even extremely dangerous and menacing to the security of the frontiers of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Government believed that Latvia [Estonia] would denounce her military alliance with the other Baltic countries after the conclusion of the Soviet-Latvian [Estonian] mutual assistance pact and thus the aforesaid military alliance would be liquidated. Instead, Latvia [Estonia], together with the other Baltic countries, began to revive and expand the aforesaid military alliance, which is proved by such facts as: the convocation of two secret conferences of the three Baltic countries in December 1939 and March 1940 in order to put into an official form the extended military alliance with Estonia [Latvia] and Lithuania, the consolidation of ties between the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian general staffs, secretly from the Soviet Union, the creation in February 1940 of a special press organ of the Baltic military entente, the "Revue Baltique", published at Tallinn in English, French and German, etc.

All these facts indicate the Latvian [Estonian] Government has grossly violated the Soviet-Latvian [Estonian] mutual assistance pact which forbids both

¹⁷ *Izvestiia* No. 138 of June 17, 1940, p. 1. *Pravda* No. 167 of June 17, 1940, p. 1.

parties "to conclude any alliance and to take part in coalitions directed against either of the contracting parties" (Article 4 of the Pact).

This gross violation of the mutual assistance pact by the Government of Latvia [Estonia] is taking place at a time when the Soviet Government pursued and continues to pursue a completely benevolent and definitely pro-Latvian [Estonian] policy, scrupulously observing all the terms of the Soviet-Latvian [Estonian] mutual assistance pact.

The Soviet Government is of the opinion that such a state of affairs can no longer be tolerated.

The Soviet Government considers it absolutely necessary and urgent that:

1) a government be established in Latvia [Estonia] without delay that would be capable and willing to warrant the honest execution of the Soviet-Latvian [Estonian] mutual assistance pact;

2) free passage be promptly ensured to Soviet troops which are to be stationed in sufficient numbers in the most important centers of Latvia [Estonia] in order to guarantee the realization of the Soviet-Latvian [Estonian] mutual assistance pact and to prevent possible acts of provocation against the Soviet garrisons in Estonia.

The Soviet Government considers compliance with these demands to be the elementary stipulations without which it is impossible to assure the honest and loyal execution of the Soviet-Latvian [Estonian] mutual assistance pact.

On June 16th the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the U. S. S. R., comrade Molotov, handed to the Estonian envoy, Mr. Rei, for transmittal to the Government of Estonia, a statement analogous to the one transmitted to the Government of Latvia.

Already yesterday Mr. Rei transmitted the answer of the Estonian Government on the compliance with the demands of the Soviet Government.

[Translation from Russian]

11. DECLARATION OF ESTONIAN GOVERNMENT¹³

Tallinn, June 22 (TASS. To-day at 21 o'clock and 10 minutes [9:10 P. M.] on local time the Prime Minister of Estonian Republic, Johannes Vares (Barbarus), announced over the radio the declaration of the government.

The declaration says:

Citizens of the Republic of Estonia!

A new Estonian government was formed yesterday. It takes the place of a government which was inimical to the people and was unable, and did not want, to follow a proper foreign and domestic policy in the interest of the people of Estonia. The former government was unable and unwilling to carry out honestly the Soviet-Estonian mutual assistance pact which saved our fatherland from the conflagration of war and guarantees to Estonia peace and security of its frontiers. A policy of the former government was in contradiction to the fundamental interests of the Estonian people.

In assuming its high governmental responsibilities, the new government of Estonian Republic considers as its first solemn duty to announce to the entire nation of Estonia that its program is an overall service of the people, of its interests and hopes which so far had been grossly trampled and ignored by the reactionary regime of preceding governments. On the basis of this basic principle the new government sees the following principal tasks ahead:

In the field of foreign policy the Government, maintaining and developing normal relations with all states, in the first place will guarantee an honest and scrupulous fulfilment of the mutual assistance pact with the U. S. S. R. and further development, on the basis of a close alliance, of actually sincere and friendly relations with the U. S. S. R.

The Government believes that only on this basis it is possible to guarantee Estonian independence and defence.

In the field of domestic policy the Government is directing all its efforts toward guaranteeing the rights of people, toward improvement of its material welfare, development of national culture and prosperity of the fatherland. The exercise of democratic rights is guaranteed by Government in these objectives. Without

¹³ *Izvestia* No. 143, June 23, 1940.

delay an amnesty will be announced to all political prisoners—the fighters for the freedom of people.

The Government will raise the question of dissolution of the present Chamber of Deputies and the Council of State which at the present time do not represent the will of people, and of holding new elections in order to secure a really popular representation; it will dissolve and close organizations inimical to the people, and will initiate the reform in local self-government in order to secure in them a real participation by people.

The new Government will purge the governmental apparatus from criminal and corrupt elements and with the help from organizations of workers, peasants and working intelligentsia it will take up a decisive fight for the liquidation of bureaucracy and unnecessary expenditures in governmental apparatus, replace rotten, corrupted and bureaucratic elements by new forces, promoted from all strata of the population, in order to make the governmental machinery honest inexpensive and responsive to the needs of the people.

The Government will try to guarantee the rights of national minorities living in Estonia and to eradicate decisively discords between nationalities, having as its aim a true friendship of nationalities in our country. The Government will take the necessary measures to enact laws designed to improve the working conditions and the status of working class and intelligentsia, also laws directed toward development and rise of economy and culture of Estonian peasants.

The Government will pay serious attention to an overall development of public education and health protection. It will take all measures so the economic life of Estonia, its trade and industry may prosper on the basis of reciprocal economic relations with our great neighbor and friend, the Soviet Union.

Extending to the Red Army the warm feelings of Estonian people, the Government on its part will show full cooperation and help to Soviet troops stationed in Estonia.

Being firmly convinced in the righteousness of its position, in that its program of action expresses the real interests of the people and serves with honor for the prosperity of our country, the Government calls on all citizens of Estonia, irrespective of their class status, ethnic origin, sex and religious beliefs, to give their whole-hearted support to the new historic tasks of the Government and extend universal assistance to the Government in its work.

[Translation from Estonian]

12. DECISION NO. 175 OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC²⁰

For reasons of state I proclaim elections of a new Chamber of Deputies and formation of a new State Council.

The Government of the Republic shall make the necessary arrangements for a speedy conduction of the elections to the Chamber of Deputies.

K. PÄTS
President of the Republic
J. VARES
Prime Minister

[Translation from Estonian]

13. ORDER CONCERNING THE ELECTIONS TO THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES²⁰ ISSUED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC ON JULY 5, 1940

The elections to the Chamber of Deputies shall be held on July 14 and 15, 1940 in accordance with the Law on Elections to the Chamber of Deputies; in order to speed up the elections, this law shall be applied to these elections with the amendments which follow. Sec. 13, 16, 18 subsections 3 and 5, Secs. 21, 22, Sec. 26 second paragraph, Sec. 31 first and second paragraphs, Secs. 33, 34, 39, Sec. 41 second paragraph, Secs. 46, 47, 48, 49, 59, Sec. 61 second paragraph, Secs. 69 and 75, shall be applied in the following form:

²⁰ *Riigi Teataja* 1940, 60, 565, July 6, 1940.

²⁰ *Riigi Teataja* 1940, 60, 566 of July 6, 1940.

I

Sec. 15. The Supreme Election Committee shall consist of six members. The chairman and members of the Supreme Election Committee shall be appointed by the Government of the Republic. The Supreme Committee shall elect the vice-chairman from among its members.

A quorum of the Supreme Election Committee shall consist of the chairman or vice-chairman and at least three members. The clerical work of the Supreme Election Committee shall be done by the State Chancery Office.

Sec. 16. The decisions of the Supreme Election Committee are final and there shall be no appeal from them.

Sec. 18. The district committee shall:

3) accept the nomination letters of the candidates, verify their conformity with law, and display publicly a copy of the list of candidates;

5) order the ballots and envelopes, record forms, and all other necessary supplies to be procured and to forward these supplies to city and rural community administrations.

Sec. 21. City and rural community administrations shall keep permanent lists of voters for each election precinct for the elections to the Chamber of Deputies; these shall be amended and supplemented within the period set by the Supreme Election Committee.

Sec. 22. In the voters' lists for the elections to the Chamber of Deputies shall be entered enfranchised citizens who, at the time of amending and supplementing the lists (Sec. 21), are residing within the respective election precinct.

From the lists of voters shall be removed citizens who have left this election precinct prior to the amending and supplementing of the lists (Sec. 21), also citizens who have been deprived of the right to vote. Citizens who have temporarily left their place of residence shall not be removed from the lists.

Nobody may be on the voting lists of more than one precinct.

Sec. 26.

(Second paragraph)

The right to be included in the lists shall be honored until the closing of voting.

Sec. 31. The nomination of a candidate shall be submitted in writing, according to the general form attached to this section and containing information required therein, to the district committee not later than five days before the first election day. In addition, the candidate's nomination letter may contain headings and slogans under which he is running. The district committee may remove from the nomination letter the heading or slogan, if it finds it to be violating law or morals. If in the nomination letter of a candidate, the name of an incorporated organization has been used as a heading, the central governing body of the organization or the specifically authorized local representative may inform the district committee, at the latest on the fourth day before the first election day, that it disapproves the use of the organization's name by the candidate. In this instance the district committee shall remove the name of the organization from the nomination letter.

The nomination letter of a candidate, approved also in the case when several candidates are using sheets with the same text, shall have signatures of at least 50 enfranchised citizens residing in the election district where the nomination letter of the candidate is filed.

Sec. 33. The person filing the candidate's nomination letter mentioned in the preceding paragraph, may appoint one person as a representative of the nomination letter to every precinct committee of the election district.

Sec. 34. Every nomination letter of a candidate shall receive a number by the district election committee in the order they have been received. Letters of nomination sent by mail are considered as having been filed on time if they are received at the district election committee not later than on the fifth day before the first election day. Letters of nomination received by mail at the same time shall be numbered according to the order in which they are opened.

Sec. 39. The district election committee shall compile for its election district an alphabetically arranged (using family names of the candidates) list of candidates for the Chamber of Deputies whose letters of nomination have been accepted. A copy of the list of candidates shall be sent by the district election

committee to the Supreme Election Committee and to city and rural community administrations of the respective election district.

The copies received in procedure described in the preceding paragraph shall be posted publicly without delay after their reception by the city or rural community administration.

Sec. 41.

(Second paragraph)

An enfranchised citizen may, on urgent reasons, vote in some other precinct of his election district. The city or rural community administration, where the citizen is carried on the lists, shall issue a certificate to the effect that the citizen is entitled to vote in any election precinct of this election district. In the precinct list of voters a remark to this effect shall be made, prior to the elections, by the city or rural community administration, during the elections, however, by the precinct commission on the basis of a communication from the above mentioned authorities.

Sec. 46. Ballots and envelopes shall be procured by the district elections committees in due time before elections.

Sec. 47. The number of ballots shall be ascertained on the basis of the number of enfranchised citizens in the election district. No later than five days before the first election day the number of citizens entered in the voters' lists shall be reported to the district committee by agencies in charge of lists.

Sec. 48. Ballot envelopes, ballots and other necessary election supplies shall be sent, on order by the district committees, to the respective city and rural community offices for forwarding to the precinct committees.

Sec. 49. The city and rural community administrations shall send not later than one day before the first election day to all citizens on the voters' list the ballot mentioned in Sec. 48. Citizens who are entitled to a ballot and have not received it, may get it from the city or rural community office before the first election day, [or] from the precinct committee during the elections.

Sec. 59. After having received the envelope the voter puts the ballot into the envelope which he hands to an election clerk who deposits his envelope before his eyes into the ballot box.

Sec. 61. (second paragraph) Thereupon the committee shall count the envelopes, leaving them unopened. If the number of envelopes differs from the number of checks made in the voters' list according to Section 58, a remark to this effect shall be made in the election record. Thereafter, the envelopes shall be opened and the ascertainment of the data required to be entered into the committee's record according to Sec. 64 shall be started.

Sec. 69. At the latest one day after the close of elections every enfranchised citizen may file complaints with the Supreme Election Committee in regard to violations of law during the elections. The decision of the Supreme Election Committee on the complaint is final. The Supreme Election Committee shall check the elections results as canvassed by the precinct commissions and district committees and, after having reviewed complaints, certify the final results.

Sec. 75. The provisions of the present law shall be applied to elections mentioned in Sections 73 and 74 and these elections shall be held within 10 days from the day when the elections were proclaimed. The election day shall be determined by the district committee or the Supreme Election Committee, as the case may be, in their decisions to hold elections, and also other necessary dates.

II.

The following sections shall not be applied: Sec. 14 subsections 4 and 6, Sections 25, 27, 40, 65 second paragraph and Sec. 71.

III.

The words "Supreme Election Committee" in Sec. 32, paragraphs 1-4, Sec. 31, paragraphs four and seven, Secs. 37, 38, 45 and 73 shall be substituted by the words "district committee" and the words "voter's certificates" in Sec. 64 shall be substituted by the word "certificates".

IV.

In Sec. 76 the words "from the issuance of voter's certificates and" shall be left out.

V.

This order shall take effect as of July 5, 1940.

Prime Minister Joh. Vares
Minister of Interior M. Unt
Secretary of State K. Terras

Correction

[*Riigi Teataja* 1940, 62, 584]

In the Order concerning the elections to the Chambers of Deputies (RT 1940, 60, 566) in Part II instead of "Sec. 40" to read "Sec. 40, paragraph two."

[Translation from Russian]

14. ELECTION PLATFORM OF THE "ESTONIAN WORKING PEOPLE'S LEAGUE"²¹

Tallinn, July 6 (TASS). In connection with the elections to the new Chamber of Deputies, the election platform of the "Estonian Working People's League" was published today in the Estonian press. The text of the election platform reads:

"Citizens of Estonian Republic! According to the decision of the Government, elections in the entire country to a new Chamber of Deputies will be held on July 14 and 15 which is called to express the supreme will of the entire Estonian people.

"During many years the Estonian people suffered under the burdensome yoke of a reactionary plutocratic regime personified by the former government, (which was) hated by the people. Lawlessness and arbitrariness ruled in the country. Free word and free thought were mercilessly suppressed. The best sons of the country—the fighters for its freedom—rotted in prisons. Lawful interests and needs of Estonian people were sacrificed by the policy of the ruling clique which was hostile to the people. The old government pushed the country into the disaster of war, into destruction and catastrophe.

"The foreign policy of the former government was hostile to, and catastrophic for, the Estonian people. Instead of an honest and scrupulous execution of the mutual assistance pact with the Soviet Union of September 28, 1939, instead of carrying consistently into practice, on the basis of this pact, a close and indestructible alliance and friendship between Estonia and the U. S. S. R., so necessary for the Estonian people, the former government in its relations with the U. S. S. R. engaged in a dishonest and unfair gamble, menacing peaceful work and the well-being of the Estonian people. It grossly violated the mutual assistance pact with the U. S. S. R. and thus directly menaced the security, inviolability and independence of the Estonian state.

"Having lost all confidence in the eyes of the people, having met with complete bankruptcy in the field of foreign as well as in domestic policy, the old government fell. Its place was taken by a new government, supported and trusted by the people. The new government considered as its fundamental tasks an overall service of people, their interests and hopes, (and) the protection of its sovereign rights.

"The declaration of the new government of June 21 proved to be the banner around which rallied wide masses of the Estonian people, all honest patriots of our homeland.

"The supreme power in Estonia must belong to the people, and only to the people. The time has come to form a truly popular representation and to elect such a Chamber of Deputies which will be authoritatively expressing the will of the entire Estonian people and its sovereign rights.

"A wide road toward a free life, toward the rise in the material and cultural well-being of the people and to the prosperity of the Estonian State has now opened before the Estonian people. On the election days on July 14 and 15 the Estonian people must go to the ballot boxes united like never before, firmly convinced that the basis for a happy and free life for the Estonian State and its people is a close and indestructible alliance and friendship between Estonia and the great Soviet Union, a brotherhood of Estonian and Soviet peoples who hence-

²¹ *Pravda* No. 187 of July 7, 1940.

forth will walk hand in hand and will fight with enthusiasm for peace and prosperity of the peoples of the Estonian Republic and the Soviet Union.

"Citizens of the Republic of Estonia!

"We, the workers, peasants, working intelligentsia, professional unions, cultural-educational organizations, Estonian women and the Communist Party of Estonia, have formed the 'Estonian Working People's League' in order to have harmonious and unanimous elections and to elect to the Diet worthy representatives of the people who are expressing its true will. We urge all workers, farmers, intelligentsia, all honest patriots of our country to give their vote to those who will with all energy and resourcefulness fight for and protect, the realization of our following demands which are the demands of the wide popular masses in Estonia.

"Our demands in the field of foreign policy are friendship between the peoples of Estonia and the Soviet Union and a close alliance of the Estonian Republic with the U. S. S. R.

"Our demands in the field of internal policy (are):

1. Guaranteeing the democratic freedoms—the freedom of speech, of press, of assembly, and of federation in the interest of the working people.

2. Improvement of the material situation of workers and employees by wage raises.

3. Determined fight against unemployment.

4. Application of far reaching measures to insure the working people against sickness and accidents and to insure the maintenance of safety rules.

5. Governmental insurance for labor invalids and aged workers of both sexes.

6. State aid of every kind in supplying smallholders and landless peasants with land.

7. Real relief for farmers in regard to their indebtedness.

8. Cancellation of all arrears on every kind of payments, state taxes and fines of the peasantry.

9. Reorganization of the unjust personal tax.

10. Expansion of mother and child protection, establishment of nurseries, children homes and consultation stations.

11. Public education shall be available to everybody without tuition.

12. Further development of the network of medical aid.

13. Liquidation of national inequality and oppression of national minorities and guaranteeing of complete equality to all nationalities in Estonia.

14. Democratization of the army.

15. Further development of the national culture, science, education and the arts.

"Citizens of the Republic of Estonia!

"These are the demands for which we ask you to vote. Their putting into effect will mean the growth of the well-being of Estonia, of freedom, of independence and of happiness for our people. We are urging all workers, peasants and intelligentsia, all honest patriots of our homeland to rally around our platform and to guarantee the victory of our cause by unanimously voting for our candidates.

"Not one vote for opponents of our demands, for opponents of our platform!

"Citizens! Enemies of people, servants of the old regime are trying to undermine the unity of our people and the brotherly union of workers, peasants, and working intelligentsia by spreading all kinds of provocative rumors. They are attributing to the workers and communists the intention to plant collective farms into Estonian villages. This is a provocative invention and slander of the working class and the communist party of Estonia. Nobody has the right to infringe upon the property rights of the peasants and to force the peasants to join collective farms.

"Expose the provocateurs, who are putting on foot the poisoning slander in order to split the workers and the peasants.

"Strengthen the system of organization, unity and the discipline of Estonian people.

"Don't spare the enemies of people, the provocateurs and slanderers.

"On July 14 all to the polls.

"Vote unanimously for our candidates of our group 'Working People's League of Estonia!'

"Long live free Estonia!

"Long live Estonian working people!

"Long live the friendship and close alliance with the great Soviet Union."

The election platform was signed by:

The Central Council of Estonian Labor Unions, The Central Union of Estonian Smallholders, The Communist Party of Estonia, and other public organizations.

[Translation from Estonian]

15. SUPPLEMENT TO THE ORDER ON ELECTIONS TO THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES²² ISSUED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC ON JULY 9, 1940

I. The order on Elections to the Chamber of Deputies (*RT* 1940, 60,566) shall be supplemented by the following amendment to the Law on Elections to the Chamber of Deputies:

In Sec. 57, Para. 2, the words "from 9-16 o'clock on the second day" shall read "from 9-22 o'clock on the second day" and in Sec. 61, Para 1, the words "on the second day citizens shall be admitted to the voting premises until 16 o'clock" shall be replaced by the words "on the second day the citizens shall be admitted to the voting rooms until 22 o'clock."

II. This supplemental order shall take effect upon publication.

Prime Minister, JOH. VARES
Minister of the Interior, M. UNT
Secretary of State, K. TERRAS

[Translation from Estonian]

16. SUPPLEMENT TO THE ORDER ON ELECTIONS TO THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES ISSUED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC ON JULY 9, 1940

[*RT* 1940, 64,628—July 9, 1940]

I. The Order on Elections to the Chamber of Deputies (*RT* 1940, 60,566) shall be supplemented by the following amendment to the Law on Elections to the Chamber of Deputies:

Sec. 31 of the Law on Elections to the Chamber of Deputies shall be supplemented by an eighth paragraph as follows:

Sec. 31, Para. 8. To prevent exploitation of the elections to the Chamber of Deputies for aims detrimental to the Republic of Estonia and the Estonian people, the representatives of the nominating petitions of candidates shall submit to the District Committees at 14 o'clock of July 10, 1940 at the latest the candidate's election platform. Failure to submit an election platform shall result in annulment of the nominating petition of the respective candidate by the District Committee.

II. This regulation shall be put into force by telegraph.

Prime Minister, JOH. VARES
Minister of the Interior, M. UNT
Secretary of State, K. TERRAS

[Translation from Estonian]

17. DECISION OF THE SUPREME ELECTION COMMITTEE OF JULY 9, 1940

[*RT* 1940, 65, 640—July 12, 1947]

Enfranchised citizens who have been left off the voters' lists during the period for amending and supplementing the lists shall be entered on the voters' lists after July 9, 1940 if they can prove that they were residing in the respective election precinct during the time the lists were amending and supplemented. The residence may be proved also by two witnesses.

The local government agencies which place citizens on the voters' list according to the procedure described above shall issue to the citizen a certificate to this effect. Going to the polls, the citizen must carry this certificate with him and present it to the Precinct Committee.

Chairman of the Supreme Election Committee, F. NIGGOL
Executive Secretary of the Supreme Committee, A. MAAR

²² *Elugi Teataja* 1940, 64,627, July 9, 1940.

18. DECISION OF THE SUPREME ELECTION COMMITTEE OF JULY 9, 1940

[RT 1940, 65, 641-July 12, 1940]

The Precinct Committee shall require persons coming to the polls to identify themselves by presenting their certificate of identification (passport) or some other official identification.

Citizens must carry to the polls their certificates of identification or some other official identifying document.

Chairman of the Supreme Election Committee, F. NIGGOL
Executive Secretary of the Supreme Committee, A. MAGI

[Translation from Estonian]

19. LAW ON ELECTIONS TO THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES OF AUGUST 17, 1937^{**}

CHAPTER 4—ELECTION OFFICIALS

PART 2—THE SUPREME ELECTION COMMITTEE

Sec. 13. The Supreme Election Committee shall consist of six members. The members are:

The Chancellor of Justice, the Secretary of State [Chief of Chancery], the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman of the Tallinn Circuit Court, as determined by the plenary meeting of the Circuit Court, the Mayor of Tallinn, the Chairman of the Temporary Administrative Board of Harjumaa County, one appointee of the Minister of the Interior.

Until the appointment of the Chancellor of Justice, his place will be taken by an appointee of the President of the Republic.

The Chancellor of Justice shall be the chairman of the Supreme Electoral Committee, until his appointment, the appointee of the President of the Republic. The quorum of the Supreme Electoral Committee shall consist of chairman or vice-chairman and at least three members.

The clerical work of the Supreme Electoral Committee shall be done by the State Chancery.

Sec. 14. The Supreme Election Committee shall:

* * * * *
4) accept the nominating petitions of candidates, verify their legality, and publicly announce the candidates;

* * * * *
6) procure the ballots, envelopes, voters' certificate and records blanks, and other necessary materials and forward them to city and rural-community administrations;

Sec. 16. The decisions of the Supreme Election Committee on invalidation of nominating petitions of candidates and on compilation of election results may be appealed within two days of the decision to the Administrative Department of the State Court of Justice by the candidates' representatives (Sec. 32). The appeal shall be addressed to the Administrative Department of the State Court of Justice and shall be filed with the Supreme Election Committee, which shall forward it, together with the whole file in the matter, without delay, to the Administrative Department of the State Court of Justice.

The Administrative Department of the State Court of Justice shall decide the appeals mentioned in the above paragraph within two days of the day the appeal was received in the court, Sundays, legal holidays, and days of rest included; no notice to appear shall be sent to the parties:

In all other matters the decisions of the Supreme Election Committee are final and cannot be appealed.

^{**} *Riigi Teataja* 1937, 71, 592.

PART 3—THE DISTRICT COMMITTEES

SEC. 18. The District Committee shall:

* * * * *

3) display publicly the copy of the list of candidates (Sec. 39);

* * * * *

5) report to the Supreme Election Committee, in accordance with Sec. 21 of the present law, the number of citizens on the voters' lists in election districts under its jurisdiction;

* * * * *

PART 5—LISTS OF QUALIFIED VOTERS [ENFRANCHIZED CITIZENS]

SEC. 21. City and rural-community administrations shall keep permanent lists of voters for each election precinct for the elections to the Chamber of Deputies. The lists shall be amended and supplemented twice a year, to wit, from May 10 to 25 and from October 30 to November 15; in the cities of Tallinn, Tartu, and Narva, however, from February 1 to 15 and from October 30 to November 15.

SEC. 22. Entered on the voters' lists for elections to the Chamber of Deputies shall be enfranchised citizens who at the time the lists are amended and supplemented reside or have their place of employment within the respective election precinct and have been residing or have had their place of employment within this election district or within the administrative limits of the respective local government for at least a year preceding the amending and supplementing of the lists of enfranchised citizens. A citizen who has moved from one election district to another within the administrative limits of the same self-government unit, shall be entered on the list of enfranchised citizens at the election precinct in the election district where he resided or had his employment for the longest period during the previous year.

Citizens meeting the requirements of the preceding paragraph who reside and have their place of employment in the same election district, shall be entered on the voters' list of their residence. Citizens whose places of residence and employment are not in the same election district, shall be entered on the voters' lists of their place of residence, unless within ten days of the end of the period for amending and supplementing the voters' lists they request to be entered on the voters' list of their place of employment. Citizens whose place of residence or employment is in the election precinct but who have not maintained their place of residence and employment in this election district or within the administrative limits of the same local governmental unit for at least one year prior to the amending and supplementing of lists, shall not be entered on the voters' lists. However, in cases where a citizen's profession does not permit him to maintain his place of residence or employment for one year in the same election district or within the administrative limits of the same local governmental unit, the citizen shall be entered, upon his verified application, on the voters' list in the district and precinct where he maintains his place of residence or employment at the time of the compilation of lists.

Removed from the voters' lists shall be citizens who left the precinct one year or more prior to the time the lists are amended and supplemented; also removed shall be citizens who have lost their right to vote. Citizens who have left their permanent residence temporarily shall not be removed from the list.

Nobody shall be carried on the list in more than one precinct.

SEC. 25. Every enfranchised citizen has the right to request the agency in charge of compiling the voters' lists within ten days after the close of the period for amending and supplementing the voters' lists, to remove errors and defects from the list. The decisions of the agency in charge of compiling the list may be appealed to the district judge within five days of the decision. The district judge shall give his final decision within three days. If there are several district judges in a city, the district committee shall designate one district judge who shall decide suits mentioned in this section.

SEC. 26. [Para. 2] The right to be included in the list for the elections shall expire two days before the first day of the elections.

CHAPTER 6—PROCLAMATION OF ELECTIONS

SEC. 27. The elections to the Chamber of Deputies shall be proclaimed no later than 35 days before the first day of election.

CHAPTER 7—NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES

SEC. 31. Every candidate's nomination shall be submitted in writing to the Supreme Election Committee, according to the general form attached to this section and containing information required therein, not later than 28 days before the first day of the election. The nominating petition of a candidate may not contain any other data, headings, or slogans.

The nominating petition of a candidate, approved also if several candidates are using sheets with the same text, shall be signed by at least 150 enfranchised citizens residing in the election district where the nominating petition of the candidate is filed. The city and rural-community administrations shall refuse to verify the signatures on a nominating petition if they number more than 300.

* * * * *

[Para. 4] For certification of the signatures the person filing the nominating petition shall present to the city or rural-community office a receipt or a certified copy thereof that he has paid a deposit of 250 Kronas to the Supreme Election Committee. The deposit may be paid to the Supreme Election Committee or to an Estonian credit institution or city or rural-community office for transfer to the Supreme Election Committee.

* * * * *

[Para. 7] An enfranchised citizen may give his signature to only one nominating petition. In case a citizen has signed more than one nominating petition, his signature shall be valid only on the nominating petition of a candidate which is filed first with the Supreme Election Committee.

SEC. 32. The persons who have signed the nominating petition of a candidate shall name a representative authorized to represent them at the Supreme Election Committee.

The representative must be an enfranchised citizen and cannot be a candidate himself.

If the nominating petition of a candidate has been submitted on several sheets of paper and there are several representatives named, the person who has drawn the most signatures shall be the representative; if the number of signatures is equal, the decision shall be by lot.

If no representative has been named in the nominating petition of a candidate, the person whose signature is appended first on the nominating petition shall be recognized as such; in case the nominating petition is submitted on several sheets of paper, the person who has first signed the page on which the greatest number of signatures appears [shall be the representative]. In case it is impossible to ascertain the representative, the Supreme Election Committee shall designate one of the persons having signed the letter as the representative.

SEC. 33. The person filing the nominating petition or his agent shall act as the representative of the nominating petition in the district committee.

He is entitled to appoint one person as the representative of the nominating petition to every precinct committee of the election district.

SEC. 34. Every nominating petition of a candidate shall be numbered by the Supreme Election Committee in the order it was received. Nominating petitions sent by mail are considered as having been filed on time if they are received at the Supreme Election Committee not later than on the 28th day before the first day of election. Nominating petitions received by mail at the same time shall be numbered in the order they were opened.

SEC. 37. The deposit paid in accordance with Section 31 of this law shall remain at the disposal of the Supreme Election Committee until the publication of the election results. Deposits for the Supreme Election Committee paid to city or rural-community administrations shall be transferred to it without delay. The deposit shall be returned to the person filing the nominating petition of the candidates: 1) if the election procedure in this election district is interrupted ac-

ording to Section 73 by the death of the candidate; 2) if the candidate withdraws his candidacy in by-elections (Sec. 73); 3) if the candidate is elected; or 4) if the candidate has received at least one-fourth of the valid votes cast in the election district. Otherwise the deposit shall go to the state.

Sec. 38. Nominating petitions of candidates not complying with the provisions of this chapter shall be invalidated by the Supreme Election Committee.

Sec. 39. The Supreme Election Committee shall compile a list of candidates for the Chamber of Deputies according to election districts, arranged alphabetically by family name and including all candidates whose nominating petitions have been approved, according to Section 16 of the present Law, by the Supreme Election Committee or the State Court of Justice. A copy of the list of candidates shall be sent by the Supreme Election Committee to the city and rural-community administrations of the respective election district.

The copies received in the manner prescribed in the above paragraph shall be posted without delay after their reception publicly in the city or rural-community administration offices.

CHAPTER 8—DELIVERY OF BALLOTS AND COUNT OF VOTES

Sec. 40. The Chamber of Deputies shall be elected by enfranchised citizens, entered on the lists of voters (Sec. 21), who personally hand in their ballots.

No elections shall be held in districts where only one candidate has been nominated. In this case the Supreme Election Committee shall make a remark to this effect on the copy of the list of candidates sent out in accordance with Section 39.

Sec. 41. [Para. 2] An enfranchised citizen may, for urgent reasons, vote in some other precinct of his election district. The city or rural-community administration where the citizen is carried on the lists shall enter a remark to this effect on the voter's certificate of the citizen that he is entitled to vote in any election precinct of this election district. In the precinct list of voters a remark to this effect shall be made prior to the elections by the city or rural-community administration; during the elections, however, by the precinct commission on the basis of a communication from the above-mentioned administration.

* * * * *

Sec. 45. The ballot envelopes shall be all similar, opaque, and without any remarks and marked with a stamp designated for this purpose by the Supreme Election Committee.

Sec. 46. Ballots, envelopes, and blank forms of voter's certificates shall be procured in due time before elections on orders by the Supreme Election Committee.

Sec. 47. The number of ballots shall be ascertained on the basis of the number of enfranchised citizens in the election district. Not later than 28 days before the first election day the number of citizens entered on the voters' lists shall be reported by agencies in charge of lists to the district committee; the latter shall report the number of enfranchised citizens to the Supreme Election Committee within two days.

Sec. 48. Blank forms of voters' certificates and ballots shall be sent at the order of the Supreme Election Committee, to the respective city and rural-community administrations who have to prepare the voters' certificates for all enfranchised citizens on the voters' lists.

The family name and first name of the citizen, residence, election district, election precinct and current number under which the citizen is carried on the list, also time and place of election shall be on this certificate.

Envelopes for ballots, blank forms for records and other necessary materials shall be sent, at the order of the Supreme Election Committee, to the respective city and rural-community offices for forwarding to the precinct committees.

Sec. 49. The city and rural-community administrations shall send not later than three days before the first day of the election, to all citizens on the voters' list the voters' certificates mentioned in the preceding section (48) together with ballots.

Citizens who are entitled to voters' certificate and ballots but have not received them, may get them from the city or rural-community office before the first day of the election. Ballots may be obtained on the day of elections also from the precinct committee.

Sec. 57. The voting shall last for two days, the first day being a Sunday, a legal holiday, or a rest day.

The precinct commissions shall be opened for delivery of ballots on the first day from 9-21 o'clock and on the second day from 9-16 o'clock.

Sec. 59. After having received the envelope, the voter puts the ballot into the envelope which he hands to an election clerk, who before his eyes, deposits the envelope into the ballot box and takes away the voter's certificate.

Sec. 61. The admittance of the citizens to the polling place on the second day shall be ended at 16 o'clock by closing the doors to the polling place; after this time the ballots shall be accepted only from citizens who had entered the polling place prior to this time. When the delivery of ballots by these citizens has been finished, the chairman declares the voting closed and the doors of the polling place are again opened upon his order.

Thereupon the commission shall count the envelopes, leaving them unopened. If the number of envelopes differs from the number of voter's certificates, a remark to this effect shall be made in the election record. After this the envelopes shall be opened and the ascertaining of the data required to be entered into the commission's record according to Sec. 64 shall be started.

Sec. 64. A record shall be kept on everything which takes place at the precinct commission from the opening of the meeting until its end; into this record shall be entered separately all orders of the chairman, decisions of the commission as well as all statements made in the commission's rooms by citizens, and also the name of citizens who voted in the precinct on the basis of the voter's certificate as provided for in Para. 2 of Sec. 41.

Further, there shall be entered: * * *

Sec. 65 [Para. 2]. The voters' certificate shall be kept by the city and rural-community administration until the publication of election results.

CHAPTER 9—CANVASS OF ELECTION RESULTS

Sec. 69. The Supreme Election Committee shall check the election results as canvassed by the precinct and district committees and certify the final results.

Sec. 71. If, in accordance with the procedure described in Chapter 7, in any of the election districts only one candidate has been nominated, the Supreme Election Committee shall proclaim this candidate elected.

CHAPTER 10—BY-ELECTIONS

Sec. 73. In case a candidate for the Chamber of Deputies shall die or lose the right to be elected to the Chamber of Deputies after the deadline for filing the nomination letters of candidates and before the closing of elections, the elections in this election district where the candidate had been nominated, shall be halted by decision of the Supreme Election Committee, and the Supreme Election Committee shall proclaim new elections in this election district; other candidates shall remain nominated also for the new elections unless they submit to the Supreme Election Committee before the deadline for nomination of candidates a written statement about their withdrawal certified by the city or rural-community office.

Sec. 75. The provisions of the present Law shall be applied to elections mentioned in the preceding sections (73 and 74) and these elections shall be held within 20 days of the day of proclamation of the elections. Election day shall be determined by the Supreme Election Committee in its decision to hold elections; all dates provided for in the present Law shall be shortened accordingly.

CHAPTER 11—ELECTION EXPENSES

Sec. 76. The respective city and rural-community administrations shall defray the expenses arising from keeping the lists of enfranchised citizens, also from the issuance of voters' certificates and from forwarding ballots to qualified voters.

[Translation from Estonian]

20. INSTRUCTION OF THE SUPREME ELECTION COMMITTEE IN JULY 1940

*To All District Electoral Committees*²³

The District Electoral Committees shall urgently form ambulatory polling stations, which must visit all hospitals and other medical establishments (ex-

²³Appendix No. 12 to testimony of H. Mark. In the files of the House of Representatives Select Committee on Communist Aggression.

cept hospitals for infectious diseases) as well as all homes for the aged, which are situated within the electoral area of the Committees, in order to let all citizens who reside in these establishments vote. If these citizens are not registered on the lists of electors, the commission shall insert their names on supplementary lists of electors. The District Electoral Committee shall by itself decide the means for the realization of the above direction. The District Electoral Committee must further arrange that all citizens who are sick or invalid and cannot leave their homes being thus unable to take part in the elections, are given opportunity to vote.

The District Electoral Committee shall notify the local electoral commissions that information about the results of the ballot is to be given only and alone to the District Electoral Committees. The latter will send the data on the results of the ballot only to the Central Electoral Committee.

F. NIGGOL

Chairman of the Central Electoral Committee

ARTHUR MÄGI

General Secretary

Extract and translation correct certified by :

H. MARK signed

[Translation from Estonian]

21. DIRECTIVE OF THE SUPREME ELECTION COMMITTEE OF JULY 10, 1940, TO THE DISTRICT ELECTION COMMITTEES²⁴

1. The District Electoral Committees shall take measures to let the sponsors of the candidates immediately know the decrees of the Government of the Republic on the electoral platform of July 9, 1940.

2. If a candidate, owing to the above decree of the Government of the Republic, wishes to renounce his candidacy, he may withdraw his candidacy application, and the caution [deposit], Kr. 250.—, deposited by him, shall be repaid to him.

3. If the presented electoral platform is worded in too general terms, or is obviously intended to dupe the voters, the District Electoral Committee shall decide on the electoral platform of the candidate, after having considered the substance of the question (viz. Electoral Law, § 31, VIII section, § 38 and § 39).

[Translation from Russian].

22. ELECTION SLOGANS OF THE GROUP "WORKING PEOPLE'S LEAGUE OF ESTONIA"²⁵

Tallinn, July 11 (TASS). The election slogans of the group "Estonian Working People's League" were published in the Estonian press. Under these slogans the Estonian people are going to the polls on July 14 and will choose for the new Chamber of Deputies the worthy sons and daughters of the country. The slogans of the group "Estonian Working People's League" present their fighting program for a new, free democratic Estonia, for a happy and joyful life for all toilers of Estonia.

The slogans say :

"Long live the alliance of workers, peasants and working intelligentsia! Long live the Estonian working people!

"Long live the friendship and close alliance of Estonia with the great and mighty Union of Socialist Soviet Republics! Long live the friendship between the peoples of Estonia and the Soviet Union!

"Let us surround with attention and care the units of Red Army which are protecting our borders and our security! Long live the glorious Red Army of the Soviet Union!

"The reactionary clique led Estonia to the road of destruction, poverty and catastrophe, it traded away the freedom and independence of our country. Down with the traitors of people!

²⁴ Appendix No. 1 to H. Mark's testimony. In the files of the House of Representatives Select Committee on Communist Aggression.

²⁵ *Pravda* No. 192—July 12, 1940, p. 4.

"Supreme power in Estonia must belong to the people, and only to the people! Anyone who does not want Estonia to become the battlefield of war, who wants peace, freedom and well-being for Estonia, shall vote for friendship and close alliance with the U. S. S. R., shall vote for the candidates of the group 'Estonian Working People's League.'

"Long live the group 'Estonian Working People's League' which unites the toilers of town and country in the struggle for a new, free Estonia!

"Working people of Estonia! If you really wish the formation of a truly popular representation which will carry out your will and will protect to the end your vital interests, vote for the candidates of the group 'Estonian Working People's League!'

"Long live Estonian Communist Party!

"Workers, peasants, intelligentsia, all honest patriots of our homeland! Unite around the platform of the group 'Estonian Working People's League!' You will secure the victory of the cause of the people by voting unanimously for its candidates!

"We demand that the democratic freedoms—freedom of speech, of press, of assembly, of federation—shall be guaranteed to the toilers of town and country!

"Whoever wants for the Estonian working class human conditions of existence, freedom from the menace of unemployment; whoever wants work, bread and freedom, must vote for the candidates of the group 'Estonian Working People's League.'

"For a wage raise for workers and employees, for a rise in the level of material well-being of toilers! We demand a resolute fight against unemployment and extensive aid to the unemployed!

"We demand further measures in regard to the social insurance of toilers against sickness and accidents, we demand further measures in regard to the worker's protection in industry, transportation and construction field! We demand public care for invalids of labor and aged workers of both sex!

"The group 'Estonian Working People's League' is fighting for government aid of every kind in providing peasants with small plots and landless peasants with land, for decisive relief from indebtedness and tax burden lying heavily upon our peasantry.

"Peasants vote all like one for the candidates of the group 'Estonian Working People's League!'

"Nobody has the right to force the peasant into collective farms and infringe upon the property of the peasantry. Vote for the candidates of the group 'Estonian Working People's League' who are fighting for the prosperity of farmers' households in our country!

"Intellectuals! The former hated regime stifled the culture and education of our people. Those who want prosperity for the Estonian people, advancement of education, science and arts, are voting for the candidates of the group of 'Estonian Working People's League!' Employees and working intelligentsia! Vote for the candidates of the group "Estonian Working People's League!" They are fighting for the improvement of living and working conditions for employees and intellectuals (intelligentsia), for decisive eradication of unemployment among the intelligentsia.

"Female workers, peasant women, female employees and housewives! The group 'Estonian Working People's League' is protecting your daily interests. Rally around the group 'Estonian Working People's League,' vote for its candidates! Long live the free women of Estonia in possession of all rights!

"For the expansion of child and mother protection, for the establishment of nurseries, children homes, kindergartens and child consultation centers! For a happy, joyful life for our children!

"The group of 'Estonian Working People's League' is fighting for the prosperity of our working and farm youth, for their rights, for growth of their spiritual and physical culture! Long live the working youth of Estonia!

"Young men and women of Estonia! In a free Estonia there are opened for you wide possibilities for recreation, work and study! Support the group 'Estonian Working People's League!'

"The former police regime not only let rot in prisons the best representatives of the working people, it also tried to convert Estonia into a prison for the people. Down with the reactionary clique and its servants! Those who are against the return to the hated past are voting for the candidates of the group 'Estonian Working People's League!'

"The group 'Estonian Working People's League' demands that the Estonian army shall walk together with the people, in protecting its free life; that the

army shall participate in the political life of the country; that a democratic order shall be established in the army. Long live the democratization of the Estonian army!

"We demand that public education shall be free and accessible for everyone, that the doors to secondary and higher schools shall be wide open for the children of workers. The group 'Estonian Working People's League' is fighting for it. Vote for its candidates!

"The former reactionary regime poisoned our people with the poison of chauvinism and sowed seeds of discord and enmity between nationalities. Down with chauvinism, inequality of nationalities, and persecution of national minorities! Let us guarantee a true equality of all nationalities living in Estonia!

"Strengthen the organizational structure, the unity and discipline of the Estonian people. Don't spare the enemies of people, the provocators and slanderers.

"Not one vote for opponents of our demands and of our platform!

"All to the elections on July 14 and 15.

"For a complete victory of candidates of the group 'Estonian Working People's League!'"

23. CABLES ²⁸

[Translation from Estonian]

The Cable of the Acting Consul General of Estonia in Charge of Legation in New York (Kair) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tallinn on July 12, 1940 Asking Information About Elections Planned in Estonia

JULY 12, 1940

To: Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Tallinn, Estonia

According to press reports on the 15th there will be in Estonia elections and an plebiscite to join Russia. Please cable what voting on what basis and order.
Consulate General 847

The Cable of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia to Consulate General of Estonia in New York on July 13, 1940 Denying Rumors About Joining the Soviet Union

Legation
NY (Consulate Genl. Estonia 9 Rockefeller Plaza)

There is no plebiscite, only Chamber of Deputies elections on basis of Constitution. Rumors about joining without foundation.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1393

Cable to the Acting Consul General in Charge of Legation in New York (Kaiv) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tallinn on July 22, 1940 Asking Information About the Joining of the Soviet Union

JULY 22, 1940

To: Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Tallinn (Estonia)
Cable about authority for joining Russia

Consulate General 887

²⁸ From the Archives of the Estonian Consulate-General in New York.

[Copy]

24. MEMORANDUM OF THE ACTING CONSUL GENERAL OF ESTONIA (J. KAIV) IN CHARGE OF LEGATION TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE U. S. A. ON JULY 17, 1940, PROTESTING AGAINST THE ELECTIONS IN ESTONIA "

The Acting Consul General of Estonia in charge of Legation presents his compliments to the Honorable the Secretary of State and has the honor to communicate the following.

In September (28) 1939 Estonia and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics concluded in Moscow the Pact of Mutual Assistance. Being always anxious of safeguarding the best relations with the neighboring countries, the Estonian Government has been endeavoring strictly and in the friendliest spirit to fulfill the said Pact.

Suddenly, some weeks ago in the official Moscow newspaper Pravda appeared an ominous article in which the Estonian people were charged with unfriendliness toward the U. S. S. R.

Soon afterwards, on June 17th, Russian troops invaded Estonia after a short-termed ultimatum had been presented. The Estonian Government resigned and a new Government was appointed as of June 21.

According to the official Soviet press this entering of Estonian territory by Russian troops has occurred on the basis of a supplementary agreement between Estonia and the U. S. S. R.

The Acting Consul General has no information that such a supplementary agreement has ever been approved by the National Assembly, ratified or proclaimed in the procedure foreseen in Article 101 of the Estonian Constitution. So it is to be assumed that at the time of entering Estonian territory by Russian troops the Mutual Assistance Pact of September 28, 1939, was in force as a duly passed act.

According to Article 3 of the said Pact " * * * the Soviet Union is entitled to maintain on the areas set aside for the bases and aerodromes, at their own cost, a strictly limited number of Soviet land and air forces."

As the press news unanimously show, the U. S. S. R. has placed its armed forces all over the country in excess of any purpose foreseen by the article cited.

By Article 5 of the same Pact the Contracting Parties agreed that "carrying out the terms of the present pact must in no way infringe the sovereign rights of the Contracting Parties; especially their economic systems and state structures." In violation of this stipulation the U. S. S. R. forced the former constitutional Government of Estonia to resign and is exercising pressure on the Estonian people and is enforcing the remodelling of Estonian institutions according to the prescriptions by the Soviet authorities.

Consequently, the entering of armed forces of the U. S. S. R. into Estonia is to be regarded as an armed invasion in violation of the rules of International Law and of existing Treaties.

By the Government appointed under the pressure of the U. S. S. R. new elections of the Estonian National Assembly have been held on the 14th and 15th instant.

The Acting Consul General has not been supplied with detailed information as to the nature of these elections. But in view of the shortness of time between the proclamation of elections and their date, it is self-evident that no possibilities were left for the Estonian people to organize into political parties or propose their candidates or to conduct election campaigns in the spirit set down in the Constitution. Secondly, it is self-evident that it is impossible to conduct elections if the country is occupied by the armed forces of another country.

In view of the above the Acting Consul General, having been appointed by the former constitutional Government of Estonia, reserves the right not to recognize the results of these elections and the acts emanating therefrom.

The Acting Consul General takes this opportunity of expressing the acknowledgement and sincerest appreciation toward the Government of the United States for the initiative of taking measures against the falling of Estonian property in this country into illegal possession.

There are in the United States goods and deposits of the Estonian governmental institutions as well as private property and there are several Estonian vessels

" Ibid.

in the waters of the Western Hemisphere. Attempts may be made by the illegal authorities to seize these deposits, goods, vessels or other Estonian property.

The Acting Consul General in charge of Legation has the honor to request the United States Government to safeguard the above mentioned Estonian property against any further attempt of alienation or of illegal seizure.

(Enclosures: Constitution of the Republic of Estonia; Estonian-Soviet Pact.)
JULY 17, 1940.

[Translation from Estonian]

25. DECLARATION ON THE GOVERNMENTAL POWER IN ESTONIA²² APPROVED BY THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES ON JULY 21, 1940

For years the Estonian people suffered under the heavy oppression of a reactionary regime, which led the country into a dead end in its internal policies and foreign relations. Unemployment, hunger, misery, and inequality of nationalities were the only fate of the working people of town and country. The legitimate interests and needs of the Estonian working people were sacrificed to the selfish interests of a handful of exploiters, big landlords, and capitalists, who ruled in Estonia.

The ruling clique, hiding behind the deceptive and misleading words of the equality, freedom, and justice of its citizens, kept the Estonian people in the bondage of injustice and arbitrary power. The Estonian State was a prison for the Estonian people. A large part of the working people were without any political, professional, or cultural organization. Free speech and free thought were mercilessly suppressed.

The foreign policy of former Estonian governments was also hostile and destructive to the Estonian people. At a time when the vital interests of Estonian people required a close alliance and friendship with the Soviet Union, the ruling clique was conducting, in regard to the Soviet Union, a policy hostile to the Estonian people, transforming Estonia into a helpless pawn in the hands of European imperialists and its territory into a base for possible attacks against the Soviet Union.

The warmongers holding power were trading with the freedom and independence of our nation and were endangering directly the security, peace, inviolability, and welfare of Estonia.

The Estonian people chased out their unacceptable government and for the first time in history had a chance to conduct free elections for its own representatives.

The elections to the Chamber of Deputies on July 14 and 15 proved to be days of victory for the working class, the peasantry, and the working intelligentsia. The platform of the Estonian Working People's League united around it the overwhelming majority of the Estonian people, all our honest patriots.

The election victory of the Estonian Working People's League signals an historic change in the life of Estonia; this means that the Estonians have expressed their wish to do away for good with the political power of capitalists and big landowners, to take into their own hands the governing of the country, and to set up a truly popular government.

The new Chamber of Deputies, which is the only and the fully authoritative representative of the will of the Estonian people, is called upon to contemplate the demands of the people, and to give its legislative confirmation to the victory of the Estonian working people achieved in the struggle with the exploiting regime, and feels it is its basic duty to decide the question of the nature of governmental power in Estonia.

In solving the problem of governmental power, we turn our eyes toward the historic experiences and the great example of the peoples of the friendly Soviet Union.

The great historical experiences of the Soviet Union teach us that only the Soviet regime really expresses and protects the interests of the working people and is the only true popular government where the state is ruled by the people themselves without landlords or capitalists.

Every other regime, as proven by the experience of capitalist countries, including that of our bitter life in bourgeois Estonia, is only a hidden or open deception using the slogans of freedom and equality and the rule of a handful of oppressors and unlimited arbitrary power over the overwhelming majority of the people.

²² *Riigi Teataja* 1940, 74, 733.

Wage slavery, man's exploitation of man has been abolished forever in the Soviet Union. The right to work, the right to rest and leisure, to maintenance in old age, the right to education, is guaranteed to every worker. The care of man is the guiding principle of the whole life. Only the Soviet regime is the most democratic regime. The working people are actually governing the state through the soviets and are creating for themselves a free and happy life.

The alliance of worker and peasant is personified in the soviets, and this renders the Soviet State an invincible power. Only the Soviet regime is creating conditions for the flowering of the nation's talents, thus elevating from among the people the leaders and organizers of economic and public life.

The oppression and inequality of nationalities have been destroyed forever in the Soviet Union. All nationalities within the Soviet Union form a common friendly family. Only in the Soviet Union has the national culture of all nationalities prospered with unprecedented force. There are no backward nationalities in the Soviet Union.

The example of the Soviet Union shows only the Soviet regime can guarantee peace, bread, work, and freedom to the working people in town and country and save the Estonian people from exploitation, want, and injustice. Only the Soviet regime can guarantee us political, economic, and cultural prosperity. Only the Soviet regime guarantees to the Estonian people a truly free national development.

In expressing the free and unanimous will of the Estonian working people, the Chamber of Deputies proclaims the Soviet regime to be in effect on the whole territory of Estonia.

Estonia is proclaimed a Soviet Socialist Republic!

Henceforth all power in the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic belongs to the working people of town and country represented by the Soviets of Workers' Deputies.

The Chamber of Deputies is firmly convinced that the entire Estonian people will rally around the Soviet Regime to achieve a complete victory of the working people, for the welfare of Estonia, for the prosperity of economic life, culture, freedom, and happiness of our people.

Long live the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic!

Long live the Soviets of the Deputies of Working People!

Long live the Soviet Union—the fatherland of the working people of the whole world!

[Translation from Estonian]

26. DECLARATION ON THE OCCASION OF ESTONIA'S JOINING THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS,²⁹ APPROVED BY THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES ON JULY 22, 1940

For many years the Estonian people have suffered oppression under a reactionary exploiting regime, have been subjected to looting and enslavement, doomed to poverty and semi-starvation.

Chronic unemployment and complete insecurity about the future was the fate of the Estonian worker and working intelligentsia.

The Estonian peasantry suffered with inadequate land or with no land from the burdens of debt and taxes, from the exactions of usurers and speculators.

The rule of the reactionary clique had led the state into an impasse. The Estonian national economy had been led into a decline. Its productive forces were undeveloped. Population was on a steady decline. National income was decreasing more and more, the indebtedness of the whole nation was ever increasing. Industry became more and more dependent on foreign capital. The future of agriculture depended on the whims of the world market. Thus, the fateful political and economic dependence of Estonia on imperialist robbers, foreign capitalists, and bankers grew greater and greater.

The policy of the former reactionary regime, detrimental to the people, had led Estonia to the verge of destruction. The danger was looming that Estonia would become the prey of the imperialists.

At a time when the most vital interests of the Estonian people required a close and all-embracing cooperation with the Soviet Union, the clique of former Estonian rulers was erecting, to the detriment of the people, artificial walls between Estonia and the peoples of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In the

²⁹ *Riigi Teataja* 1940, 76, 743.

narrow, profit-seeking interests of its class it sowed enmity between our people and the peoples of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, furthering chauvinistic hatred. By all means it sought to prevent a brotherly rapprochement between our people and the Soviet peoples, to hinder the development of friendship and a close and firm alliance with our great neighbor, the invincible Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The former government started to violate the treaty concluded on September 28, 1939 between Estonia and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and treacherously started our state on the road to war and destruction.

Instead of promoting the establishment of friendship between nationalities, the reactionary clique trampled upon the primitive rights of national minorities in Estonia, inciting and provoking in every respect hatred between nationalities.

The Estonian people, having destroyed the former oppression and the domination of an unjust regime, having taken into its own hands the future of its fatherland, and having started on the broad and bright road toward building a new life, the great historic hour has arrived when the will of the Estonian people, expressed in the vote of the whole nation, to establish a firm union and indestructible friendship between the Republic of Estonia and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, shall find its legislative confirmation.

The Chamber of Deputies is convinced that only the entry of Estonia into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will guarantee real sovereignty to our State, a free national development for our nation, prosperity to our industry, agriculture, and national culture, a mighty increase in the material and cultural welfare of the Estonian people and the well-being of our beloved fatherland.

For a long time the working people of Estonia have been connected with the peoples of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics by brotherly ties in a common revolutionary struggle against czarism, capitalists, and landlords, who were oppressing the Russian as well as the Estonian workers and peasants.

The Estonian people, entering the family of brotherly peoples of the land of socialism is making possible the rapid development of its creative forces and is marching on the road to the building of a new life hand in hand with the working people of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Only within the great Soviet Union and as an equal member of the brotherly family of the Soviet Republics will the Estonian people have the opportunity to raise its economy, to develop a national culture, guarantee the equality of nationalities, and guarantee peace, bread, and real freedom to the Estonian working people.

On the basis of the unanimous will of the Estonian people, the Chamber of Deputies decides:

To petition the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the admission of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic into the Soviet Union as a constituent republic on the same basis as the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, and other constituent republics.

Long live free Soviet Estonia!

Long live the great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics!

[Translated from: Johannes Lauristin. *Esimene Nõukogude aasta Eestis* (First Soviet Year in Estonia). Tallinn. RK "Politiline Kirjandus," 1946, pp. 169-171.]

[Translation from Estonian]

27. CABLE OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY OF ESTONIA TO THE CONSULATE GENERAL OF ESTONIA IN NEW YORK ON JULY 22, 1940, CONFIRMING ESTONIA'S JOINING WITH THE SOVIET UNION³⁰

1940 JULY 22

Legation (Consulate General of Estonia)
New York (Room 1421 9 Rockefeller Plaza)

887 The Chamber of Deputies has decided to request the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. to accept Estonia into the U. S. S. R. as a member republic. Under consideration a proclamation to the effect that the land belongs to the people; that means preservation of small land holdings, state subsidies, granting of land to the landless and small landowners. Nationalization of large industries and banks under way.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

³⁰ From archives of Estonian Consulate General in New York.

[Copy]

28. NOTE OF THE ESTONIAN ACTING CONSUL GENERAL IN CHARGE OF LEGATION (KAIV) OF JULY 23, 1940, TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE U. S. A. REQUESTING NON-RECOGNITION OF THE SOVIET SEIZURE OF ESTONIA ^{30a}

NEW YORK, July 23, 1940

The Honorable CORDELL HULL
Secretary of State, Washington, D. C.

SIR,

As stated in my Note verbale dated July 17th, 1940, Estonia has been invaded by the troops of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and my country is at present under military occupation. Grossly violating the rules of International Law and existing treaties, the aggressor has been endeavoring, nevertheless, to camouflage its acts by the cover of apparent legality. But the fact of invasion persists, as persists the fact of occupation by armed forces.

In such a state it is impossible for the Estonian people to exercise its free will as regards the Government of the country, and it is evident at the same time that it has been made impossible for the Estonian institutions to function in accordance with the Constitution and Law for the benefit of the Estonian people.

Under pressure and threats by the aggressor's authorities the newly established puppet Government has had to act as dictated from Moscow.

The so-called elections of the Estonian Chamber of Deputies were conducted by this Government on the 14th and 15th instant.

As the latest information shows, no means were left to the Estonian people to express its will at these elections. It is anything else, but not elections in the sense of the Estonian Constitution. It has been a most cynical usurpation of the free will of the people.

According to the press news, this newly elected Chamber of Deputies has voted for joining the U. S. S. R. as one of the Soviet Republics. As I had no official confirmation of these reports, I cabled yesterday to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tallinn asking for information. Last night I received a cabled reply of which a translation is enclosed herewith.

On this occasion I would point out that according to the Estonian Constitution Estonia is an independent and sovereign Republic wherein the supreme power of the State is held by the people (Art. 1). Consequently the union with any other country can be decided only in the way set for the amendment of the Constitution, as foreseen in Chapter XIV of the Constitution. That has not been the case.

Being appointed by the former constitutional Government as senior Representative in this country, I regard the above mentioned elections as null and void, as well as all acts passed by this unconstitutionally elected Chamber of Deputies, in particular the decision about the union with the U. S. S. R.

For the reasons stated above as well as in my Note verbale of the 17th instant, I have the honor to request through you, Mr. Secretary, the United States Government: 1) to withhold recognition of the union of Estonia with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and 2) to allow me to continue my duties in the United States as Acting Consul General in charge of Legation duly appointed by the constitutional Government of Estonia.

Accept, Sir, the assurance of my most distinguished consideration/

J. KAIV

Acting Consul General of Estonia in charge of Legation

29. MEMORANDUM OF THE ESTONIAN MINISTER IN LONDON TO BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY, JULY 23, 1940 ³¹

ESTONIAN LEGATION,
London, S. W. 7, July 23rd, 1940.

MY LORD,

I have learned that the new Estonian Chamber of Deputies, which assembled for its first meeting on Sunday, July 21st, has decided to apply for the admission of Estonia into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

^{30a} Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

It has always been the sincere endeavour of the Estonian people and of every successive Estonian cabinet to maintain the friendliest relations with Estonia's great eastern neighbour. In the geographical position of Estonia it could hardly have been otherwise.

It is, however, impossible to assume that the Estonian people after having fought so gallantly for its independence in 1918/19 and after having achieved during the past twenty-two years of its independent life such undeniable progress in political, cultural and economic spheres, should now of its own free will renounce the independence it has cherished so dearly.

From what has transpired about the latest events in Estonia every impartial observer must inevitably arrive at the conclusion that the elections of July 14th and 15th took place under manifest foreign pressure. The decision to surrender the independence of the country has, therefore, quite obviously been arrived at under duress and it cannot be considered to be a free and genuine expression of the will of the overwhelming majority of the Estonian people.

Under these circumstances, I am unable to regard the decision mentioned above as valid, neither can I consider as binding any decision or act emanating from a Government which no longer represents the free Estonian nation but acts under foreign control and pressure.

In view of the above, I venture to express the hope that H. M. Government, in conformity with their frequently reiterated determination not to approve of situations engendered by force as against law, will refuse to recognise the incorporation of Estonia into the Soviet Union, since it is only too apparent that this situation has been brought about under duress.

I have the honour to be, with the highest consideration, My Lord,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) A. TORMA.

The Right Hon. Viscount HALIFAX, K. G., P. C., G. C. S. I., G. C. I. E.,
H. M. Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,
Foreign Office, London, S. W. 1

* * *

This is to certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a note dated July 23, 1940 addressed by the Minister of Estonia to Great Britain August Torma to The Right Hon. Viscount Halifax, British Foreign Secretary, a copy of which has been forwarded by Mr. Torma to the Consulate General of Estonia in New York.

(Signed) J. KAIV,

Acting Consulate General of Estonia in charge of Legation.

NEW YORK, N. Y., March 2, 1954

Reg. No. 82

[Translation from Estonian]

30. DECLARATION OF THE ESTONIAN CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES ON JULY 23, 1940, CONCERNING THE NATIONALIZATION OF INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES AND BANKS²²

Banks and large industrial enterprises, in the hands of Estonian capitalists and big landowners, have been the means of exploiting the working people.

A handful of parasites and speculators fattened and enriched themselves by the toil of workers, peasants, craftsmen and the working intelligentsia.

The wealth of the people accumulated in the pockets of industrialists, factory owners and bankers.

The workers were robbed of everything they possessed. Unemployment, insecurity, and fear for the morrow have been the lot of the Estonian worker. The economic life of the country has been stultified.

At the elections to the Chamber of Deputies, in which the whole nation took part, the working people of Estonia demanded that they should have work, living conditions fit for human beings, and that they should for all time be freed of the fear of unemployment.

At their meetings the working people raised the question of the nationalization of the banks and large industrial enterprises.

Complying with these just demands of the people, and in order to abolish the exploitation of one human being by another, and forever to crush the power of parasites, industrialists, factory owners and bankers over the working people,

²² *Riigi Teataja* 1940, 77, 745.

the Chamber of Deputies hereby proclaims the nationalization of all banks and large industrial enterprises in the territory of Estonia.

Henceforth all banks, together with their assets, all large industrial enterprises, mines and transportation enterprises are declared public property, the property of the State.

Henceforth the working people of Estonia are in possession of these powerful instruments for their economic liberation—the banks and the large industrial enterprises. Thereby conditions are created for a speedy prospering of the national economy, guaranteed by the free labor of the workers, who have now become the owners of the factories and plants.

The Chamber of Deputies is convinced that this decision entirely conforms with the interests of the nation and the State, and calls on all workers and employees to keep revolutionary discipline and to work self-denyingly so that the new regime may achieve final success.

The Chamber of Deputies charges the Government with the duty of drawing up and approving without delay a list of the enterprises to be nationalized.

[Translation from Estonian]

31. DECLARATION OF THE ESTONIAN CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES ON JULY 23, 1940, DECLARING ALL THE LAND PUBLIC PROPERTY ²³

The Estonian peasant has suffered for centuries. He was compelled to bow before the landlords. He had to endure the whip of the baron's bailiffs. The misery of the working peasant was not alleviated with the advent to power of the Estonian capitalists. He is suffering from lack of land or inadequate small-holdings. He is groaning under heavy and unjust taxes and a heavy burden of debt to the banks and to usurers. He is exploited by industrialists and business men. A handful of parasites and profiteers are enriching themselves at his expense.

The end has now come to this horrible nightmare of the past. Henceforth the Estonian peasant will be free in his country which has been liberated from the rule of a reactionary clique. Henceforth the workers, peasants and the working intelligentsia will be the only lawful masters of the Estonian State.

In their endeavour to further the true interests of the working peasants and in expressing the will of all workers, the Chamber of Deputies has decided to proclaim as public property, that is the property of the State, all the land, together with all natural deposits, all forests, lakes and rivers.

The maximum area of land allowed to each working farmer is henceforth fixed at 30 hectares. All land now in possession of farmers exceeding this maximum is to be added to the State Land Reserve, which will enable the State to provide landless peasants or those holding small areas with additional land.

Henceforth there is not, and shall not be, any room in our country for parasites, exploiters, and their creatures.

Land at present held by working peasants, as well as lands apportioned by the State to landless peasants and those holding insufficient land, shall be held by them in perpetual tenure. Any attempt to seize the farmers' private property or to compel the working peasants to join collective farms against their will, shall be decisively prevented, since any such attempt would be detrimental to the interests of the State and the people.

The Chamber of Deputies annuls all debts burdening the farmers arising out of the previous Land Reform.

The Chamber of Deputies requests the Government to find means to alleviate all other liabilities now oppressing the households of farmers and fishermen, to repeal unjust taxes, and to find means to ease the burden of taxes resting on the whole working population.

The Chamber of Deputies declares null and void all arrears in tax payments owed by farmers, and all fines imposed on them by former administrative authorities.

The termination of the land tenure system favoring parasites and exploiters, and the assistance, with grants of land by the State, of landless peasants and those who hold insufficient land, means that an end has been put to starvation and misery among the peasants, an end to these constant companions of the political and economic rule of Capitalism.

Long live the Estonian working people, the only lawful masters of the whole land!

Long live the unbreakable union of workers and peasants!

²³ *Riigi Teataja* 1940, 77, 744.

32. SPEECH BY V. MOLOTOV AT THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE SUPREME SOVIET ON AUGUST 1, 1940³⁴

Our relations with Germany, which underwent a turn nearly a year ago, remain entirely as laid down in the Soviet-German Agreement. This Agreement, strictly observed by our Government, removed the possibility of friction in Soviet-German relations when Soviet measures were carried out along our Western frontier and at the same time it has assured Germany a calm feeling of assurance in the East. * * *

* * * now come to our relations with Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Since the Mutual Assistance Pacts concluded with Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia had not produced the expected results, the problems of the relations of the Soviet Union with the Baltic countries has lately taken a new turn. The conclusion of these Pacts did not lead to a rapprochement between Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, respectively, and the Soviet Union, as might have been expected, because this was opposed by the ruling bourgeois groups of the Baltic countries.

Far from taking the road of rapprochement with the Soviet Union as we had some right to expect after the conclusion of the Mutual Assistance Pact, these ruling groups took the road of an intensification of hostile activities against the Soviet Union, pursuing them secretly and behind the back of the U. S. S. R. For this purpose the so-called Baltic Entente was utilized in which formerly only Latvia and Estonia were united in a military alliance against the U. S. S. R., but which, at the end of last year, was converted into a military alliance comprising Lithuania as well as Latvia and Estonia. It is thus clear that the ruling bourgeois groups of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia were incapable of honestly carrying out the Mutual Assistance Pacts concluded with the Soviet Union; that on the contrary, they even extended their hostile activities against the Soviet Union.

Facts proving that the Governments of these countries were grossly violating the Mutual Assistance Pacts concluded with the U. S. S. R. kept piling up. It became utterly impossible to tolerate such a state of affairs any longer, particularly in the present international situation. This was the reason why the Soviet Government presented the demands of which you are aware concerning changes in the Governments of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia and the dispatch of additional Red Army units to these countries. You know the results of these steps taken by our Government.

The most important measure carried out by the Governments friendly to the Soviet Union that were set up in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, was the holding of free parliamentary elections. In July democratic elections were held for the Lithuanian Diet, the Latvian Diet and the Estonian State Duma. The elections proved that the ruling bourgeois clique of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia did not possess the will of their people but represented only a small group of exploiters.

The Diets of Lithuania and Latvia and the State Duma of Estonia were elected on the basis of universal direct and equal suffrage and secret ballot and have already expressed their unanimous opinion on fundamental political questions. We can note with satisfaction that the peoples of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania voted solidly for their representatives who unanimously pronounced in favour of introducing the Soviet system and the incorporation of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Thus relations between Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia and the Soviet Union must be placed on a new basis. The Supreme Soviet will examine the question of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia joining the Soviet Union as Union Soviet Socialist Republics of the U. S. S. R. There is not the slightest doubt that the affiliation of these Republics to the Soviet Union will assure their rapid economic development and the flourish of their national culture in every way; their entry into the Soviet Union will, moreover, greatly enhance their strength and assure their security, and at the same time, still further increase the might of the great Soviet Union.

* * * * *

* * * The fact that the frontier of the Soviet Union will now be shifted to the Baltic coast is of first-rate importance for our country. At the same time we shall now have ice-free ports in the Baltic of which we stand so much in need.

³⁴ Molotov, V. M. Soviet peace policy; four speeches by V. Molotov. London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1941, pp. 72-75, 77, 80.

The successes of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union are all the more significant in that we have achieved them all by peaceful means, that the peaceful settlement of questions both with the Baltic countries and Bessarabia was achieved with the active co-operation and support of the broad masses of the people of these countries.

* * * * *

We have learned that there are certain people in the United States who are not pleased with the successes of Soviet foreign policy in the Baltic countries. But we must confess we are little concerned over this fact inasmuch as we are coping with our tasks without the assistance of these disgruntled gentlemen. However, the fact that the authorities in the United States unlawfully placed an embargo on the gold which our State Bank recently purchased from the Banks of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, meets with the most energetic protest on our part. In this case we can only remind both the Government of the United States and the Government of Great Britain, which adopted the same procedure, of their responsibility for these illegal acts.

[Translation from Russian]

33. LAW ON INCORPORATION OF ESTONIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC INTO THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS OF AUGUST 6, 1940²⁸

After having heard the statement of the plenipotentiary delegation of the Chamber of Deputies of Estonia, the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics resolves:

1. To approve the petition of the Chamber of Deputies of Estonia and to incorporate the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic into the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics as a constituent Soviet Socialist Republic with equal rights.
2. In accordance with Sections 34 and 35 of the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the U. S. S. R. to hold elections of deputies from the constituent Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R.
3. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall determine the election day.

²⁸ *Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Soveta of the USSR* 1940, No. 28.

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III. Latvia

1. LATVIAN DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE ³⁶

The National Council of Latvia, deeming itself to be the only repository of the supreme power in the State of Latvia, declares, that:

1) Latvia, united in its ethnographic limits (*Kurzeme, Vidzeme, and Latgale*)—is a self-governing, independent, democratic-republican State. [Its] Constitution and the relations with foreign states shall be specifically defined in the near future by a Constituent Assembly convoked on the basis of direct, general, equal, secret and proportional suffrage for both sexes.

2) The National Council of Latvia has established a Provisional Government of Latvia as the supreme executive power in Latvia.

The National Council of Latvia requests the citizens of Latvia to maintain peace and order and to assist the Provisional Government of Latvia with all their power in its difficult and responsible task.

Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of Latvia:

ULMANIS.

Deputy Chairman of the National Council of Latvia:

ZEMGALS.

RIGA, November 18, 1918.

2. POLITICAL PLATFORM OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LATVIA ADOPTED IN THE NOVEMBER 18, 1918, SESSION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LATVIA AT RIGA ³⁷

I. CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

1) The Constituent Assembly of Latvia shall be convoked at the earliest time possible.

2) Members of the Constituent Assembly shall be elected under the participation of both sexes on the basis of general, equal, direct, secret and proportional right to vote.

II. FORM OF STATE [ORGANIZATION] AND RELATIONS WITH OTHER NATIONS

1) A republic based on democratic principles.

2) A united, self-governing and independent Latvia in the League of Nations.

III. THE SOVEREIGN POWER AND THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION OF THE STATE

1) Until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, sovereign power shall be vested in the National Council of Latvia, which shall also appoint the Provisional Government.

2) The National Council of Latvia shall consist of the delegates of: a) political parties, b) national minorities and c) those areas (*novadi*) of Latvia, i. e. *Kurzeme and Latgale*, where there do not exist political parties at the present moment.

3) In forming the Provisional Government the principle of coalition shall be observed.

4) Until the [convocation of the] Constituent Assembly all executive power shall vest in the Provisional Government.

³⁶ ["Waldibas Wehatnesis" December 14, 1918, No. 1 (Official Gazette).] Bilmanis, Alfred. *Dr. Comp. Latvian-Russian Relations*. Washington, the Latvian Legation, 1944, p. 59.

³⁷ Collection of laws and decrees of the Latvian Provisional Government, No. 2, July 15, 1919. Also Bilmanis. *Documents*, op. cit., pp. 59-60.

5) Until the Constituent Assembly the Provisional Government has no authority to change the existing social system.

IV. RIGHTS OF RACIAL MINORITIES [*Zittautceschu tiesibas*]

1) National minorities shall delegate their representatives to the Constituent Assembly and legislative agencies on the basis of the right of proportional representation in the elections (see I, Para 2).

2) Those national minorities which are included in the National Council of Latvia, shall participate in the Provisional Government on the basis of Part III 3).

3) The cultural and national rights of national groups shall be ensured by the basic laws.

V. CIVIC LIBERTIES

1) Freedom of press, speech, assembly and association shall be ensured by regulation of the Provisional Government.

2) An amnesty [shall be granted] in all cases, except criminal cases.

3) A possibility for Latvian citizens to return to their homeland [shall be given].

VI. NATIONAL DEFENSE.

1) The national militia of Latvia (defense force) shall be established on the basis of conscription, not excluding voluntary registration. The militia (national defense forces) shall be directly responsible to the Provisional Government organizing national defense.

2) The German army shall be evacuated within a definite period of time.

VII. MUNICIPALITIES.

1) The election of Municipal Agencies shall take place on the basis of principles outlined in Part I, Para. 2. Prior to the Constituent Assembly, the Provisional Government shall fix the time for these elections and it shall also set up the provisional agencies of local administration.

Deputy Chairman of the National Council of Latvia :

ZEMGALS.

Secretary :

BITTE.

3. DECLARATION CONCERNING THE STATE OF LATVIA ADOPTED BY THE LATVIAN CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY IN ITS PLENARY SESSION OF MAY 27, 1920²⁸

1. Latvia is a self-governing and independent republic with a democratic state organization.

2. The sovereign power of the Latvian State belongs to the Latvian Nation.
The President of the Constituent Assembly :

J. TSCHAKSTE.

The Secretary of the Constituent Assembly :

R. IVANOV.

4. PROVISIONAL CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE OF LATVIA ADOPTED IN THE JUNE 1, 1920, PLENARY SESSION OF THE LATVIAN CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY²⁹

1. The bearer of the sovereign power of the State of Latvia is, in the name of the Latvian people, the Constituent Assembly elected by the nation on April 17 and 19, 1920.

2. It is the task of the Constituent Assembly to draft and pass the basic laws and the agrarian reform laws of the State.

²⁸ Collection of laws and decrees of the Latvian Provisional Government, No. 182. Also Bilmanis. Documents, op. cit., pp. 66-67.

²⁹ Collection of laws and decrees of the Latvian Provisional Government, No. 183. Also Bilmanis. Documents, op. cit., pp. 66-67.

3. The Constituent Assembly passes also other indispensable laws and decides on the State Budget and credits.

4. The Constituent Assembly decides [on questions] of peace and war, and ratifies international treaties signed with other states.

5. The President of the Constituent Assembly represents the State internationally, accredits diplomatic representatives of Latvia and receives those of other states. The President in the name of the State declares war and signs international treaties.

6. The executive power is vested in the Cabinet of Ministers, to which are subject all government agencies and the supreme command of the army.

7. The Cabinet of Ministers is formed by a person invited for this purpose by the President of the Constituent Assembly.

8. The Cabinet of Ministers is responsible for its activities to the Constituent Assembly, and it must resign if it has lost the confidence of the Constituent Assembly.

9. Inviolability of person and home, freedom of press, speech, conscience, strikes, meeting and association, and inviolability of correspondence exist in Latvia, and they shall be secured and determined by pertinent laws.

10. Members of the Constituent Assembly may be prosecuted judicially if the Constituent Assembly consents to it by a majority vote of three-fifths of the members present.

11. Having performed its tasks, the Constituent Assembly shall renounce its powers.

12. This law becomes effective upon its adoption by the Constituent Assembly.

The President of the Constituent Assembly:

J. TSCHAKSTE.

The Secretary of the Constituent Assembly:

E. IVANOVŠ.

5. RECOGNITION OF LATVIA BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ⁴⁰

"860.n.01/52a : Telegram

"The Secretary of State to the Commissioner at Riga (Young)

Washington, July 25, 1922, 4 p. m.

"98 Advise Foreign Offices of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as nearly at the same time as possible on the morning of July 28, that *the United States extend to each full recognition* (Italics by the ref.). The fact will be communicated to the press at Washington for publication in the morning papers of July 28, and the following statement will be made:

"The Governments of Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania have been recognized either de jure or de facto by the principal Governments of Europe and have entered into treaty relations with their neighbors.

"In extending to them recognition on its part, the Government of the United States takes cognizance of the actual existence of these Governments during a considerable period of time and the successful maintenance within their borders of political and economical stability.

"The United States has consistently maintained that the disturbed conditions of Russian affairs may not be made the occasion for alienation of Russian territory, and *this principle is not deemed to be impinged by the recognition at this time of the Governments of Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania which have been set up and maintained by an indigenous population.* (Italics by the ref.).

"Pending legislation by Congress to establish regular diplomatic representation Mr. Young will continue as Commissioner of the United States and will have the rank of Minister. Request from respective Governments temporary recognition pending formal application for exequatures of John P. Hurley, Charles H. Albrecht, and Clement S. Edwards consuls at Riga, Reval and Kovno, respectively.

Signed: HUGHES."

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 123-124.

6. SETTLEMENT OF FRONTIER DISPUTES

AGREEMENT BETWEEN LATVIA AND THE UNION OF SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLICS CONCERNING THE SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES WHICH MAY ARISE ON THE FRONTIER BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, SIGNED AT RIGA, JULY 19, 1926 "

With a view to establishing a simplified procedure applicable to disputes and incidents of minor importance which may arise on the frontier, THE LATVIAN GOVERNMENT, of the one part, and THE SOVIET OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS OF THE UNION OF SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLICS, of the other part, have decided to conclude an agreement on this subject, and have appointed for this purpose as their Plenipotentiaries:

1. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE LATVIAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC:

M. Charles ULMANIS, Latvian Minister for Foreign Affairs;

2. THE SOVIET OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS OF THE UNION OF SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLICS:

M. Alexis TCHERNIKH, Representative Plenipotentiary of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics in Latvia:

Who, having communicated their full powers found in good and due form, have agreed upon the following provisions:

Article 1.

Any incidents or disputes which may have arisen on the frontier before the coming into force of the present Agreement shall be settled by diplomacy. Such incidents and disputes may, however, be dealt with by the simplified procedure applicable to incidents of minor importance, as hereinafter set forth, if the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Soviet of People's Commissar of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics have agreed in advance to employ that method.

Any incidents and disputes of minor importance (Article 2) which may arise on the frontier after the coming into force of the present Agreement, shall be settled on the spot, in conformity with Articles 3 to 10 of this Agreement.

Article 2.

For the purposes of the present Agreement, the following shall be regarded as frontier incidents and disputes of minor importance:

(a) Single shots fired in the frontier zone at posts, sentinels or private persons, without causing death, wounds or material damage;

(b) The crossing of the frontier by local inhabitants, Customs employees or frontier guards, if the crossing took place by mistake and without malicious intent;

(c) The impounding of domestic animals which have crossed the frontier, and questions concerning their restoration to the persons who claim them;

(d) Thefts of live-stock or other property situated on the other side of the frontier and their restoration to the owners, or the payment of compensation if it is impossible to restore the stolen objects themselves;

(e) Other incidents or misunderstandings which may arise on the frontier and which do not involve any question of principle.

Article 3.

The representatives of the local frontier administrative authorities, whose duty it will be to settle frontier incidents and disputes of minor importance (Article 2) shall be: for Latvia: The Head Officer of the district; and for the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics: the Head of the Frontier Detachment of the State Central Political Administration, or his authorised representatives.

The areas in which the above-mentioned officials shall act, together with their permanent stations, shall be laid down in the Protocol annexed to the present Agreement.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 144-148.

Article 4.

Decisions regarding questions to be settled under the present Agreement, by the officials mentioned in Article 3, shall be arrived at by consent between the officials concerned. The decisions shall be as brief as possible; they shall be signed and drawn up in two copies, one, for Latvia, in Latvian, and the other, for the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, in Russian, or White Russian.

Should no agreement be reached, the question shall be submitted to the Governments of the two Parties to be settled by them. In such cases, the above-mentioned frontier authorities shall only carry out an enquiry and shall transmit the resulting information to the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

Article 5.

Decisions given by the persons mentioned in Article 3 shall be binding on the two Parties when they refer to the questions set out in (a), (b), (c), and (e), of Article 2. Decisions regarding the restitution of property, or the compensation to be paid by a guilty party, when restitution in kind is impossible, or indemnification of injured parties for their losses, shall not have effect until they have been approved by the Latvian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and by the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Soviet Republics.

Article 6.

The Head Officer of the District for Latvia and the Head of the Frontier Detachment of the State Central Political Administration for the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics shall, acting by common consent and in conformity with the Protocol referred to in Article 3, establish at points along the frontier special posts for the supervision and crossing of the frontier. These posts shall serve for the transmission of statements or documents regarding frontier questions, for enquiries conducted in respect of these matters (Articles 2 and 3), for the execution of the decisions given, the conveyance across the frontier of any persons who have been detained on the other side of it by one of the Contracting Parties, and for the passage of animals or the restitution of property.

The Head Officer of the District for Latvia, and the Head of the Frontier Detachment of the State Central Political Administration for the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, and the latter's agents, shall be entitled to cross the frontier for the purpose of settling frontier incidents and disputes, if they are provided with documents establishing their official status. Whenever the frontier is crossed these documents must be *visés*, at the examining posts referred to above, by the representatives of the other Contracting Party.

The officials referred to in the present Article shall be entitled to summon the injured parties, witnesses and experts to the examining posts to hear their statements and, may, if circumstances require it, in order to facilitate the solution of disputes and misunderstandings, allow them to cross the frontier on a single occasion, for a period not exceeding twelve hours. These permits must be *visés* at the examining posts by the representatives of the other Contracting Party.

The visas referred to in the present Article shall be in writing.

Witnesses, injured parties and experts of one of the Parties who are summoned to the examining posts shall enter the territory of the other Party without steel weapons or firearms. This restriction shall not apply to officials, who shall be entitled to carry arms in the exercise of their duties.

Article 7.

The meetings between the officials mentioned in Article 3, with a view to settling frontier incidents and disputes, shall take place at the examining posts or at other places agreed upon beforehand, upon the invitation of one of the Contracting Parties. The Party invited shall, within two days at latest after the receipt of the invitation, notify the other party that it consents to appear at the place selected.

Article 8.

Officials referred to in Article 3 of the present Agreement who have occasion in connection with the settlement of frontier incidents or disputes, to cross into the territory of the other Party, shall enjoy immunity and shall be entitled to wear their regulation uniforms.

The above-mentioned officials shall be entitled to take with them, free of Customs duty, their provisions and also such articles as are essential for the exercise of their duties (stationery, etc.). The weight of such baggage—which shall be subject to Customs inspection—may not exceed 30 kilogrammes per person.

Persons who have crossed the frontier in conformity with the third paragraph of Article 8 of the present Agreement, shall be under the protection of the laws in force in the country in which they happen to be. These persons shall be allowed to take one day's supply of food with them, free of Customs duty, but subject to Customs inspection.

Article 9.

The subsistence and travelling expenses of the officials carrying out the duties referred to in the provisions of the present Agreement shall be borne by the Party of which they are nations. Each Party shall, however, be entitled to the assistance of the other Party, as regards the provision of transport and lodging, the furnishing of documents necessary for the enquiry, and the despatch across the frontier, of persons whose presence is indispensable (Article 6). Witnesses and injured parties may not be interrogated by the representatives of one Party on the territory of the other Party, except in the presence of the representatives of the Party on whose territory the examination takes place.

Article 10.

The first meeting of the officials referred to in Article 3 of the present Agreement for the purpose of organising the work in their respective sectors shall take place one month after the coming into force of the present Agreement.

Article 11.

The present Agreement shall come into force one month after the date of its signature, provided that it has been approved by the Government of both Contracting Parties. The Parties shall notify each other as soon as possible when they have received the approval of their respective Governments.

Article 12.

The present Agreement shall remain in force for three months after the date on which either Contracting Party shall have notified the other Party of its intention to terminate it.

Article 13.

The present Agreement has been drawn up in duplicate in Russian and Latvian. In matters of interpretation the two texts shall be equally authentic.

In faith whereof the Plenipotentiaries of the two Contracting Parties have signed the present Agreement and have thereto affixed their seals.

Done at Riga, July the nineteenth, nineteen hundred and twenty-six.

(L. S.) Ch. ULMANIS.

(L. S.) A. TCHERNIKH.

PROTOCOL.

When proceeding to sign the Agreement regarding the settlement of disputes which may arise on the frontier between Latvia and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, the Undersigned Charles ULMANIS, Latvian Minister for Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the Republic of Latvia, and Alexis TCHERNIKH, Plenipotentiary Representative in Latvia, of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics on behalf of the Soviet of People's Commissars of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, have signed the present Protocol:

(1) With a view to clearly defining the provisions contained in paragraph (b) of Article 2 of the Agreement, the Contracting Parties agree that the procedure established in the Agreement regarding the settlement of disputes which may arise on the frontier between Latvia and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics shall not apply to the crossing of the frontier in the following cases:

(a) When the person who has crossed the frontier without authorisation has advanced in the territory of the other Party to a distance of over two kilometres from the frontier between the two countries;

(b) When the person who has crossed the frontier without authorisation has already been guilty of the same act in the same sector, unless it is shown that the offence was committed without malicious intent. A "sector" shall then be taken to mean a portion of the frontier ten kilometres in length;

(c) If the frontier has been violated by more than three persons, at the same time and at the same spot.

(2) The Latvian Government declares that it is in entire agreement with the *note verbale* of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated September 23, 1925, No. 920/24/43025, concerning transit hutments.

The Government of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics has taken note of this declaration.

(3) With a view to settling disputes and misunderstandings which may arise on the frontier between Latvia and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics the two Contracting Parties will divide the frontier into three sectors:

Ist Sector: from the point where the frontiers of Latvia, the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and Estonia meet, up to the village of Kaluzenka, including that village;

IIInd Sector: on the Latvian side, from the village of Kaluzenka to the village of Paliscino (commune of Skaunas, district of Ludzas), the village of Paliscino not being included; and on the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics side, from the village of Kaluzenka up to the *folwark* of Stolmach, excluding the latter place;

IIIrd Sector: on the Latvian side from the village of Paliscino, which is included in this sector, up to the point where the frontiers of Latvia and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and Poland meet; on the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics side from the *folwark* of Stolmach up to the point at which the frontiers of Latvia and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and Poland meet.

On the Latvian side the sectors will be administered as follows: Ist Sector, by the official agent in permanent residence at Jaunlatgale; IIInd Sector, by the official agent in permanent residence at Ludzas; IIIrd sector, by the official agent in permanent residence at Daugavpili.

On the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics side, the sectors shall be administered: Ist sector, by the official agent in permanent residence at Ostrov; IIInd Sector, by the official agent in permanent residence at Sebez; IIIrd Sector, by the official agent in permanent residence at Bigosovo.

The following points shall be used by the representatives of the frontier authorities of the two States, for meetings and for crossing the frontier with a view to conferring regarding disputes which may have arisen:

In Sector I: Ritupe-Ostrov, at the junction of the Latvian and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republic's railway lines;

In Sector II: Zilupe-Sebez, at the junction of the Latvian and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republic's railway lines;

In Sector III: Indra-Bigosovo, at the junction of the Latvian and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republic's railway lines.

The present Protocol shall form an integral part of the Agreement between Latvia and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics concerning the settlement of frontier disputes.

(L. S.) Ch. ULMANIS.

(L. S.) A. TCHERNIKH.

RIGA, July 19, 1926.

7. LATVIA SUSTAINS FULL SOVEREIGNTY

DECLARATION OF THE U.S.S.R. GOVERNMENT OF MARCH 28, 1939, ASSURING ITS SINCERE BENEVOLENCE TOWARD THE LATVIAN PEOPLE, AND INTEREST IN PRESERVING INDEPENDENT EXISTENCE ETC. FOR THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA ⁴²

The presumption of the Latvian-Soviet peace treaty of August 11, 1920, as well as of the non-aggression treaty of February 5, 1932, was to render to and secure for the Latvian nation entirely self-determining and independent existence as a state, conforming with the wishes of the Latvian people. The Soviet

⁴² Ibid., pp. 188-189.

government acted upon this presumption when it immediately put into force the Briand-Kellogg pact, extended the non-aggression treaty for 10 years, and assumed obligations in accordance with the statutes of the League of Nations.

The Latvian government is aware of the efforts exerted by the Soviet government during the past 15 years in order to ensure the inviolability of the frontiers of the Republic of Latvia, wherein it again acted upon the same presumption. From the above emanates what enormous importance the Soviet government has constantly laid and continues to lay upon preserving the complete independence of the Latvian as well as of the other Baltic Republics, conforming not only with the interests of the peoples of these republics, but also with the vital interests of the Soviet state. From this it should be clear that no matter what kind of agreements were signed, "voluntary" or concluded under outside pressure, should they result even only in the abatement or restriction of the independence and self-determination of the Republic of Latvia, permitting in it the political, economic or other domination of a third state, and granting to the latter any exceptional rights and privileges, both within the territory of Latvia and in its ports, this would be recognized by the Soviet government as insufferable and contradictory to the stipulations and spirit of the above mentioned treaties and agreements regulating at present its mutual relations with Latvia, and even as a violation of these agreements with all the consequences arising therefrom.

This declaration is made in the spirit of sincere benevolence toward the Latvian people, with the purpose of enhancing in the Latvian nation a feeling of security and confidence in the readiness of the Soviet Union to prove with deeds, in case of need, its interest in preserving in its entirety for the Republic of Latvia its independent existence as a state and its political and economic independence, as well as confidence in the inability of the Soviet Union to remain an idle bystander of open or masked attempts to destroy their self-determination and independence.

MARCH 28, 1939.

8. ANSWER OF THE LATVIAN GOVERNMENT ON APRIL 7, 1939⁴⁸

In connection with the declaration of Monsieur the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of March 29, the Latvian government avails itself of this opportunity to emphasize on its part its already frequently iterated favorable evaluation of the good neighborly mutual relations existing between both countries. The Latvian government considers these mutual relations, conditioned by the experience and treaty stipulations of many years, to be firmly established and sees in them an important element for consolidating the situation in this region of Europe. Moreover, the Latvian government is confident that its efforts to adhere to a policy of neutrality and to defend the neutrality of Latvia against any and all violations promotes best of all security in the Baltic region and peace in general.

In remarking with satisfaction the benevolent attitude of the Soviet Union toward the Latvian people, the Latvian government, firmly confident that it expresses the will of the entire nation, declares that the Latvian people will always and with all means at their disposal defend their national freedom and state independence. Being guided by the vital interests of Latvia, the Latvian government has never permitted and will never permit restrictions of any kind whatsoever to be placed upon the sovereign will of the people. In the same way the Latvian government does not recognize the right of any foreign state whatsoever, directly or indirectly, to exert its influence upon the foreign, domestic or economic policy of the state, and in all its actions reserves complete freedom of decision, being fully prepared to defend this freedom and to bear all responsibility for its decisions. Conscious of this responsibility, Latvia cannot share with any state its rights and its obligation to take care of the defense of its self-determination and independence, strictly observing in this respect all international obligations undertaken by it.

APRIL 7, 1939.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 189.

9. TREATY OF NON-AGGRESSION BETWEEN THE GERMAN REICH AND THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA. SIGNED AT BERLIN, JUNE 7TH, 1939 "

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA AND THE CHANCELLOR OF THE GERMAN REICH,

Being firmly resolved to maintain peace between Latvia and Germany in all circumstances.

Have agreed to confirm this resolve by means of a Treaty and have appointed as their Plenipotentiaries:

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA:

M. Vilhelms MUNTERS, Minister for Foreign Affairs;

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE GERMAN REICH:

M. Joachim von RIBBENTROP, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Reich;

Who, having exchanged their full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed on the following provisions:

Article 1.

The Republic of Latvia and the German Reich shall in no case resort to war or to any other use of force one against the other.

Should any action of the kind referred to in paragraph 1 be taken by a third Power against one of the Contracting Parties, the other Contracting Party shall not support such action in any way.

Article 2.

The present Treaty shall be ratified and the instruments of ratification shall be exchanged as soon as possible in Berlin.

The Treaty shall come into force on the exchange of the instruments of ratification and shall remain in force for a period of ten years from that date. Should the Treaty not be denounced by one of the Contracting Parties at least one year before the expiry of that period, its validity shall be extended for a fresh period of ten years. The same shall apply to subsequent periods.

Nevertheless, the Treaty shall not remain in force longer than the corresponding Treaty signed this day between Germany and Estonia. Should the Treaty lapse on these grounds before the expiry of the period specified in paragraph 2, the Latvian Government and the German Government shall, at the request of either Party, at once enter into negotiations for the renewal of the Treaty.

In witness whereof the Plenipotentiaries of both Parties have signed the present Treaty.

Done in original duplicate at Berlin, in Latvian and German, this 7th day of June, 1939.

J. RIBBENTROP.

V. MUNTERS.

PROTOCOL OF SIGNATURE.

On the signature, this day, of the Treaty between Latvia and Germany, the agreement existing between the two Parties on the following points has been put on record:

The Contracting Party which is not participating in the conflict shall not be deemed to be giving support within the meaning of paragraph 2 of Article 1 of the Treaty if the attitude of that Party is in harmony with the general rules of neutrality. Therefore, the fact of a normal exchange of goods and transit of goods continuing between the Contracting Party not involved in the conflict and the third Power shall not be regarded as constituting illicit support.

J. RIBBENTROP.

V. MUNTERS.

BERLIN, June 7th, 1939.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 190-191.

10. STATEMENT OF GERMAN MINISTER IN RIGA VON KOTZE THAT GERMAN-SOVIET PACT DOES NOT CONTRADICT GERMAN-LATVIAN NON-AGGRESSION PACT⁴⁵

The Minister for Foreign Affairs V. MÜNTERS today received the German Minister von Kotze to discuss the current situation in the field of the general political state of affairs.

During the conversation the (Foreign) Minister mentioned the news spread in the foreign press in connection with the German-Soviet non-aggression pact regarding the purported drawing of the Baltic States into this pact. At the same time the Minister inquired about declarations delivered to various European states regarding the neutrality of the states in question being respected.

In response the Envoy stated in the name of his Government that the basis of relations between Germany and Latvia was the non-aggression pact signed on June 7, 1939 and that Germany naturally had concluded no agreements whatsoever that would be contradictory to this pact.

Simultaneously a special declaration was delivered regarding the neutrality of Latvia being respected.

SEPTEMBER 4, 1939.

11. PROCLAMATION OF THE LATVIAN GOVERNMENT TO THE LATVIAN PEOPLE REGARDING THE EUROPEAN WAR, SEPTEMBER 3, 1939⁴⁶

The armed conflict which flared up between Poland and Germany on September 1st is expanding. Today war has also broken out between Great Britain and Germany and between France and Germany. Also in these circumstances the policy of Latvia is strict neutrality as the President of the Republic set out in his declaration of September 1st.

In this moment of anxiety the Government appeals to all citizens with the ardent invitation to support unanimously and conscientiously the policy of neutrality determined by the President of the Republic which will be observed by the Government in all branches of activity. Calmly and staidly, without being carried away by its emotions and without submitting to panic, the whole nation will continue its work and will overcome all difficulties and obstacles which the war between the foreign powers might place before our country.

May the feeling of responsibility and the conscientiousness of obligations be strong in every citizen, and may each one know that the Government expects active and sensible support from all.

Let us work together, let us pray together for peace between the peoples which today have arisen in arms against each other, and let us exert all our efforts together for the strength and honor of our native land.

God bless Latvia!

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 192.

⁴⁶ Text in "Valdības Vestnesis" 1939, No. 199; English translation in "Latvian Information Bulletin" No. 9 (31) of September 30, 1939, issued by the Latvian Legation at Washington, D. C.

12. MUTUAL GUARANTIES⁴⁷**REPORT OF MR. V. MUNTERS, LATVIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, ABOUT THE CONVERSATIONS IN THE KREMLIN PREVIOUS TO SIGNING THE MUTUAL ASSISTANCE TREATY**

October 2, 1939
 In the Kremlin from
 9:30 to 12 p.m.

Participants: Stalin, Molotov, Potemkin,⁴⁸ Zotov,⁴⁹ Munters,⁵⁰ Kocins.⁵¹

MOLOTOV: We wanted to talk over with you how to settle our relations. Shall they be approximately as with Estonia? If you view them similarly, we could outline the principles. We need a naval base open all the year.

STALIN: I think that you will not swear at us. Twenty years have passed: we are stronger, and you also are stronger. We want to discuss those same airfields and military defense.

We do not encroach upon either your constitution, organs, ministries, foreign policy, financial policy or economic system. Our demands are based upon the war between Germany, England and France. Incidentally, should we agree there are very good perspectives in commercial-economic matters.

I requested that the political situation be elucidated and also promised to do so on my part. Molotov started with the non-aggression treaty with Germany. There had been a sudden turn on the part of Germany. We received it sympathetically (*sochuvstvenno*), for it meant turning away from war, at least a general war. We have agreed in all basic questions, and now we not only have no problems for a struggle but not even for friction. Our foundation is secure. We fixed the frontier precisely. Germany is engaged in a war in which we do not participate; however, we are thinking of the future. One State has already paid the price (*poplatilas*). That was the fault of the English, French and Poles. With Germany we have established relations on a lasting basis, and also in regard to the Baltic States our views do not differ from those of Germany.

But now war is raging, and we have to see to our safety. The States of Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland have already disappeared; others may also disappear. We think that in relations with you, there is not yet a true guarantee. That is not safe for you (*nebezopasno*), but we are principally thinking of ourselves. That which was determined in 1920 cannot remain for eternity. Peter the Great saw to it that an outlet to the sea was gained. We are now without an exit, and the situation in which we are now cannot remain. We, therefore, wish to ensure ourselves the use of ports, roads to these ports, and their defense. (There was neither haste nor threats. Regarding the Lithuanians it was said that perhaps they will receive Wilno.)

Then I made an expose. I ascertained that now we have to do only with the U. S. S. R. and Germany. Therefore, in view of the fact that they have a non-aggression treaty (Molotov corrected me, treaty of friendship), we do not understand what additional security there could be. **MOLOTOV:** We cannot permit small States to be used against the U. S. S. R. Neutral Baltic States—that is too insecure (*nenadezhno*).

I: But the Baltic Sea is administered by Germany and the U. S. S. R., and as long as you are friendly with Germany no one can take advantage of us.

Here Stalin interrupted: England has already demanded from Sweden certain airfields and the admission of some submarines; Sweden may easily be drawn into the war. The war will be very involved, and neutrals will be drawn into it (*apelatsiya k neutralnym*). Great pressure will be brought to bear upon neutrals.

We returned once again to the political state of affairs. Stalin affirmed that there will always remain a difference between national socialism and communism. What will be done with Poland is not precisely known; to the east of the frontier the settlement is final. In the west there may be a protectorate. Should more be given, the same would also have to be given to Czechoslovakia. I tell you frankly: a division of spheres of interest has already taken place. When I said that we have to observe our peace treaty also with Germany: As far as Germany is concerned we could occupy you. However, we want no abuse (*ne zhelaem zlou potrebit*). Ribbentrop is a sensible person.

⁴⁷ Billmanis, op. cit., pp. 192-198.

⁴⁸ Vice-Commissar of Foreign Affairs.

⁴⁹ Soviet Minister in Riga.

⁵⁰ Latvian Foreign Minister.

⁵¹ Latvian Minister in Moscow.

We shall need Liepaja, Ventspils; also your unemployed will have employment. (I interrupted here that we have no unemployment to which Zotov replied that we have 11,000.) The territory having a Russian minority could be taken away from you, but we do not raise that question. Molotov asked in detail about individual minorities, but otherwise made no conclusions. Then Molotov drew out a project. Stalin began to rattle off all kinds of figures: 15 submarines and auxiliary cruisers in bases; 4 airfields.

(In between he mentioned that the Germans had killed Jews in vast numbers and was astonished that there are so many Jews in Daugavpils.)

I said: three things are absolutely unacceptable to us: (1) the mention of the capital even though for a temporary garrison; (2) Pitragi, which interferes with our peaceful fishermen and where we ourselves can place the necessary battery, and (3) 50,000 troops, which is two and one-half times the size of the whole army.

Then began argumentation. My principal argument was that public opinion must receive the impression that that is a friendly step and not an enforced yoke leading to oppression. Kocins and I added various strategic and military arguments. Stalin showed amazing military knowledge and skill with figures. He was astonished that we had such small divisions. He said that 1,500 ton submarines could easily enter through Irbe Straights and bombard Riga with four inch guns. The batteries at the Straights must be under one command, otherwise they cannot function. I, in particular, opposed his statement that Latvian batteries might fire upon Soviet batteries and vice versa. I said that here was exactly an opportunity to show public opinion our collaboration. Then Stalin incidentally said that in order to lighten our situation Riga could be dropped (mutual comedy with Molotov, who said that that was not well). Then Stalin, pulling out a map, briskly described how submarines must flit back and forth (shniryat) under the support of air forces, and left the impression that great activity would take place along the entire coast. Then we again jumped to garrisons, and Stalin mentioned 40,000. They began to calculate our population and that of Estonia. They estimated—4 aviation regiments with 240 aircraft (less than you received from Poland), one or two tank brigades and one infantry brigade—a division would have been better. So 38,000—40,000—if you want, 38,000; if it were less the Estonians would laugh.

Four airfields would be necessary: Liepaja, Ventspils, Irbe Straights and the Lithuanian frontier.

You have nothing to fear. Maintain 100,000. Your Rifles²² were good, and your army is better than the Estonian army. The treaty with Estonia has been criticized: (1) some said treason; (2) others said safety; (3) still others—let us see.

The garrisons are only for the duration of the war—if it ends they will be withdrawn. It is sufficient to throw a hand grenade on an airfield and it is done for. If they will be our airfields they will be feared a little. "The heavens glow from the struggles of the giants."

Then we jumped from one subject to another. After I had presented lengthy arguments regarding Pitragi, he said: Perhaps an airfield is hardly necessary at Pitragi. But the batteries operate together with "zenitki" (anti-aircraft guns) and the air force. The base could be 40 kilometer distant. In one voice we asked: in the interior? Yes, why not? Again they emphasized that in the war there will no longer be any neutrals. But if the war ends—we shall withdraw. We need Baltic ports—the Estonian ports are not ice free.

Then again we went down to 30,000 (for my argument was the size of our army), only 5,000 more than Estonia. I said: well, at least the same number as for Estonia. Real Asiatic haggling!

Beck has lost everything (promotal). We have offered help, without garrisons, with better intentions. The reply: nam vasha pomoshch ne nuzhna i prokrutiti usi po polski. Nashe slovo krepkoe—vozmite Mongoliiyu (we do not need your assistance, and rolled up their moustaches in Polish fashion. We keep our word—take, for example, Mongolia). After this treaty everyone will know—here are two masters—Latvians and Russians.

Having accepted nothing, we parted till October 3, at 6 p. m.

October 3, 1939
In the Kremlin from
6 p. m. to 8 p. m.

²² Latvian Rifle regiments.

I read my explanation :

We have attentively studied the project and carefully weighed everything that was discussed between us yesterday.

In this connection I can notify the following :

1. In spite of the fact that the existence of a treaty of non-aggression and friendship between the U. S. S. R. and Germany does not give any reason to speak of any element of danger whatsoever in regard also to our mutual political relations with both great powers in the sphere of interests which enter the Baltic Sea, we admit that in case of a lengthy war new circumstances may arise in the Baltic Sea, and therefore we do not reject the proposed principle of mutual assistance.

2. In view of the fact that the material stipulations of Article III and of the secret protocol are of a purely strategic nature and are based on strategic considerations, they must be given a temporary character to the maximum extent, limiting their application exclusively to the duration of the war.

3. Most essential, however, we consider the principle already analyzed by me yesterday and emphasized several times to the effect that the conclusion of this treaty must not appear in the eyes of the Latvian people to be an imposed heavy yoke in which public opinion might see the restriction of their military and consequently their political independence of the State, and a menace to the free existence and development of the people in future. Under the military measures mentioned by you yesterday, even after decreasing them by excluding the capital of Latvia from the treaty and reducing the total number of garrisons, there cannot be the slightest doubt that the treaty will be interpreted as the creation of something similar to a protectorate—a situation unacceptable to a liberty loving nation, particularly since the strength of the Latvian army under the possibilities opened up by Article II of the project at the present time is sufficient to ensure the safety of Latvia and indirectly of the U. S. S. R.

For this reason I, as the plenipotentiary of the Latvian Government, being aware of its views and of the trend of public opinion, cannot propose to accept the stipulations of the project as a basis for a treaty, even with the "concessions", as you called them yesterday, although in general all concessions here are made on our part.

4. In analyzing the proposed project and taking into consideration the fact that the question of a base in the port of Riga has been dropped, the principal objections are concentrated upon three questions :

a. the demand for bases in two, i. e., in other words in all the ice-free ports of Latvia ;

Such a situation cannot be considered as acceptable. A military-naval base introduces a new element in the life and operations of a port, and we foresee that we shall be compelled to effect certain changes in the existing dispositions, both of a military as well as of a commercial and administrative nature. That would be particularly difficult in the city of Liepaja, living the complicated life of exactly such a military, commercial and administrative center—the largest city after Riga. I therefore propose that in choosing a military-naval base this be restricted to the port of Ventspils.

This will also facilitate dealing with the second difficulty, namely

b. the demand for any kind of a base whatsoever at Pitrags.

First of all, it would disrupt the peaceful life of the fishing population (which is engaged in its industry along the entire coast—in the sea and on the shore) without any need whatsoever ; secondly, as far as was clarified yesterday, a battery of coastal artillery and anti-aircraft guns are planned there for its defense. This, as I already mentioned yesterday, we can take upon ourselves, taking into consideration the technical wishes of the Soviet.

Finally, third, I fully maintain all my objections in regard to

c. the number of garrisons, and I cannot go further than the peacetime size of our army, i. e., 20,000. After a general consideration of the situation even this appears to be a heavy burden upon the strategic maneuverability of our army, but in view of the firmness of your demands I am ready to meet you at this point, considering that thereby we shall at least have an argument against the criticism and suspicion of our population, which will inevitably accept the appearance of foreign military forces equal in number to our army as a fact bound with heavy consequences.

In order to soften that impression I consider it indispensable to stipulate in the conditions pertaining to the number of garrisons not only that this measure will continue only for the duration of "the present war in Europe," but also that at the end of the war the garrisons will immediately be recalled.

Molotov: (Stalin writes, draws, walks around, seizes books and newspapers). Our concession of yesterday is final. You now retreat. In removing such important things from its contents we deprive the treaty of its value. You are larger than Estonia but want to give less. Both harbors are not large and large vessels cannot enter there. Pitrags must be placed under one command, any other solution is impractical. You have 60,000 territorials (aizsargi) well, it makes no difference, 40,000. Our military men consider 30,000 to be unacceptable. Your proposals are entirely unacceptable. If the present project is made worthless there can be no security. Weigh the situation (uchest obstanovku).

I opposed this again, and then, as yesterday, the discussion was taken up by Stalin. You start from conditions of peace, but one must start out from worst (these and other expressions are once in a while fondly ruminated in a sweet tone by Potemkin). I have only one correction: article three to read "for the purpose of ensuring the safety of the U. S. S. R. frontiers and to enhance its own independence." I accept, omitting the word "frontiers."

You do not trust us, and we don't quite trust you either. You believe that we wish to seize (zakhvat) you. We could do that now, but we do not do it. Riga is the center of anti-Soviet propaganda (upon my assurance that we have no distrust and upon my question why we are not trusted). Liepaja will be a smaller base. Moreover, we shall request you to allow goods to pass through there. I inquired whether that was a commercial intention. Yes, in order not to have to bring them through Murmansk. We shall pay your tariffs and a great revival will take place. Liepaja and Ventspils are small matters; they are not Hango and Tallinn. We do not wish to delay. You had twice as much time as the Estonians. You already see how the Estonian nation values the treaty. That is best proved by Selters' telegram. The Estonians were the first—their position was more difficult. Your army remains untouched, in a couple of days you can arouse an army, we can do nothing quickly in these scattered places. We raised 3½ millions in six days. Our garrisons will be a preventative force (predupreditelnaya sila). If the war will spread the treaty will later have to be supplemented. In Pitrags we shall not disturb your fishermen. The artillery will be in towers—let them fish as much as they like. In Petropavlovsk we also have a base, but we and the Japanese fish there to beat the band. If necessary we can help the fishermen.

I attempted to raise the proposal that they nevertheless be satisfied with Ventspils, and if conditions become more acute the question of Liepaja could be raised. This is rejected. Stalin continues: A German attack is also possible. For six years German fascists and the communists cursed each other. Now an unexpected turn took place; that happens in the course of history. But one cannot rely upon it. We must be prepared in time. Others who were not ready paid the price.

We began to read the texts: amendments were adopted in articles I and V. At article VI, I inquired: why do we have 15 years, when the Estonians have 10? First of all, to advance a step!

Article 1 of the confidential protocol—long arguments about the sentence that at the conclusion of the war the army must be withdrawn. It is clear—bases for the duration of the treaty, garrisons until the end of the war. They do not wish to deal a blow to the Estonians. That was exactly Selter's formula. It will now appear that you trumped them. Neither is a letter admissible—a signed treaty cannot be changed the very next day. You note down everything. Stalin: If I might be permitted to make a lyrical change in the subject (esli posvoleno sdelat liricheskoe otstuplenie)—followed by a long discussion about philology and ethnographics, starting out with the similarity of Latvians and Lithuanians. About Poles and Bulgarians: the militant minority becomes assimilated: the Turks in Bulgaria, Norwegians in Russia, Germans in France.

Then we pass on to my 11 points (see supplement). (The tenth is already decided with the wording of the new article V.) I did not mention the ninth. The airfield places in points one, four and five can be settled only upon the spot. If there will be a difference of opinion, let us begin to negotiate again directly. But it must be understood that there must be no delay. We do not ask that people be uprooted from their homes (vyselyat). It may be necessary on the coast (pozhalui nado budet u morya). Cannot they be around Jelgava? In general they appeared very thoughtful when they learned about our structure in the country. We do have wider opportunities. They admit that communications are an important problem. Couldn't they be near railway stations? Well, perhaps we shall carry supplies along highways. Point eight: an amendment to article 3 of the protocol is adopted. Points 3, 7, and 11 are logical and practical: let us see what Mikoyan will have to say.

Points 2 and 6 are correct; won't you let our sailors go to see the girls? Not even on their "days off?" (v vyhodnye dni). They are well behaved. In between came a few political remarks:

In August the Germans, in speaking of the divisions of spheres of interest, mentioned the river Daugava, dividing Latvia into two parts. The Russians did not agree, saying that nations cannot be treated in this way. The Germans always work with a hammer; for example, they intend to turn the Czechs into Germans. Then the Russians announced their interest in Liepaja. Perhaps German pretensions can awaken again.

The Czechs wanted to fight, and also the heads of the army, but the leaders spoiled this (pomeshali).

The English, so say the Estonians, a few years ago wanted to buy Osel and Dago Islands.

In connection with the existence of our army and bases there will be great activity in your ports.

Without having adopted article III and article I of the protocol, we parted. Molotov in parting added: it would be best to sign tonight, and then tomorrow we would celebrate and issue it to the press.

He was peeved that the Estonians had let others know of the 25,000.

Supplement.

In conclusion—and always being guided by the same motives of creating an atmosphere of trust and of evading suspicions of the intentions of the U. S. S. R.—I consider it indispensable now to stipulate, at least in principle, the putting into effect of certain details emanating from Article III:

1. The placement of airfields.
2. The principle of completely separating the leased territories from adjoining territory.
3. The principle that all construction work will be done by Latvian workmen contracted through the Labor Central (Darba Centrale) and with materials of Latvian origin, to the extent that such are available, including it, upon the desire of the Latvian Government, in Latvian exports to the U. S. S. R.
4. The principle that the leased territories will have intercourse with the U. S. S. R. by sea or by air, in the latter case along routes established by mutual agreement.
5. The airfields must be so placed as to lie along the seacoast (otherwise all kinds of misunderstandings may arise and it may be necessary to raise additional structures).
6. The principle that the rule regarding intercourse of the troops with the territory outside of the bounded areas be fixed by mutual agreement, permitting contact only with institutions determined by the Latvian Government. Troops shall be brought into or withdrawn from the country by sea or by air.
7. If the garrisons with the consent of the Latvian Government should make any purchases in Latvia, as for example the purchase of foodstuffs, such purchases at the wish of the Latvian Government may be included in exports.
8. Differences of opinion which may arise in fixing the place and limits of bases and airfields and in general in the work of the mixed equal commission shall be decided by the Government by means of diplomatic or indirect negotiations.
9. It is undesirable to bring into Latvia tank troops, as they are offensive and not defensive weapons.
10. The Stipulations of section I of Article V fully apply to military measures of Latvia.
11. The rental payment upon the wish of the Latvian Government may be included in Latvian exports to the U. S. S. R.

13. LATVIAN GOVERNMENT APPREHENSIVE

EXTRAORDINARY EMERGENCY POWERS OF LATVIAN STATE AUTHORITY ABROAD GRANTED TO THE LATVIAN MINISTER IN LONDON, K. ZARINS AND HIS SUBSTITUTE A. BILMANIS, LATVIAN MINISTER IN WASHINGTON⁵⁸

STATE CHANCERY
 May 18, 1940
 No. 48.

Riga, Valdemāra ielā 3, Apt. 4.

TO THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS:

The State Chancery notifies that the Cabinet of Ministers in its session of May 17 of this year determined:

1. In case it should no longer be possible to communicate with Latvia's diplomatic and consular missions in Western Europe due to war conditions, to confer extraordinary powers upon Kārlis Zariņš, Latvian Envoy in London.

2. The moment when these powers shall come into effect shall be declared by the Minister for Foreign Affairs by giving the relevant order to the Envoy in London, in which he shall define which missions shall be subject to the extraordinary powers.

3. If it should prove impossible for the Minister for Foreign Affairs because of technical reasons to notify the Envoy in London of his order, the extraordinary powers conferred upon the latter shall come into effect automatically.

The Envoy in London verifies this by (sending) a relevant telegraphic request to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and upon failing to receive a reply within twenty-four hours shall act upon the basis of the extraordinary powers until the moment when communications with the Minister for Foreign Affairs are again renewed.

4. The extraordinary powers conferred upon Kārlis Zariņš, Envoy in London, pertain to all Latvia's diplomatic and consular missions except (those) in the following States: Estonia, Lithuania, Finland, Sweden, Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

5. Should Envoy Kārlis Zariņš die or lose his freedom of action while his extraordinary powers are in effect, the extraordinary powers granted by this decision shall pass to Alfreds Bilmanis, Latvian Envoy in the United States of America.

6. The extraordinary powers give the right:

a. to defend to the best ability Latvia's interests in all countries except Estonia, Lithuania, Finland, Sweden, Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

b. for this purpose to give binding orders to all Latvia's missions except (those) in the States previously mentioned;

c. to operate with all State funds, movable and immovable property at the disposal of the said missions;

d. temporarily to remove from office envoys, as well as to remove from office and to transfer all the other employees of the missions;

e. to liquidate missions, with the exception of the Legation in the United States of America;

f. to designate delegates to meetings and conferences;

g. in extraordinary circumstances which might obstruct the use of these powers to transfer them to Envoy Alfreds Bilmanis.

(Signed) R. BULSONS,
Acting Director of State Chancery.

(Signed) B. ROZE,
Acting Chief of Division.

I certify the correctness of this copy:

(Signed) T. ANSEVICS,
Director of the Administrative Dept.

⁵⁸ Bilmanis, documents, op. cit., pp. 201-202.

14. SOVIET RUSSIA INVADES BALTIC COUNTRIES

LATVIAN OFFICIAL DEMENTI OF GROUNDLESS SOVIET RUSSIAN ACCUSATIONS⁵⁴

LTA (Latvian Telegraph Agency), Riga, June 15, 1940. The official announcement of the Soviet agency *Tass* regarding the liquidation of the Soviet-Lithuanian conflict states, among other things, that Lithuania had entered into a secret military alliance with Latvia and Estonia, thereby turning the Baltic Entente into a military alliance of the three States. The Latvian Telegraph Agency is authorized to announce that this statement does not coincide with actuality, as Lithuania has not joined the military treaty signed between Latvia and Estonia on November 1, 1923, and that no other military agreement exists between the three Baltic States.

15. SOVIET RUSSIA'S ULTIMATUM TO LATVIA⁵⁵

On June 16, 1940, Molotov, president of the Soviet of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union, delivered to the Latvian Minister in Moscow Fr. Kociņš the following ultimatum addressed to the Latvian Government:

"On the basis of the material of facts at the disposal of the Soviet Government and also of the exchange of views which recently took place in Moscow between President Molotov of the Soviet of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union and Prime Minister Merkis of Lithuania, the Soviet Government considers it assured that not only has the Latvian Government failed to liquidate the military alliance with Estonia which was created before the conclusion of the Latvian-Soviet mutual assistance pact and was aimed against the Soviet Union, but has even extended this alliance by enticing into it Lithuania and is attempting to include in it also Finland. Until the conclusion of the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance in the fall of 1939 the Soviet Government could view casually the existence of such a military alliance, although as a matter of fact it was contrary to the pact of non-aggression previously signed between the Soviet Union and Latvia. But after the conclusion of the pact of mutual assistance the Soviet Government considers the existence of the military alliance between Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania and aimed against the Soviet Union not only unpermissible and unbearable, but also seriously dangerous and menacing to the security of the frontiers of the Soviet Union.

"The Soviet Government reckoned upon the withdrawal of Latvia from the military alliance with the other Baltic States after the conclusion of the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance and that in this manner the military alliance would be abolished. Instead Latvia together with the other Baltic States has acted to revive and expand the above-mentioned military alliance, to which testify such facts as the conversation of two secret conferences of the three Baltic States in December, 1939, and March, 1940, in order to develop formally the expanded military alliance with Estonia and Lithuania, the enhancement of relations between the general staffs of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania secretly from the Soviet Union, the creation in February, 1940, of a special press organ of the military Baltic entente—the 'Revue Baltique,' which is published in Tallinn in English, French and German, etc.

"All these facts go to show that the Latvian Government has grossly violated the Latvian-Soviet mutual Assistance Pact, which forbids both parties 'to conclude any unions whatsoever or to participate in coalitions, which would be directed against one of the contracting parties' (Article 4 of the treaty). This gross violation of the Latvian-Soviet mutual assistance pact on the part of the Latvian Government takes place at a time when the Soviet Union has conducted and continues to conduct a supremely favorable and definitely pro-Latvian policy, scrupulously observing all the requirements of the Latvian-Soviet mutual assistance pact. The Soviet Government finds that it can no longer suffer such a state of affairs.

"The Soviet Government considers the following completely indispensable and not to be postponed: 1. the establishment in Latvia immediately of a government capable of and ready to ensure the honest execution of the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance; 2. to ensure without delay the free entry of Soviet troops into Latvian territory, in order to place them in the most impor-

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 202-203.

tant centers of Latvia in such numbers as to secure the possibility of realizing the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance and to avoid possible provocatory acts against Soviet garrisons in Latvia.

"The Soviet Government considers compliance with this demand to be the elementary stipulation without which it is impossible to achieve the honest and loyal execution of the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance."

16. STATEMENT OF DR. ALFRED BILMANIS, LATVIAN MINISTER, ABOUT NOT RECOGNIZING THE SAEIMA ELECTIONS IN LATVIA TO BE HELD ON JULY 14-15, 1940, AS BEING ILLEGAL AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL⁶⁶

Released to the Press
on July 13, 1940.

The Latvian Minister has been informed that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had without any foundation charged the Latvian Government with violating the Latvian-Soviet Mutual Assistance Treaty of October 5, 1939. Press information has been also received that a supplementary agreement was reached on June 16, 1940, between the Latvian Government and the U. S. S. R. for the purpose of enforcing the fulfillment of the said Mutual-Assistance Treaty. But such an agreement has never been ratified, proclaimed, or published and there is no information that this agreement became ratified by the Latvian Government. So it is evident that the Latvian Government was served with an ultimatum.

It is said that on the basis of the mysterious agreement previously mentioned large numbers of Soviet troops were permitted to enter Latvia and a new pro-Soviet temporary Government was formed.

This new Government has proclaimed elections to be held on July 14 and 15—"in accordance with Article 6 of the Latvian Constitution" as stated by Prime Minister Augusts Kirchensteins in his telegram to Joseph Stalin. This Article reads as follows:

"6. Saeima (Parliament) is elected by general, equal, direct, secret and proportionate elections."

The Latvian Minister wishes to observe that in spite of his cabled inquiries to the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for authentic information as to the nature of the elections to be held, no reply has been received other than a confirmation to the receipt of his cablegrams. It is known to this Legation that the great majority of the Latvian people have been deprived of the right to organize parties, propose their candidates and conduct election campaigns. The only party admitted to the elections is the pro-Soviet United Workers Bloc, representing only a very small fraction of the electorate. Therefore the issue of these elections, be it a Saeima (Parliament), Government or President, cannot be considered as representative of the actual will of the Latvian nation as provided for in Article 6 of the Latvian Constitution, particularly taking into view the presence of huge military forces of the U. S. S. R. in Latvia.

In view of these facts the Latvian Minister, having been appointed by the constitutionally-elected President of Latvia, Alberts Kviesis, and therefore speaking in the name of the Latvian nation, reserves the right not to recognize the results of the coming elections and the acts emanating therefrom.

DR. ALFRED BILMANIS,
Latvian Minister.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 203-204.

17. LATVIA—A VICTIM OF UNPROVOKED AGGRESSION OF SOVIET RUSSIA⁶⁷

STATEMENT BY DR. ALFRED BILMANIS, LATVIAN MINISTER IN WASHINGTON

Released to the Press
on July 21, 1940.

News has just been received that Latvia has been proclaimed a Soviet Republic and that the pro-Soviet Latvian puppet Parliament has requested Moscow to incorporate Latvia into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Thus Latvia has been made the victim of unprovoked aggression by the U. S. S. R.

The basis of Latvia's tragedy is her geographic position, lying as she does on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea between the two colossi of Europe—Germany and Soviet Russia. It must be stressed once again that the Latvians are not Slavs: their language, together with Lithuanian, forms a separate branch of the Indo-European group and they are the modern languages most closely related to the ancient Sanscrit. The majority of Latvians are of the Lutheran faith, and they believe that religion, family life, private property and self-government are the principles upon which State life must be based.

Latvia has always been aware of its dangerous position, and for this reason has done everything within its power to be a good neighbor, to cooperate for peace and to observe strict neutrality in all international conflicts. Having signed non-aggression treaties with both Germany and the U. S. S. R., Latvia had hopes that her neutrality would be respected and that she would be able to continue her peaceful work of building up the country. These hopes were shattered by the agreement signed between Germany and Soviet Russia in August, 1939, under the terms of which the three Baltic States were considered to be within the Russian sphere of interest.

The first act of Latvia's tragedy began after the conquest of Poland. Soviet Russia declared the Republic of Latvia was incapable of adequately defending its neutrality, although Latvia was not menaced by any power and Germany, the only possible enemy of Russia, had established friendly relationship with the latter country. Soviet Russia proposed that naval bases in Latvia be leased to the U. S. S. R. and that a pact of mutual assistance be signed between the two countries "in order to insure the safety of the U. S. S. R. and to consolidate the independence of Latvia."

In view of the international situation Latvia was compelled to agree to this, and the treaty was signed on October 5, 1939. According to the terms of this pact both countries solemnly declared that "the carrying into effect of the pact must in no way affect the sovereign rights of the contracting parties, in particular their political structure, their social and economic system and their military measures." This promise was formally reiterated by Premier (Vyacheslaff M.) Molotoff on later occasions, and Latvia accepted it as bona fide and itself fulfilled the terms of the pact punctiliously.

The second act of the tragedy began on the day after the fall of Paris. The U. S. S. R. accused Lithuania on June 14, and Latvia and Estonia on June 16, of forming a secret military alliance against the Soviet Union. Although the Latvian Government categorically denied the accusation, the Soviet Government presented it with an ultimatum in the form of a new agreement. The terms of this agreement were to organize a new pro-Soviet government which could assure the fulfillment of the mutual assistance pact and to permit additional Soviet troops to enter Latvia. This agreement was never ratified, proclaimed or published, because on the morning of June 17, numerous Soviet troops entered Latvia from the east, south and north and occupied Riga the capital of Latvia.

On the same day a puppet government was formed whose main task was to proclaim new elections in accordance with Article VI of the Latvian Constitution and to form closer ties with Soviet Russia. Some of the first acts of the new puppet government were completely unconstitutional. For example, the introduction of the death penalty by decree of government for sabotage, the dissolution of the National Guard, the so-called "democratization" of the Latvian Army by introducing politics into it and placing a Latvian Communist at its head as political commissar, the establishment of worker's soviets and collective farms, the legalizing of the Communist party, etc.

The elections proclaimed by the new government proved to be only a farce, as only one list of candidates was allowed to run—that of the pro-Soviet Work-

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 204-206.

ers' Coalition. Approximately 80 per cent of the Latvian population are farmers, and factory workers form less than 3 per cent of the population. In view of this fact and foreseeing that if it ran in the election with its own list the small vote cast for it would make it ridiculous, the Communist party did not run under its own name but joined the list of the Workers' Coalition. The vast majority of the Latvian population were not permitted to form their own lists, nominate candidates and conduct pre-election campaigns. At the same time Soviet soldiers and pro-Soviet political agents participated in the campaign in favor of the Workers' Coalition. All inhabitants, however, were compelled to go to the polls under the threat that if they failed to have the balloting stamp on their passports they might be considered saboteurs. Taking into consideration these facts, it only stands to reason that these "elections" packed the Latvian Saeima (Parliament) with Communists and pro-Soviet delegates. In the same unconstitutional way the Acting President of the republic, Karl Ulmanis, was removed from office.

The pro-Soviet Government, placed its own editors in all newspapers and upon orders from above they wrote that Latvia was not in a position to exist as an independent economic and political unit and must therefore be incorporated into the Soviet Union. These statements are absurd, as has been proved during the past twenty-two years of Latvia's independence.

During this period Latvia reached a high level of economic independence, had no unemployment and even imported scores of thousands of farm hands from abroad. There was no deficit; the country enjoyed a favorable balance of trade, and it had a maritime fleet of some 200,000 tons. Latvia ranked second in the world flax market, sixth in the timber market, and seventh in the dairy produce market. Soviet Russia's insignificance in Latvia's trade is proved by the figures of 1938: of Latvian total exports amounting to 260,000,000 lats, only 2.6 per cent went to Russia, and of its total imports amounting to 230,000,000 lats, only 3.8 per cent came from the U. S. S. R.

Having a favorable trade balance, Latvia began to pay off its foreign debts. In June, 1939, it redeemed from the Lee Higginson Corporation of New York, its bonds, paying for them \$2,640,000 in cash. Trade with the United States was so good that a direct shipping line was established between these countries.

All these facts prove that there are no grounds to doubt Latvia's right to independence. The one conclusion that can possibly be formed is that Soviet Russia chose this moment to expand her territory at the expense of Latvia by the methods explained above, camouflaging this as a voluntary act of the Latvian people. The Latvian nation was compelled to bow before force of arms, but every Latvian patriot hopes that justice and democracy will finally prevail and that Latvia will regain her independence and liberty.

God bless Latvia!

Dr. ALFRED BILMANIS,
Latvian Minister.

WASHINGTON, July 21, 1940.

18. PROTESTS OF THE LATVIAN CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES TO ARGENTINE AND BRAZIL, DR. P. OLINS, SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF ARGENTINE AND BRAZIL JULY 23, 1940⁵⁸

BUENOS AIRES, July 23, 1940

MY DEAR MINISTER,

With deep concern I have the honor to inform you that my native country—Latvia—sharing the fate of many other European countries—has become a victim of brutal power politics. On July 21, 1940, a meeting which has usurped the name of a Latvian Diet ("*Latvijas Saeima*") has decided to establish a Soviet form of government in Latvia and to incorporate the country into the Soviet Union.

In this connection I have the honor to declare that the above mentioned "parliament" in no way expresses the free will of the citizens of Latvia, because it emanated out of a voting, which took place under the occupation of Latvian cities and towns by the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the only candidates admitted to these elections were communists. In such a way the annexation of Latvia was manipulated, this being in contradiction to all treaties with the Soviet Union, in which the latter solemnly promised to respect forever the independence and freedom of Latvia.

⁵⁸ English translation from the Latvian text reproduced in "LATVIJA—LETONIA—Revista literaria e informativa. Buenos Aires. Vol. IV, No. 38 (August 1940), p. 15.

In my capacity as legal diplomatic representative of national and independent Latvia to the Republic of Argentina [Brazil] I have the honour to communicate to you my most solemn protest against the forceful action taken by the Soviet Union, by which my people and my nation have been deprived of liberty and independence.

At the same time I have the deep conviction, that this catastrophe is only temporary, and that in the New Europe, which will be created after the war will have come to a close, the Republic of Latvia shall again take her place in the family of free peoples.

Information received by this Legation shows that similar protests have been lodged by other Latvian diplomatic representatives abroad.

Please, accept, my dear Minister, the consideration of my deepest esteem

Dr. P. OLINS
Chargé d'Affaires of Latvia

19. NOTE OF K. ZARINS, LATVIAN ENVOY IN LONDON, PROTESTING AGAINST THE INCORPORATION OF LATVIA INTO U. S. S. R. AS BEING UNCONSTITUTIONAL AND ILLEGAL⁹⁹

(Addressed to the British Foreign Office on July 23, 1940.)

One of the principal aims of Latvia since the proclamation of her independence in 1918 has been the development of good and cordial relations with all states and especially with her nearest neighbours, chiefly among them the U. S. S. R. To this end several important treaties have been concluded between the two countries, besides the Peace Treaty of 1920, such as the Treaty of Non-aggression, Definition of Aggressor, and several others; and lastly, on October 5, 1939, was signed the Treaty of Mutual Assistance, Article 5 of which says: "*The enforcement of this pact shall not affect the sovereign rights of the Contracting Parties in any way, especially their state structure, economic and social systems and military measures.*"

On her part Latvia has scrupulously adhered to her promises. Yet, on June 16, the Soviet Government presented Latvia with new, far-reaching demands for the increase of troops garrisoned on Latvian territory and for a change of Government—and practically occupied the whole of Latvia. In itself, the demand by one state for a change of Government in another cannot be regarded otherwise than as a breach of sovereignty, and the sovereignty of Latvia the U. S. S. R. had solemnly undertaken to respect.

These demands were made on the basis of allegations that Latvia had maintained her military alliance of 1923 with Estonia, to which no objections were raised at the time of the conclusion of the Pact of Mutual Assistance of October 5, 1939. It was further alleged that Latvia was engaged in the conclusion of military alliances with Lithuania and possibly even with Finland which, to my knowledge, is entirely untrue.

On July 14 and 15 elections were held for a Latvian Parliament. Only ten days' notice was given for the preparation of these elections, and the only political organization that could be ready was the Latvian Communist Party, which was legalised only on June 16, and which had its headquarters abroad and has always been directed from abroad. These elections were carried out under threat, in the presence of a strong foreign armed force and under the supervision of a high Soviet official, Vice-President of the Council of Peoples Commissars, M. Vishinsky, who has made several public pronouncements in Latvia expressing views on interior matters of Latvia. This fact too must be regarded as a breach of sovereignty.

The new Government established in Latvia following the Soviet demands in one of its latest declarations styles itself as Government of Soviet Latvia, making it clear that it regards itself as such from the first day of its existence. Frequent exalting messages of homage have been sent to Stalin, Kalinin and other high Russian functionaries.

All this cannot be regarded as the acts of a free and independent Government, neither can the recent elections be regarded as an expression of the free will of the people. On the contrary, because of the presence of armed foreign forces and high Government officials, they must be viewed as enacted under duress. This among other facts is confirmed by a declaration of gratitude to the U. S. S. R. and the Red Army passed by the new Parliament.

⁹⁹ Bilmanis. Op. cit., pp. 209-210.

The Parliament thus elected passed a resolution to join the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Latvian Constitution of 1920 which, in the fundamental parts, was still in force, and on the basis of which the elections were supposed to have been carried out, does not give such powers to the Parliament. Art. 1 of the Constitution reads: "Latvia is an independent democratic Republic" and this article can be changed only by a referendum.

The Latvian people have fought hard and gallantly for their independence, also against Soviet Russian troops. The spirit of the war of independence was always alive, and every impartial observer will therefore know it impossible that the Latvians of their own free will would sacrifice their hardly won and dearly cherished independence.

Taking into consideration all that is mentioned above, I as representative of the independent Latvian Government accredited in London in 1933 by appointment from President Kvisis, and since 1936 representing President Ulmanis, who has now, on July 19, 1940, been deposed from his office, have the honour to ask His Majesty's Government to regard the recent happenings in Latvia as enacted under duress, and venture to express the hope that His Majesty's Government will understand my position and will not recognize the incorporation of Latvia in the U. S. S. R.

(Signed) K. ZARINS,
Minister of Latvia in London.

20. THE LATVIAN MINISTER IN WASHINGTON DOES NOT RECOGNIZE INCORPORATION OF LATVIA INTO THE SOVIET UNION⁶⁰

Released to the Press
on August 6, 1940.

The Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has proclaimed, on August 6, 1940, the incorporation of the Republic of Latvia into the Soviet Union. The Latvian Minister considers this act to be an outrageous infringement of international law, practice and morals and he solemnly protests against this violation of Latvia's integrity.

Although the U. S. S. R. has attempted to give a semblance of legality to the proceedings, a glance at the Constitution of Latvia shows that this "legality" is nothing but a flimsy veil to cover the annihilation of the independence of a weaker country by brutal force. Article One of the Constitution of Latvia states that

"1. Latvia is an independent democratic republic."

Articles Seventy-six and Seventy-seven of the Constitution further state that

"76. Saeima (Parliament) may amend the Constitution in sessions in which at least two-thirds of the members of Saeima participate. Amendments shall be adopted in three readings by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the votes of the deputies present."

"77. Should the Saeima amend Articles One, Two, Three or Six of the Constitution, such amendments to attain legal force shall be referred to a national referendum."

It is well known that no referendum was carried out in Latvia and that even the Saeima elections were illegal, only one party being permitted to run. Moreover, no referendum or plebiscite could have been carried out in the presence of the huge military forces of the Soviet Union occupying Latvia. Thus the action of the U. S. S. R. and of the Latvian puppet Saeima in incorporating the Republic of Latvia into the Soviet Union does not have the slightest constitutional legality.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

DR. ALFRED BILMANIS,
Latvian Minister.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

IV. Lithuania

[Translation from Russian]

1. DECREE OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS, ON RECOGNITION OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE LITHUANIAN SOVIET REPUBLIC ^{60a}

The Council of People's Commissars at the request of the Government of Soviet Lithuania, proclaims as follows:

1. The Government of Soviet Russia recognizes the independence of the Lithuanian Soviet Republic. The Government of Soviet Russia recognizes the supreme authority in Lithuania of the Lithuanian soviets and, until the convocation of the Congress of Soviets, that of the Provisional Revolutionary Workers Government of Lithuania under the leadership of Mickevičius-Kapsukas.

2. The Government of Soviet Russia has instructed all civil and military authorities of the Russian Soviet Republic which shall come into contact with Lithuania to give all necessary assistance to the Government of Soviet Lithuania and its troops in the fight for liberation of Lithuania from the yoke of the bourgeoisie.

3. The Commissariat of Supply and the Supreme Council of the National Economy shall be entrusted with the task of concluding an agreement with the proper authorities of the Lithuanian Soviet Republic for the exchange of goods between the two Republics.

DECEMBER 22, 1918.

V. ULJANOV LENIN,
Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars.
V. BONCH-BRNEVICZ,
Manager of the Council of People's Commissars.
L. FOTIEVA,
Secretary of the Council.

[Translation from Russian]

2. MANIFESTO OF THE PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS GOVERNMENT OF LITHUANIA ⁶¹

Workers of the world, unite!

In the name of the insurrectionary workers and poor peasants of Lithuania, in the name of the Red Army, we proclaim the abolition of the German occupation government and of the Lithuanian Taryba.

All power passes to the representatives of the soviets of workers, landless peasants, and small farmers.

Workers, landless peasants, and small farmers! The long-awaited hour of liberation from the unbearable German occupation, humiliation, and poverty has arrived. The hour has struck for our liberation from the century-old yoke of the landlords, well-to-do peasants [kulaks], and capitalists, who were enriched by the people's distress during the horrible massacre.

As a result of this imperialistic world war, that happened which had to happen: the world revolution broke out; it overthrew one throne after another, and broke with its iron hammer the chains which bound the workers of the world. Follow-

^{60a} "Izvestia V. Js. I. K.," No. 282 of December 24, 1918. *Sobr. Uzak. 1. Raspor of December 29, 1918, No. 98, p. 1006.* "Zhizn' natsional'nostei," No. 8, of December 1918.

⁶¹ "Zhizn' natsional'nostei," No. 7, December 22, 1918. Quoted in R. S. F. S. R. Narodnyi Komissariat po delam natsional'nostei. *Politika sovetiskol vlasti po natsional'nomu voprosu za tri goda. 1917-XI-1920.* Moskva, 1920, pp. 67, 69. (The Nationality Policy of the Soviet Regime for Three Years.)

ing the Russian Czar, the thrones of Austro-Hungary and Germany were overthrown. The strongholds of world capitalism are cracking and tumbling down. The destruction of English-French-American imperialism, which now plays the conqueror of the world, as not long ago the German was boasting of his triumph, is not far off.

Implacably the world proletarian Revolution marches forward. The bourgeoisie of the world sees that its end is coming. Faced by its mortal enemy, it endeavors to organize a holy alliance of world counterrevolution and makes every effort first to suppress the source of social revolution in Russia. With the rise of the Revolution in Germany the danger to world capitalism is growing. Capitalism is ready to take all necessary measures to prevent an alliance between the Russian and German Revolutions, and for this reason it has given special attention to the areas separating the Republics of Germany and Russia. World capitalism has decided to strangle Russia with an iron ring, not only from the north and east, but also from the south and west in order to stifle first the Russian Revolution and then the German one.

The mercenary bourgeoisie of the Baltic provinces, Lithuania, and Poland, without confidence in its own ability to master the growing proletarian revolution in our country, is taking all necessary measures to hurry the arrival of the English-French-American troops, so that with their help it may drown the working class in rivers of blood. We know what these new "liberators" are bringing to the proletarians and semiproletarians of Lithuania. They are bringing the same yoke and the same humiliation as the German "liberators," the same plundering and enslavement of the workers and poor peasants. We have learned from the experience of Russia that there is no difference between "Allied" and German imperialist occupation: the same restoration to power of landlords and capitalists, the same enslavement of labor and the poor peasantry, the same black reaction, the same slaughter and mockery of our brothers.

This situation compels the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania and Byelorussia, the sole party of the proletarian masses in Lithuania, to take the most serious measures in order to prevent this mortal danger menacing the proletarians and poor peasantry of Lithuania.

Mindful of the will of the insurrectionary workers, the poor peasantry, and the Red Army of Lithuania, who have repudiated the authority of the Kaiser's Taryba and the occupying powers, German as well as English-French-American, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania and Byelorussia, with the city soviets of Kaunas and Vilnius, proclaims the establishment of the Provisional Revolutionary Workers Government of Lithuania.

In the name of the Revolutionary Working People we declare:

1. All power is transferred to the representatives of workers, landless peasants, and small farmers.
2. The authority of the German invaders is abolished.
3. The Kaiser's Lithuanian Taryba and its Council of Ministers is hereby deposed and outlawed.
4. The laws, decrees, resolutions, and regulations of the Taryba and its officials and also of the German occupation authorities, insofar as they are not concerned with German soldiers and their withdrawal from Lithuania, shall be considered void and shall not be enforced.
5. All lackies of the Taryba and the German occupation authorities who have not resigned their offices, shall be arrested, and replaced by the officials of the Soviet Government.
6. Everybody who is willing to follow the orders of the Taryba or the occupation powers or their agents is liable to immediate arrest.
7. All land belonging to landlords and big landowners, churches, monasteries, and the clergy, together with livestock and equipment, as well as forests, waters, and natural resources, shall be the property of the Toilers of Lithuania (shall be nationalized) and shall be placed at the disposal of the workers, small farmers, and semiproletarians for their use.
8. Railroads, mail, telegraph, and telephone networks, banks, and warehouses, shall be the property of the toilers of Lithuania (shall be nationalized) and shall be transferred to the authorities of the Soviet Government by former owners and managers in good order in accordance with the orders issued by the Revolutionary Workers Government.
9. It is strictly forbidden to remove from Lithuania or to damage livestock and equipment, also rolling stock and equipment of railroads, post offices, telegraph offices, and power stations, and other property of national importance.
10. The local soviets shall be charged with safeguarding the people's property and prosecuting offenders.

11. Wages shall be increased gradually up to the level established in the Soviet Russia.

12. An 8-hour work day in industry, commerce, and agriculture shall be introduced.

13. Debts contracted by workers and poor peasants and owed to capitalists, big landowners, and the wealthy clergy, shall be considered void.

14. Strong measures shall be taken to reestablish the economy of the country (to organize transport, etc.) and organize the exchange of goods between Lithuania and Soviet Russia and Germany.

15. Strong measures shall be taken against high prices and speculation, especially against speculation in necessities.

The Provisional Government of Revolutionary Workers of Lithuania declares that it will strive with all means at its disposal to realize the above-mentioned aims. However, without the energetic support of the laboring masses of Lithuania, the proletarians, and poor peasants, without definitive victory over the counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie, landlord, big landowners, and their servants, the clergy, without defeating the German army of occupation, which supports the Kaiser's Taryba—without all this, it will be impossible to realize all these great goals for the liberation of tolling Lithuania from its enslavers.

Workers! Poor peasants! We are not alone now. Coming to our aid are the proletarians of the entire world, raising the flag of revolutionary insurrection. We are guaranteed the general help of the Workers-Peasants of Soviet Russia. Coming to our aid with red flags flying are our brothers of the Red Army [who are] sons of the workers and peasants of our harassed Lithuania, which is now being liberated. Press forward to meet them, give them a cordial and brotherly welcome and increase their ranks tenfold. With their assistance you will be better able to deal with your oppressors.

Raise the flag of insurrection! Organize in every place the government of the deputies of the soviet workers and small farmers! Crush your oppressors! Join the ranks of the Red Army of Lithuania! To arms in the liberation of tolling Lithuania from the usurpers and oppressors!

Long live the liberated Lithuanian Soviet Republic!

Long live the soviets of workers and poor peasants!

Long live our Red Army!

Long live the World Revolution of Workers!

Long live socialism!

In the name of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of Lithuania.

Chairman:

V. MICKEVICH-KAPSUKAS

Members of the Cabinet:

B. ALEKSA-ANGARIETIS,
AIZIK VAINSHTEIN,
SEMEN DIMANSHEIN,
KONSTANTIN KERNOVICZ,
SVETELIS-PROLETARAS,
KAZIMIR JSIKONSKII,
ALEKSANDER YAKSHEVICH.

[Translation] ⁶²

3. NO. 4315.—PROTOCOL RENEWING THE TREATY OF NONAGGRESSION OF SEPTEMBER 28TH, 1926, BETWEEN LITHUANIA AND THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS. SIGNED AT MOSCOW, APRIL 4TH, 1934 ⁶³

THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA;

Being desirous of providing as firm a basis as possible for the development of the relations between their countries;

Being desirous of giving each other fresh proof of the unchangeable character and solidity of the peaceful and friendly relations happily established between them;

⁶² Translated by the Secretariat of the League of Nations, for information.

⁶³ League of Nations. Treaty Series. Treaties and International engagements registered with the Secretariat of the League of Nations. Geneva, 1938. Vol. CLXXXVI, No. 4315. pp. 273-275.

Actuated by the desire to contribute to the consolidation of world peace and to the stability and peaceful development of international relations in Eastern Europe;

And noting that the conclusion of the Treaty of September 28th, 1926, between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Lithuania, and its prolongation in 1931 have had a beneficial influence on their relations and on the solution of the above-mentioned problems;

Have decided to sign the present Protocol and have for this purpose appointed as their Plenipotentiaries:

THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS:

Maxime Maximovitch LITVINOFF, Member of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs;

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA:

Jurgis BALTRUŠAITIS, Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Lithuania at Moscow;

Who, having communicated their full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed on the following provisions:

Article 1.

In modification of Article 1 of the Protocol signed at Moscow on May 6th, 1931, the Treaty of September 28th, 1926, concluded between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Lithuanian Republic, together with the two annexed notes of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and of the Lithuanian Republic, shall be deemed to be prolonged until December 31st, 1945.

Article 2.

The present Protocol is drawn up in duplicate, in the Russian and Lithuanian languages, both texts being equally authentic. It shall be ratified as soon as possible and the instruments of ratification shall be exchanged between the High Contracting Parties at Kaunas.

The present Protocol shall come into force on the date of the exchange of the instruments of ratification.

In faith whereof the above-mentioned Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Protocol and have thereto affixed their seals.

Done at Moscow in duplicate, in the Russian and Lithuanian languages, this 4th day of April, 1934.

(L. S.) (Signed) M. LITVINOFF.

(L. S.) (Signed) J. BALTRUŠAITIS.

[Translation from Lithuanian]

4. REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA "

KAUNAS, May 11, 1939

Secret

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
No. 469/sl

1. To the Envoy of Lithuania in Moscow
2. " " " " " Tallin
3. " " " " " Stockholm
4. " " " " " Berlin
5. " " " " " Paris
6. " " " " " London
7. " " " " " Warsawie
8. " " " " " Ryga
9. " " " " " Roma
10. Copy to the Chief of Military Staff

Some time ago, when tension between Germany and Poland increased, there were certain cases where foreign diplomatic representatives in their private conversations with our diplomatic representatives had alluded to the fact that

" From the personal collection of the former Lithuanian Minister in Berlin, Mr. Skirpa.

Lithuania, taking advantage of an opportunity, might bring up its territorial demands. For instance, the Poles talk about an opportunity of recovering Klaipeda (Memel) or eventually a part of East Prussia, and the Germans and Russians—about giving back the region of Vilnus.

It is quite possible that the purpose of such allusions, from the reaction of our diplomatic representatives, were to check the attitude of the Government or of our public opinion on these questions or to extract careless statements which could be used to influence our relations with one or another State.

In any case, it is clear that the present dangerous situation imposes upon us a particular duty of caution. Therefore, such allusions should be answered so clearly that there can be no doubt that the basic point of the Lithuanian policy and its attitude is strict neutrality which we are firmly determined to defend in any situation and on any question.

Please give instructions in this sense to the members of your legation.

J. URBSYS

Minister of Foreign Affairs.

[Translation from Lithuanian]

5. TO MINISTER K. SKIRPA⁶⁵

In the session held on September 22, 1939 in which you participated the following principles of our policy were established:

1. Lithuania wishes and is firmly determined to maintain fully good neighbour relations with Germany. The recent events in East Europe did not change this attitude of Lithuania.

2. Lithuania, in the presence of actual war and after a sober estimate of her own forces, decided to maintain her neutrality. She will also maintain this attitude in the future. Her neutrality means the determination to be a free and independent State.

3. In accordance with this policy, Lithuania wishes to maintain and is maintaining at the present time good relations with all States, especially with neighbouring States.

4. Lithuania has some unrealized national aspirations, but she seeks their realisation only by peaceful measures. This was confirmed recently by a public statement of the Council of Ministers.

5. Lithuania is grateful to Germany for its recently expressed approval of Lithuanian aspirations.

These principles were established in connection with the invitation of the Reich Foreign Minister addressed to me to visit him. I informed Mr. Zechlin about these principles on September 22, 1939.

J. URBSYS.

KAUNAS, *September 23, 1939.*

6. THE PRIME MINISTER, ACTING IN HIS CAPACITY AS PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 110 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF LITHUANIA, PROCLAIMS THE FOLLOWING LAW ON CONFISCATION OF PROPERTY OF FUGITIVES⁶⁶

Law on confiscation of property of fugitives

1. The property of those Lithuanians who for political reasons left the country after June 15, 1940 or who have gone into hiding, shall be confiscated, provided that they do not return on the order of the Minister of the Interior within one month after the publication of that order.

The order to return, issued by the Minister of the Interior, shall be published in the *Vyriausybes Zinios*.

2. Property shall be confiscated by the decision of the Confiscation Commission. The Confiscation Commission shall have as its chairman the Minister of the Interior or, if he so orders, the Secretary General of the Ministry of the Interior, and as members the Chief Government Comptroller and the Secretary General of the Ministry of Finance.

⁶⁵ From the personal collection of the former Lithuanian Minister to Berlin, Mr. K. Skirpa.

⁶⁶ In the *Vyriausybes Zinios* on July 4, 1940.

3. When the Confiscation Commission issues a decision to confiscate property, it shall immediately appoint a liquidator.

4. The decisions of the Confiscation Commission shall be published in the *Vyriausybes Zinios*.

5. An appeal of the decisions of the Confiscation Commission may be taken to the Court of Appeals within one month of the publication of the decision.

The decision of the Court of Appeals is final.

6. Property belonging to the persons mentioned in Section 1 shall not be sold or otherwise encumbered.

Persons who have in their hands the property of the above-mentioned persons shall report it to the confiscator within one month of the publication of the decision of the Confiscation Commission.

7. Persons who have claims on confiscated property which arose before June 15, 1940 shall submit them to the liquidator within 3 months of the publication of the decision of the Confiscation Commission.

8. Confiscated property shall be handed over to the State Treasury.

9. The present Law shall go into effect on the day of its publication.

J. PALECKIS,

Prime Minister, Acting in his capacity as President of the Republic.

M. GEDVILAS,

The Minister of the Interior, acting for the Deputy Prime Minister.

KAUNAS, July 3, 1940

[Translation from Lithuanian]

7. LAW ON ELECTION TO THE PEOPLE'S DIET^a

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Every Lithuanian national 21 years of age or over on election day shall have the right to elect the people's representatives.

The following persons shall not have the right to vote :

1. Those who have been deprived of this right by a court decision, except in cases where deprivation of right was imposed for political crimes.

2. Those who have been punished by a court for theft, embezzlement, buying or receiving stolen goods, bribery, or other crimes dishonoring a person, provided that 5 years have not yet expired after the court passed sentence.

3. Those who are under investigation for suspicion of having committed a crime which involved the deprivation of rights or a crime mentioned under (2).

4. Those who are under a guardianship, established by the court.

5. Those who are in prison on the day of elections.

2. Every Lithuanian national who had attained 21 years of age on the day of elections may be elected as a people's representative.

Whoever does not have the right to vote may not be elected.

3. For every thirty-five thousand inhabitants there shall be elected one people's representative.

4. People's representatives shall be elected by districts.

The number of electoral districts shall be established in the Annex of the present Law.

5. The number of people's representatives to be elected in each district shall be established by the Supreme Electoral Commission and shall be published in the *Vyriausybes Zinios*.

If after the division of the number of inhabitants of the district by 35,000, the rest is more than 20,000 there shall be added one more representative.

6. The votes shall be cast in the precincts.

The number of precincts and the voting premises in the precincts shall be established by the Minister of the Interior.

7. The voting shall take place within one day.

The election day shall be set by the President of the Republic.

The President of the Republic may extend the voting time.

^a Published in *Vyriausybes Zinios* [Official Gazette] on July 6, 1940, No. 715.

II. ELECTORAL COMMISSIONS

8. The Supreme Electoral Commission shall consist of the chairman, his deputy and three members.

The Commission shall act until the expiration of the term of the Diet whose elections the Commission was appointed to supervise.

The chairman of the Commission, his deputy, and the members shall be appointed by the President of the Republic on the proposal of the Prime Minister.

9. The Supreme Electoral Commission shall supervise the elections, give instructions on the conduct of the election, decide on appeals to the decisions of district commissions, and perform other duties established by the present Law.

10. The district electoral commission shall consist of a chairman, his deputy and three members. They shall be appointed by the chairman of the Supreme Electoral Commission.

11. The district electoral commission shall supervise the elections in the district, decide on appeals from the decisions of precinct commission, and perform other duties established by the present Law.

12. The precinct electoral commission shall consist of a chairman, his deputy, and three members.

The chairman and his deputy shall be appointed by the chairman of the district electoral commission.

The members of the commissions shall be chosen by the chairman of the precinct electoral commission. Then they shall be subject to approval by the chairman of the district electoral commission.

13. For the validity of the meeting of the electoral commission, the presence of the chairman, or his deputy, and at least two members shall be required.

14. Decisions at the meetings of the electoral commission shall be made by a majority vote.

If the vote results in a tie, the vote of the chairman of the meeting shall decide.

15. The electoral commission shall keep minutes of its sessions.

The minutes shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting.

16. The agencies of the national and local government shall execute the orders given by the chairman of the electoral commissions.

17. The appropriations made by the Government for electoral purposes are at the disposal of the Chairman of the Supreme Electoral Commission.

III. THE LISTS OF NOMINEES

18. The people's representatives shall be nominated by counties.

A city having more than 35,000 inhabitants shall be considered as a county.

19. As many candidates for the people's representatives shall be nominated as there are to be elected from the electoral district.

20. The candidates for the people's representatives shall be nominated at the county meeting of the toiling people convoked by the district electoral commission.

The persons who receive the highest number of votes, shall be considered nominated.

21. After the conclusion of voting, the chairman of the meeting shall announce how many votes were cast for each nominee and who shall be considered nominated, and then shall close the meeting.

22. Minutes shall be kept of the meeting.

The minutes shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting.

The consent of the nominated people's representative and the result of the vote shall be added to the minutes.

All these documents shall be sent to the district electoral commission without delay.

23. The lists of nominated people's representatives shall be presented by the district electoral commission to the Supreme Electoral Commission for approval. If the Supreme Electoral Commission considers the nomination unlawful, a meeting of the county's toiling people shall take place for a new nomination not later than within 2 days from the communication of the decision of the Supreme Electoral Commission.

IV. VOTING

24. Everyone shall have the duty to vote.

The elector can vote only in person.

25. Leave for voting shall be granted to workers and clerical employees.

No deduction of pay will be made for this leave.

26. Location of voting premises designated by the Minister of the Interior shall be published by the precinct commission at least 2 days before the election day.

27. Voting shall be done by ballot.

Ballots must contain the surname and Christian name of the nominee, his age, profession and residence and also indication of the source nominating him.

28. Ballots shall be uniform, sealed with the seal of the Supreme Electoral Commission, and shall bear no notations.

The envelopes shall be opaque, uniform, and sealed with the seal of the district electoral commission and shall bear no notations.

The ballots and envelopes shall be provided by the Supreme Electoral Commission.

29. The precinct electoral commission shall provide a box for ballots. The box shall have a slot to insert the ballots, and shall be sufficiently large for all ballots of the precinct to go in.

30. Any member of the precinct commission, upon a request from an elector, shall explain the voting procedure.

31. The chairman of the precinct commission has the right to remove from the voting premises anyone who disturbs the election.

To assure order and quiet in the voting premises, the chairman of the precinct commission shall have the right to call in the police or militia.

32. The voting shall begin at 8:00 A. M. After the chairman of the precinct commission together with the other members of the commission has verified that the box is empty and has only one slot, he shall close it and seal it and then invite electors to vote. Thereafter, the box shall not be opened until the voting is over.

33. The elector coming to vote shall present his passport or special certificate, attesting his right to vote, issued by the precinct electoral commission for persons not possessing passports.

34. The complaints of nationals who have not obtained special certificates attesting their right to vote shall be accepted by the precinct commission and shall be sent to the district electoral commission within two days.

The decision of the district electoral commission is final.

35. The precinct electoral commission shall give to the elector one envelope and one ballot for each nominee to be elected in the district.

The elector shall put into the envelope as many ballots as there are people's representatives in the district to be elected.

Whereupon, the elector shall close the envelope and submit it to the member of the commission at the box, who in the presence of the elector shall put it in the box. And then, a note shall be made on the passport for the persons having passports that the possessor of passport had voted or the special certificate attesting the right to vote shall be withdrawn from persons who do not have passports.

36. An envelope presented by an elector which does not meet the requirements of Section 28 shall not be accepted.

37. Receiving of ballots shall end at 20 o'clock. Only the ballots of electors who enter into the voting premises before 20 o'clock shall be accepted later than that.

38. After balloting is closed, the chairman of the precinct electoral commission and the members, having checked the seal, shall open the box and count the ballots for each nominee.

If there were several ballots for the same nominee, in the envelope, they shall be counted as one ballot.

If there were more ballots than people's representative to be elected in the district, in the envelope, all ballots shall be considered as void.

The precinct electoral commission shall establish the number of electors who participated in the elections and the number of ballots given for each individual nominee.

39. The precinct commission shall send immediately to the district electoral commission the minutes mentioned in Section 38, together with the ballots.

40. The district electoral commission, having received from the precinct commissions the packages of envelopes, the minutes, and other electoral documents, shall make an account of how many ballots each nominee has received in the whole district.

The minutes of the district electoral commission on the results of the election shall be sent immediately to the Supreme Electoral Commission.

V. RESULTS OF ELECTIONS AND COMPLAINTS

41. The nominees who received the highest number of votes shall be considered elected as people's representatives.

42. The Minister of the Interior and any elector may submit a complaint on the election to the Supreme Electoral Commission.

43. After establishing on the ground of the complaints presented that the election results were influenced by bribery, violence, fraud, or other criminal acts or that the election took place without compliance with the provisions of the present Law, the Supreme Electoral Commission shall annul the election in this district, if these acts or such non-compliance [with this Law] could influence the results of the election.

The decision of the Supreme Electoral Commission is final.

44. If any complaints were presented, or if the Supreme Electoral Commission did not annul the election on the ground of complaints presented, the Supreme Electoral Commission shall publish the list of the elected people's representatives in the *Vyriausybes Zinios* [Official Gazette].

45. If the Supreme Electoral Commission has annulled the election, a new election shall take place.

The same ticket of nominees shall be voted.

The election shall take place no later than two days after the annulment of the election.

A supplementary election day shall be set and published by the Supreme Electoral Commission.

VI. TERM OF THE DIET AND ITS CONVOCATION

46. The term shall begin on the day scheduled for the first session.

47. The date and the place for the first session of the Diet shall be set by the President of the Republic. He shall convoke the Diet for the first session.

48. The first session shall be opened by the President of the Republic or on his order by the Prime Minister.

49. After the opening of the session, the Prime Minister shall name the provisional presidium of the Diet from the members of the people's representatives.

Three people's representatives shall be selected for the provisional presidium with one of them as chairman.

The provisional presidium shall be in office until the chairman and other members of the presidium are elected.

VII. TERMINATION AND ASSUMPTION OF DUTIES BY THE PEOPLE'S REPRESENTATIVE

50. A people's representative ceases to be a people's representative, if he has lost the right of eligibility to be a people's representative or if he has resigned or died.

51. The question whether a people's representative ceases to be a people's representative shall be considered and resolved by the Supreme Electoral Commission on the basis of a report presented by the Chairman of the Diet or by the Government Attorney General.

The decision of the Supreme Electoral Commission shall be published in the *Vyriausybes Zinios*.

The decision of the Supreme Electoral Commission is final.

52. Each people's representative may be removed from office by the electors for his inability to perform his duties or for failing to perform the duties of a people's representative.

VIII. FINAL PROVISIONS

52. The Law on Election of the Diet shall be abolished (V. Z. No. 98, text 793, No. 98, text 794, No. 109, text 852, No. 111, text 871, No. 219, text 1436, No. 219, text 1437, No. 467, text 3278, No. 493, text 3442 and No. 533,^{67a} text 3704).

54. This Law comes into effect on the day of publication.

The Prime Minister, acting in his capacity as President of the Republic, in accordance with Section 110 of the Constitution of Lithuania, proclaims the following appendix to the Law on the Election to the People's Diet.

^{67a} Published in the *Vyriausybes Zinios*, No. 115 on July 6, 1940.

*Appendix to the Law on Election to the People's Diet***Electoral Districts**

- I. District of Kaunas**
 1. City of Kaunas
 2. County of Kaunas
 3. County of Kedainiai
- II. District of Alytus**
 1. County of Alytus
 2. County of Seinai
 3. County of Trakai
- III. District of Marijampole**
 1. County of Marijampole
 2. County of Vilkaviskis
 3. County of Sakiai
- IV. District of Ukmerge**
 1. County of Ukmerge
 2. County of Utena
 3. County of Zarasai

Electoral Districts

- V. District of Panevezys**
 1. County of Panevezys
 2. County of Birzai
 3. County of Rokiskis
- VI. District of Siauliai**
 1. County of Siauliai
 2. County of Raseiniai
 3. County of Taurage
- VII. District of Telsiai**
 1. County of Telsiai
 2. County of Kretinga
 3. County of Mazeikiai
- VIII. District of Vilnius**
 1. City of Vilnius
 2. County of Vilnius
 3. County of Svencionellai

(Signature) J. PALECKIS,

The Prime Minister, acting on his capacity as President of the Republic.(Signature) Prof. V. KREVE-MICKEVICIUS,
Deputy Prime Minister.

KAUNAS, July 6, 1940.

8. THE PRIME MINISTER, ACTING IN HIS CAPACITY AS PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF AUGUST 7, 1940, PROCLAIMS THE FOLLOWING LAW ON CONFISCATION OF PROPERTY OF REFUGEES AND FUGITIVES FROM LITHUANIA⁶⁸

Law on Confiscation of Property of Refugees and Fugitives From Lithuania

1. The property of those inhabitants of Lithuania, who left the country after June 15, 1940 or who are in hiding, shall be confiscated for the benefit of the State.

2. The property of those persons, enemies of the people, who left Lithuania before June 15, 1940, legally or illegally, and who do not return within one month of the publication of the present law, shall also be confiscated.

A Commission of Confiscation shall determine who is an enemy of the people (Section 4).

3. The property of a refugee or a fugitive which is either given to another to preserve it or sold to, or acquired by, another, shall also be confiscated.

4. The following commission shall be established for the confiscation of the property of refugees or fugitives:

1) chairman—the Minister of the Interior or his deputy,

2) members—the Chief Government Comptroller or his deputy, the Minister of Finance or his deputy, and the Director of the Department of Security or his deputy.

Confiscation shall take place by decision of the Commission.

5. Persons who have in their possession the property of a refugee or fugitive shall immediately report it to the Ministry of the Interior.

Persons who do not report the property of a refugee or a fugitive shall be punished in accordance with Section 6, Par. 5 of the Law on Emergency (V. Z. No. 717, text 5667).

6. If the property of a refugee or a fugitive has been destroyed, stolen, or embezzled, there shall be exacted from the offenders three times the value of this property as established by the Commission of Confiscation.

7. An appeal to the decision confiscating property may be taken to the Council of Ministers within two weeks of the decision's publication.

⁶⁸ In *Vyriausybes Zinios*, No. 724, August 14, 1940.

8. Directives concerning the present Law shall be issued by the Minister of the Interior.

9. The Law on Confiscation of Property of Fugitive Lithuanians (V. Z. No. 714, text 5607) shall be abolished.

10. The present Law shall go into effect on July 25, 1940.

M. GEDVILAS,

The Minister of the Interior acting for the Prime Minister in his capacity as the President of the Republic.

P. PAKARKLIS,

The Minister of Justice acting for the Deputy Prime Minister.

KAUNAS, August 8, 1940.

9. REPORT ON CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN KREVE-MICKEVICIUS AND MOLOTOV**

When, toward the end of May, 1940, Lithuanian-Soviet relations began to deteriorate, Mr. A. Merkys, Prime Minister of Lithuania, hoped that by means of a personal meeting with Mr. Molotov, Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, the misunderstandings might be liquidated and "relations based on mutual confidence" recreated.

Molotov agreed to see him. It was decided that the Prime Minister would go to Moscow accompanied by J. Urbšys, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The reception in Moscow was very cool. It seemed to Mr. Natkevičius, the Lithuanian Minister in Moscow, that the fate of the Baltic States had already been decided, and that only a miracle could save Lithuania's independence. He had learned that one of the obstacles to British-Soviet agreement had been the British refusal to sacrifice the freedom and independence of the Baltic countries for the benefit of Moscow . . .

The visit to Molotov convinced Mr. Merkys that perhaps Mr. Natkevičius was not very wrong in his thinking, for Molotov refused to discuss any matters with him, but had simply declared in an ultimate tone that Lithuania must (a) admit, without the slightest opposition, new Red Army detachments the U. S. S. R. Government may consider necessary; (b) hand over at once for the disposition of the Soviets all Lithuanian airfields; (c) form a new Lithuanian government composed of persons acceptable to the U. S. S. R.; (d) permit the Lithuanian Communist Party to function freely.

There was nothing else for Mr. Merkys to do but to hurry home and inform the President and the Council of Ministers. He returned to Kaunas on June 13, 1940, while Mr. Urbšys, Minister of Foreign Affairs, remained in Moscow where at midnight of June 14, 1940, he was given an ultimatum which expired at 10 a. m. the following day.

The Lithuanian nation was shocked as by a thunderbolt at the news that on June 15, 1940, several Red Army divisions with tanks and heavy artillery had crossed the Eastern frontier of the Lithuanian Republic and that numerous planes of the U. S. S. R. air force had occupied the airports.

I. THE FORMATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT ON MOSCOW'S ORDERS

Simultaneously with the invasion of Lithuania's territory by Russian troops a special Soviet emissary, Mr. Dekanozov, Vice Commissar of Foreign Affairs, arrived by plane in Kaunas. He was charged with the task of forming a new government and of bringing Lithuania into the Soviet orbit. Without even stopping at the Soviet Legation, he proceeded from the airport directly to the presidential residence. However, he failed to meet President Smetona, for he was already on his way out of the country. Efforts to bring him back also failed to the great disappointment of the Kremlin and of Mr. Dekanozov. In the meantime, grief-stricken Lithuanians wept while Red Army detachments marched in the streets of Kaunas; only a few of the non-Lithuanian population of Kaunas seemed glad.

Two days later, after 11 p. m., I received a telephone call from the Soviet Legation. Mr. Pozdniakov, the Soviet Minister to Lithuania, asked me to come immediately to the Legation. I replied that it was late and that I was already going to bed. If necessary I would try to come the next morning. But Pozdniakov repeatedly emphasized that the matter was urgent and that it was impossible to postpone it until the following day. He said he would send his car for me.

** From the Archives of the Lithuanian Legation in Washington, D. C.

Finally I agreed, and after half an hour had elapsed, I was at the Soviet Legation. There I was met by Dekanozov himself whom I met for the first time. After introducing me to Dekanozov, Pozdniakov left saying that he will have some refreshments (zakuska) brought in, for he supposed that our conversation might take some time.

Dekanozov began by saying that he was not only surprised, but also offended by the absence of President Smetona, who had left the country, and he doubted that any one in Moscow had expected such a step on his part.

According to Commissar Dekanozov, Moscow will not understand, just as he himself failed to understand, such lack of confidence on the part of the Lithuanian Government. It was well known to Mr. Merkys, therefore, to President Smetona as well, that the Soviet Government had given assurances that it had no intention of injuring Lithuania's independence, of interfering in her internal affairs, or of attempting to change her internal organization.

"Moscow, compelled by regrettable incidents and motivated by the best of intentions to protect Lithuania from becoming involved in the World War if not by her own volition then perforce, and in the interests of her own security, had to increase her garrisons in Lithuania (stationed there nine months ago)," said Dekanozov.

I expressed doubt that Lithuania was in danger of becoming involved in the war, for Lithuania had declared that she would adhere to strict neutrality; moreover, Germany was in such a position that it was not expected that she would attempt to violate Lithuania's neutrality without the consent of the U. S. S. R.

"Our friendship with Germany is like that of two hungry hounds who are trying to get the same bone," joked Dekanozov. "Believe me, both Comrade Stalin and I personally have only the best of wishes for Lithuania. We are not suffering from the disease of Russian patriotic chauvinism; we like and respect the Lithuanian nation, for there is much in common between its destiny and that of the Georgian nation. Both of us are well acquainted with your history. We know that for centuries you fought to arrest the German onslaught to the East, and that you were victorious in the unequal struggle. We know that the boundaries of your State extended eastward from present-day Kharkov, that they were only 100 kilometers distant from Moscow, and that in the south, they had reached the Black Sea. How can a Georgian fail to honor a nation which, although not large in population, in the midst of life and death struggles was able by heroic bravery alone to evolve power great enough to resist the West and in the East to push back the Mongols almost to the Volga. I say all this in order to convince you that Comrade Stalin has no hidden aims and designs in regard to Lithuania, that he only wants to safeguard your country from possible future German attack in the event of a change in the political situation and in our relations with them. And what could we be seeking in Lithuania? You are a nation of tillers of the soil. You possess only the type of wealth which the Soviet Union has in abundance. I must admit that, in our opinion, Lithuania is an important strategic point, and it is this fact that augments the danger of German aggression against Lithuania, and from this danger we wish to protect you.

"It was very difficult for me to reach an agreement with Merkys, now Acting President, and his advisers, regarding the future composition of the Government," continued Mr. Dekanozov. "We desire that the new Government will be composed of persons who will loyally execute Lithuania's commitments and obligations.

"In this new government, upon which agreement has finally been reached, you are to be Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister," Mr. Dekanozov ended his remarks and handed me a list of the prospective members of the Cabinet:

Justas Paleckis, an obscure journalist, to be Prime Minister.

Mickis, Minister of Agriculture.

Pakarklis, candidate for the post of Minister of Justice.

He was well known to me, but not from a favorable point of view; I had reasons for considering him an unreliable person.

Antanas Venclova, Minister of Education.

General V. Vitkauskas, for the post of Defense.

The other candidates were unknown to me

Having acquainted myself with the list of candidates, I expressed surprise that the question of my participation in the government was being discussed with me not by Mr. Merkys, Acting President of the Republic, but by a Plenipotentiary of the Soviet Union, and not at the presidential residence but at the Legation of

the U. S. S. R. As for myself, I could not dare to assume under any circumstances the posts offered me. Moreover, I did not believe that, in such strenuous and responsible times, Paleckis would be a suitable person to head the State.

Mr. Dekanozov listened quietly to my rather violent reaction.

"In regard to your objections, I must say that I also do not believe that Paleckis is suited to head the government. Therefore, in accordance with the Lithuanian Constitution, he, as prime minister is to occupy the post of acting president. These are passive duties. Furthermore, we understand that such a person will have no influence on the activities of the government. You will lead the government, and therefore I wanted to talk to you as to the future head of the government before Mr. Merkys makes you an appropriate offer. If you were to refuse the task which is offered you, you would offend us and you would injure your country. You are popular among the people. In other words, a government headed by you will have the confidence of the people, and that is very important to us and to you. I cannot refrain from saying that the war will last a long time, a very long time. The Germans do not hide the desire to occupy all countries of Western and Southern Europe, not to mention the countries of Northern Europe. Today, because of our treaty of friendship with them, Lithuania is still safe, but no one knows, their confidence in us may change. Today, they are our friends by force, but tomorrow, perhaps, they may become our greatest enemies, and then their first step will be to occupy Lithuania as an important strategic point. Therefore, it is very important for us to have in Lithuania a government which will have the confidence of the people and which, we want to be sure, will not accede to German wishes. We wish to protect ourselves and indirectly to protect you. We have no other aims here in Lithuania. As soon as the danger recedes, our Army will be immediately withdrawn, and in the future you will live as heretofore. I am glad we are going to be direct neighbors and that friendly relations between the U. S. S. R. and Lithuania will be even closer than have existed up to now."

Thus spoke Dekanozov. When I returned home I telephoned the U.S.S.R. Legation. Mr. Pozdniakov was at the telephone and I declared to him that I had thought matters over and had decided not to assume the duties offered me.

"I dare not inform Mr. Dekanozov about this, and I hope that your decision is not final," said Mr. Pozdniakov.

About ten o'clock the following morning I received a short note from Mr. Merkys inviting me to come at once to the presidential residence to discuss an important matter . . .

Although Mr. Merkys, Acting President, and some of the members of the Council of Ministers were fully aware that all these Soviet accusations were invented for the purpose of provocation, they nevertheless felt that if some of the demands, though unjust and humiliating to Lithuania's sovereignty, were satisfied, a far greater danger might be avoided and that an opportunity may arise to create at least bearable relations with Moscow.

Mr. Merkys was of the opinion that I must accept the inevitable.

II. A CONVERSATION WITH V. MOLOTOV IN MOSCOW

Following the Moscow ultimatum to Lithuania of midnight June 14-15, 1940, the abyss of anarchy yawned before Lithuania. The attitude of the Moscow functionaries in regard to the Lithuanian nation clearly indicated that they strove to demolish the internal order, destroy the unifying foundation, and to bring the nation to chaos.

To resist was almost unthinkable, since actually, besides the Council of Ministers, four other governments appeared on the scene:

(a) *The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania.*

It terrorized the government officials, forcing them to obey the regulations not of the legal government but the demands of the Central Committee; it set in motion through the press, radio, and mass meetings a blindly destructive propaganda machine; it gave aid to the strikers and organized the scum of the populace which they used in all types of demonstrations to intimidate the peaceful inhabitants.

(b) *The administration of the Bolshevik Army of Occupation.*

It not only set up its own regulations, for the most part unenforceable, but it also threatened to take steps against those who would sabotage the "rightful" demands of the Army. It took charge of the Communist demonstrations, threatening to provide them with an armed escort should the Lithuanian Government

dare to forbid the populace the right to express their sympathy for Moscow which freed this "populace" from the "bloody" Fascist regime of Smetona. It immediately demanded the liquidation of *Šauliai* (The Lithuanian Home Guard), and added that should the Lithuanian Government contrive to delay the matter, the administration itself would attend to it by force; furthermore, the Government would be held accountable for any incidents which would hinder the peaceful liquidation of *Šauliai*.

(c) *The Moscow Legation in Lithuania.*

It was not as brutal as the Military Government, but its manner was most exasperating. It was always demanding the removal of this or that official, indicating which resolutions the Council of Ministers should adopt, designating the proper relations with foreign representatives, and specifying those of our representatives who should be recalled and just who should replace them. In the beginning all such demands were presented through Paleckis (the puppet president), who presented them to me supposedly in his own name, but when the Russian Legation discovered that the demands which they presented through Paleckis were being ignored, they began to apply directly to me supposedly with suggestions only. Threats were not employed. And when, on several occasions, I had had rather sharp conversations with Dekanozov, the Soviet Minister, Pozdniakov, always arrived to apologize. It was explained that Dekanozov is a Caucasian, a hot-blooded person who does not always know how to control himself. But at the same time it was also advised that in order to maintain good relations with the Moscow Government it was absolutely necessary to take Dekanozov's opinion into account since that opinion was not his own, but that of the Moscow Government which would like to trust fully the Lithuanian Government, and it should not be thought that the attitude of the present administration is insincere or that it has secret aspirations, perhaps even unfriendly ones.

(d) *"Our" Ministry of the Interior.*

While in power, the Nationalist regime (in order to combat the destructive elements and to a certain extent) in its struggle with the opposition, had issued a whole series of decrees granting extensive powers to the Minister of the Interior. The Ministry of the Interior became (sort of) an independent state within the State. The Minister (it seemed) could completely disregard the Council of Ministers. He was more under the personal discretion and surveillance of the President than under the Council. He had the power not only to arrest all those who appeared dangerous to him, but also to exile them from Lithuania with the President's approval. He conducted, or he at least had the power to conduct, an independent policy; he managed the affairs of the country as he saw fit, and according to his discretion he could disband every organization, party, even commercial and industrial institutions. The radio stations were in his hands which he controlled by agreement with the Ministry of Defense. The Minister of the Interior, Mr. Gedvila, who it appeared was a Communist of long standing, now began to use his powers extensively, always with the approval of the (puppet) president, J. Paleckis. He reorganized the Ministry of the Interior from its very foundations; all officials, from ordinary policemen to county supervisors, and directors of the Ministry departments were discharged, and Communists or Communist sympathizers put in their places. In the Ministry itself, although the higher posts were occupied by Lithuanian citizens, for the most part of Jewish origin, each was assigned either an adviser or an assistant sent from Moscow in whose hands the power lay. These men enforced the Moscow decrees and acted only upon instructions received from their own government.

The Lithuanian people did not grasp the true situation, and blamed everything the Ministry of the Interior did on the Council of Ministers. This Council no longer had any power at all; it was at odds, disunited, for the Communist part of it also followed the dictates of Moscow which reached them through the Communist Party. Others, for instance, Venclova, and Mickis, although they were not Communists, ranged themselves with the latter, for, as it became evident later, they were concerned about their careers. Actually, only I, Galvanauskas (formerly Prime Minister and Minister of Finance), and General Vitkauskas worked together, although the latter consulted us only on military matters.

Under the circumstances, I thought that there was nothing else to do but resign. I consulted Mr. Galvanauskas on this subject without whose approval I usually hesitated to take any serious steps. Galvanauskas disagreed with my opinion and did not approve my plan. He thought that we must "hold out until

the bitter end." Since I persisted, he advised me to call a meeting of prominent persons of the old generation, regarding whose attitudes and points of view there could be no doubt, to discuss the matter with them and to decide how further to proceed. I was forced to comply with this, and through the efforts of Galvanauskas, the meeting soon took place at the home of Tadas Petkevičius, (formerly Counselor of the Min. of For. Aff.).

When the situation had been thoroughly explained to them, the participants of the meeting upheld the opinion of Galvanauskas, that we did not have the right to withdraw. We are obliged to hold fast as long as we are able to do so.

There and then, it was decided that I should leave for Moscow to see Molotov, and if possible, even Stalin. I was to acquaint them with the situation and to demand that they order their Legation in Kaunas and the military government not to interfere in the internal affairs of the country, to cease the destruction of the authority of the Lithuanian Government, and to recall their citizens whom they had unlawfully seated in the Ministry of the Interior.

We were the first victims of the Bolsheviks in Europe; we knew neither their tactics, methods, nor final aims. Therefore, it is not surprising that we thought that most of what took place occurred without the knowledge and approval of Moscow. If eminent diplomats of Western Europe and America allowed themselves to be deceived because they failed to orientate themselves, then, God, Himself, therefore allowed us to be deceived as well.

The following day I sent a coded telegram to our representative, Mr. Natkevičius, in Moscow, requesting him to arrange an audience with Mr. Molotov as quickly as possible.

Mr. Natkevičius received a negative reply from Molotov, explaining that N. Dekanozov is now in Lithuania, and that the government of Moscow has empowered him to confer with the Lithuanian Government on all matters. Dekanozov himself visited me shortly and demanded to know why I had not applied to Molotov through him if I had something important to discuss with the Commissar of Foreign Affairs. It was totally incomprehensible to him why I did not wish to discuss it with him, Dekanozov, who was sent here for that purpose.

I replied that Lithuania still has her representative in Moscow through whom she has the right to appeal to the Moscow Government, and therefore I see no reason to disturb Mr. Dekanozov in order to ask him to act as mediator. It would be useless to confer with him since all those matters had more than once been discussed with him, but that all our discussions had been in vain and had produced no fruit.

"You, Mr. Minister, orientate yourself poorly today in regard to the existing conditions which have changed a great deal since we came here," stated Dekanozov. "You would do well if you would listen less to all that Galvanauskas whispers in your ear. We are perfectly aware of that."

"I am not a child, and I understand perfectly well what is going on here, and the whispered advice of Mr. Galvanauskas, should there truly be any, would not influence me. I should like to explain the situation to myself in order that I might not find myself participating in the burial of Lithuania's independence.

"Should Mr. Molotov refuse to see me, even so everything will be clear to me, and I will know what conclusions to draw."

With this our conversation ended. That same day I repeated my request through our representative in Moscow that Mr. Molotov receive me in person, and this time I received a reply that the Commissar of Foreign Affairs, V. Molotov, agrees to receive me, on June 30th, at four o'clock in the afternoon.

This notification reached me on June 29. I left that very day for Moscow. I was met at the station with the customary pomp by the Vice-Commissar of Foreign Affairs, whose name I am unable to recall, Mr. Dekanozov, who, it appeared, had flown from Kaunas, the Moscow Military Commandant, a few other officials, and our legation's functionaries with our Minister, Mr. Natkevičius, at the head.

The station was decorated with our national flags.

From the station I left for our legation.

Mr. Natkevičius was not in a good mood.

"Although you were met in the same way as our high officials were met in good times when they came to Moscow, I do not think that the attitude of Moscow toward the Baltic nations has changed," said the Minister, when the reasons for my coming were explained to him. "If it has changed, then it has become even more unfavorable."

During dinner, about three o'clock, the office of the Commissar of Foreign Affairs telephoned to inform us that Mr. Molotov would receive me not at four o'clock as had been promised, but at eleven o'clock at night.

"Do not be surprised, Mr. Minister," stressed Mr. Natkevičius, at this point, "here, all important matters are attended to at night. That your appointment is scheduled for eleven at night means that a long conversation awaits you. God grant that it bring good results, but that is doubtful."

At eleven o'clock we arrived at the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. I was amazed at the number of times we were stopped and our credentials checked: on entering the Kremlin, at the entrance to the Commissariat, on reaching the second floor, and even at the door of Molotov's office.

Silence reigned everywhere, and not a single employee was to be seen, but there was an armed guard at every step.

Finally we found ourselves in the waitingroom. We did not have long to wait, scarcely a few minutes, but the first unpleasantness occurred here which irritated me considerably: we were informed that Molotov wishes to speak with me alone, without the Minister.

I had no idea how one should conduct oneself in these circumstances, how one should address a high official of a foreign country, and had expected that Mr. Minister would be my adviser in this instance. Now that I was left alone, I became uneasy.

Although Mr. Natkevičius had told me that I must open the conversation by inquiring about the health and wellbeing of Josif Vissarionovič, and similar diplomatic phrases, but upon entering Molotov's office I had forgotten everything, and after greeting him I began to express my dissatisfaction on being forced to pay this call on the Commissar of Foreign Affairs alone, unescorted by our Minister.

Molotov smiled, showing no vexation. His expression and attitude impressed me favorably. I thought I was dealing with a Russian intellectual of the old generation.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Minister, and that of your representative. By receiving you alone I did not intend to offend you or to express any distrust of your representative," said the Commissar in reply to my comment. "I have been informed that you are an outspoken person, that you always 'take the bull by the horns' (*berlote vsegda čorta priamo za roga*), and that you do not hide your opinions behind the shield of diplomatic courtesies. Therefore, I wished to speak openly with you, as with a man who can understand our present position, not with a diplomat. I thought that I could not speak as freely, seeing beside you an experienced diplomat, the kind your representative, without doubt, happens to be."

Being inexperienced at that time in diplomatic slyness, I believed the words of Mr. Molotov, and was even overjoyed. I thought that speaking candidly and wholeheartedly I could explain many misunderstandings and gain more than I had believed possible. I did not doubt the sincerity of Molotov's statement. Only later I understood that this clever and cunning diplomat had something entirely different in mind.

"We sincerely wished to reach an agreement with the English, French, and Polish Governments for a common plan to block German expansion and avoid the threat of war, however, not through any fault of ours, we were unable to reach such an agreement," continued Mr. Molotov. "It was demanded that we guarantee the eastern Polish borders, although the present allies should have known that those borders were imposed on us at the peace conference in Riga. Our position then was such that we had to agree to all the conditions that were dictated to us. They also demanded that we guarantee the eastern borders of Rumania, although they were aware that we had not disclaimed, nor did we intend to disclaim in the future our rights to Bessarabia. Furthermore, the Polish Government evinced the greatest distrust toward us. It did not agree to allow our military forces to cross their country, even in the event should Germany start a war and we would be forced to join with Western Europe in the fight against German expansion.

"Under such circumstances how could there be any agreement? Seeing that agreement was impossible, we were compelled to seek guarantees elsewhere so as not to remain alone should we be attacked. Such a guarantee had been offered to us by the German Government before our talks with the English, French, and Poles, but we had paid no attention to it. Now, perceiving that nothing would or could come of our discussions with the three allies, we renewed our negotiations with the German Government which seemed to us to be very well disposed and tractable, agreeing to satisfy all our wishes.

"Although we reached an agreement and signed a non-aggression pact with the German Government, we were perfectly aware that the Germans were not to be

trusted. Therefore, for the sake of caution, it was necessary to find other means to strengthen our security. At that time we had no common borders with Germany. In other words, desiring to attack us, they would choose a route across Lithuania. We sincerely wished to cooperate with the Lithuanian Government, to strengthen your country's defenses.

"We have always had the best interests of Lithuania at heart, as sincere and true friends we have always upheld her interests on an international level, we have everywhere and always supported her in all her affairs. We have demonstrated our friendship by returning to you your former capital, Vilnius.

"One of the first measures was our suggestion to the Lithuanian Government that it form a firm union with the other Baltic nations, and in this way strengthen its resistance to possible German aggression. We used our influence so that the Governments of Latvia and Estonia would offer no resistance to the formation of such a union. But we were soon disappointed. Although Smetona is not a foolish person, but being covered with the moss of superstition, he failed to orientate himself in the existing circumstances and mitigate his regime. He failed to understand such a simple thing that it was impossible to maintain friendly relations with us and at the same time persecute all that smacked of Russian culture, persecute those who manifested the slightest regard for us. Still worse, it soon became evident to us that the union of the Baltic nations, formed at our instigation, showed signs of leaning toward the Germans. From well-informed sources we learned that the delegates of the Baltic nations held a meeting in Riga where it was decided to take a firm stand against us, to resist our influence, and to seek a closer cooperation with the Germans. Your representative in Berlin, instructed by Smetona, began negotiations with the German Government for an agreement directed against us.

"The true nature of the Germans became evident to us when they accepted the Lithuanian offer. Only they desired that your Government take a definite stand in this regard as an ally of Germany. Therefore they ordered the Lithuanian Army to attack Poland immediately and take Vilnius.

"I will not try to hide the fact from you that we were overtaken unexpectedly by this fact and that we were very worried. If Lithuania had listened to the demands of the German Government and had thus proved herself an ally of Germany, she would have become a German fortified area extending far to the East, a starting point in the event of war with us. And we would have been unable to take any measures against her without risking war with Germany which we did not and do not desire.

"We were able to breathe more freely when we discovered that the Lithuanian Government did not dare to listen to the Germans, had refused to occupy Vilnius by force and that she had thereby lost the confidence of Germany.

"In the presence of this dangerous fact we were forced to change radically our attitude toward the Baltic nations, as well as toward Germany, and to take steps which we had neither desired nor anticipated. These steps were necessary in the interests of security. We had no right to give such a situation an opportunity to repeat itself. For their promise not to threaten to draw the Baltic nations into their sphere of influence, and not to interfere in their internal affairs, we now had to yield on many questions to the Germans. Furthermore, they agreed that the Baltic nations, namely: Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia lie exclusively within our zone of influence, and that in that zone we might act as we saw fit.

"However, these new agreements did not wholly disperse our distrust of the Germans, therefore we were compelled to strengthen our armed forces in these countries. I understand that this act of ours seems unpleasant to you, but believe me, it is more advantageous to you than to us: we protect you from danger from the German side, from Germany's attempts to entangle your tiny nation in a world war whose flames lick ever closer.

"It is true that we were obliged to liquidate the Baltic Union, but not because it had gone astray. It is no longer necessary; we have assumed the task of protecting the independence of the Baltic nations."

As I listened I was unable to imagine what purpose Mr. Molotov could have in recounting all this. Did he wish to read to me the act of indictment against Lithuania and the other Baltic nations, or by so doing to cloud my vision and distract my attention from matters which might be unpleasant to him?

And indeed I was blasted from my trench and was unable, on the spur of the moment, to get my bearings, how to divert the conversation to the matters that were important to me and for which I had come.

"We are responsible for neither the national nor the foreign policy of Smetona with which practically none of the Lithuanian inhabitants were satisfied," I now began to say. "Personally, however, I begin to fear that soon our populace

will start to regret the passing of that time when Smetona ruled the country if matters in Lithuania will continue in the same direction as they have up until now. . ."

"We are aware that you are popular with the people," said Mr. Molotov interrupting me. "You must strive to keep the confidence of the people. . ."

"Yes, I did enjoy a certain amount of popularity, I can tell you. But there is very little left of it, and I fear that there will soon be none left at all. Today the welfare of the Lithuanian people is being destroyed together with the agricultural as well as the legislative system to which they are accustomed and which they value highly. We are unable to stop this destruction, we have neither the power nor the means, while in the eyes of the people the responsibility is ours. The people still believe the Moscow statement that no one shall interfere in the internal affairs of Lithuania, and they are not aware that today their government is powerless. . ."

"What keeps you from combating those who indulge in this destruction?" interrupted Molotov again. "Punish them."

"We would then have to punish the officials from your legation who without regard are proceeding with this destructive propaganda and are causing great unrest in the nation, especially among the farmers. We would have to punish your officers who by their direct demands and threats are demoralizing our institutions and those who work in them. . ."

"We sent no such instructions," frowned Mr. Molotov. "It is hard to believe that our officials or our officers could be so wilful."

I understood that I had been too severe, that I would accomplish nothing by speaking in this manner and that my audience might come to a close without achieving the end.

"It is for this reason that I asked to be received so that I might explain the present situation. I do not for a moment doubt the good intentions of the Government of the U. S. S. R. For I understand that it is not only in our interest, but in yours also, that the production of Lithuanian agriculture should not decrease, to the contrary, it should increase, so that Lithuania could continue its obligation without further hardships to feed your garrisons," I began to explain. "The welfare of the Lithuanian people has reached a high level; the agricultural life of the people was so arranged as to do away with middlemen between producer and consumer. The return was greater for the producer and prices were lower for the consumer since the middleman's profit was eliminated. Our export has always been active and considerably larger than our import. This stabilized Lithuanian currency which during all this time not only did not drop in value but also did not fluctuate."

Before my departure for Moscow Mr. Galvanauskas had thoroughly acquainted me with Lithuania's agricultural and financial situation and had provided me with all the necessary information concerning our agricultural productivity, our export and import, our agricultural system, and concerning the organizations: Lietūkis, Pienocentras, and Maistas.

Making use of this material which I had brought with me I proceeded to explain all this to Molotov as clearly as I could.

Molotov appeared interested and listened attentively.

"We have already been informed that your agricultural organizations function like clockwork without any hindrances (bez otkaza). To us that was rather unexpected," commented Molotov. "Our Military Government is absolutely fascinated by the efficiency of these organizations."

"I cannot question your official facts but I am amazed at the productivity of Lithuanian agriculture," continued Molotov. "She produces and exports more than the great, rich Ukraine. It is not our purpose to destroy such a perfect agricultural system. On the contrary we are vitally interested in maintaining its high level. Our officials have received no instructions to interfere in the internal affairs of Lithuania and by this interference harm the country's agricultural system." Therefore, Molotov believes that all these misunderstandings arise not from ill will but from the dissimilarities of the agricultural and social systems between Lithuania and the Soviet Union. The people failing, and not wishing, to realize this do not agree and do not understand each other due to different psychological viewpoints. The present Lithuanian Government, whose sincere regard for the Soviet Union he does not doubt, should strive to prepare its people to adapt themselves to new condition. . . .

"We believe and our entire nation believes that the present situation is only temporary and will not prevail much longer," I said in answer to Molotov's statements. "I should like to believe that it would be more to the point for you to

attempt to instruct your garrison commanders in Lithuania to comply more with our system, with our conditions, popular opinion and national psychology."

For some time Molotov did not reply. He sat with bent head scribbling something on a sheet of paper that lay under his hand.

"You provoke my candor, Mr. Minister," he said at last glancing up at me. "You force me to say something which I had no wish to say at this time. Therefore we shall speak openly without sentimentality of which there is already enough. You must take a good look at reality and understand that in the future small nations will have to disappear. Your Lithuania along with the other Baltic nations, including Finland, will have to join the glorious family of the Soviet Union. Therefore you should begin now to initiate your people into the Soviet system which in the future shall reign everywhere, throughout all Europe, put into practice earlier in some places, as in the Baltic nations, later in others."

Although I had been warned in advance by Mr. Natkevičius that I might hear such things, I was completely abashed by Molotov's flat statement. My throat felt dry, my lips frozen, and for some time I was speechless.

It appeared that Mr. Molotov perceived my condition. He telephoned and ordered some tea brought.

"When these things become evident there will be great confusion among our people, perhaps even armed resistance," I began not realizing what I was saying. "The German Government without doubt will make use of this, for it will not tolerate the instigation of the Soviet system on its border."

"Germany swallowed the occupation of the Baltic States without choking, and she will have to digest their incorporation," Molotov snapped back. "They are having too much trouble in the West now to want a war with the mighty Soviet Union. I also will not conceal from you that in regard to these matters we have already come to an agreement with them. Friend Stalin has already spoken about this to your former Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs when they came to see us about some misunderstandings which had arisen with the soldiers of our garrisons."

"You have said yourself, Mr. Commissar, that the present German Government is not to be trusted, therefore, you cannot predict how they will behave in this respect. For my part I can only warn you that when your aims become clear our people will look to the Germans as possible allies who will help liberate them from your tyranny. The Lithuanian farmers already, still ignorant of what fate has in store for them, are restless, dreading a change in the agricultural system. They are already intimidated by your officials and the agitation of sympathizers, and they fear the system of collectivization. They have been accustomed for centuries to private ownership of their land; they prize it as they prize their independence. The theory of land collectivization is foreign to them."

"We do not think of imposing (naviazat) a collective system of farm supervision," remarked Molotov. "We do not maintain that this system is the best method of land reform, but Russia is still a nation too poor and wretched to be able to afford (posvolit sebe) a different system of land reform."

"As I now see it, our people have shown themselves to be more alert than we, and they have distrusted your public pledges and are becoming restless in their distrust, although we have tried to quiet them," I continued my song not realizing that it was not only useless to the matter I wished to defend but was, more than likely, harmful. "Endless lines of farmers' delegations have visited me and the Minister of Agriculture. They have all demanded that we defend not only the internal order but the freedom and independence of the nation as well. When the people will discover the Soviet Union's motives, they will give way to great despair and disorder which will demolish the very foundations of the nation, destroy the still stable prosperity as well as the basis for that prosperity, wiping out all foreign agreements so essential to our economy. The populace without doubt will regard your garrisons as an army of occupation and they will fight them in every way imaginable. Would all this be beneficial to the Soviet Union in such unstable times? In order that all this may be avoided we propose that a friendship pact be made with us on new terms. This would improve our position and strengthen the authority of the Soviet Union in the eyes of the Lithuanian people. According to this pact we would agree even to limit ourselves in matters of foreign policy, being mindful of the interests and advice of the Soviet Union."

"I will not say that your proposal is not worth considering today. At another time it would have been very acceptable to us, but conditions have changed so, that such a turn might not be useful either to the Soviet Union or to the Baltic

States. We are more firmly convinced now than ever that our brilliant comrade, Lenin, was not mistaken when he assured us that the Second World War will help us to gain power throughout all Europe as the First helped us to gain power in Russia.

"Today we support Germany but just enough to keep her from being smothered before the miserable and starving masses of the warring nations become disillusioned and rise against their leaders. Then the German bourgeoisie will come to an agreement with its enemy, the allied bourgeoisie, in order to crush with their combined forces the aroused proletariat. But at that moment we will come to its aid, we will come with fresh forces, well prepared, and in the territory of Western Europe, I believe, somewhere near the Rhine, the final battle between the proletariat and the degenerate bourgeoisie will take place which will decide the fate of Europe for all time. We are convinced that we, not the bourgeoisie, will win that battle.

"This is why we cannot seriously consider your offer today. We cannot allow a small island with a form of government that will have to disappear in all Europe to remain behind our back."

"You, Mr. Commissar, forget that the United States of America with her vast material and technical strength might come to the aid of those Western European nations who are fighting against German aggression. This nation, as we know, has once already saved Western Europe because of her way of life. I do not believe that history cannot repeat itself."

"You are absolutely right, Mr. Minister," Molotov stressed. "We know very well that the United States of America are eager to enter this war, and they use every means to provoke that entry. We doubt that we shall be successful in persuading her to resist that provocation; however, this does not worry us. We know that country better than those who govern it do. Have you ever visited the United States?"

"No, I have not," I admitted, "but I have read a great deal about that nation."

"In other words, you have no idea what that loose swamp, which calls itself the United States of North America, is like. American journalists, and to some extent the writers, are clever with their pretty words at deceiving themselves and others when they talk about their land. But we do not have to believe them. There, when they speak of humanism, liberty, equality, and democracy, it is merely the most loathsome hypocrisy, which is so characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon peoples. There at every step you find a church, but in spite of this, there is no other nation in the world so materialistic, where the only thing that matters is money, money, and more money . . . There every official, from an ordinary policeman to their president, is ever ready to make mistakes and errors, if these errors increase his bank account.

"We are not like the stiff Germans who believe only in using their fists. We shall find means to help the leaders of American politics make mistakes, when these mistakes will be to our advantage. Therefore, their entrance into the war does not worry us in the slightest. All those who put their faith in them will be greatly disillusioned . . ."

"Past events have taught us that we can have faith only in ourselves, and our country has not yet lost that faith," I said in answer to Molotov's last words of emphasized rebuke. "The people of Lithuania, at the end of the First World War, were able alone during the most difficult times to repulse the Polish attempts to occupy and incorporate Lithuania. Poland was supported in these attempts by all of the Western European allies, the French, the British, the Belgians . . . Although our people had no one to turn to for aid or support, they fought valiantly, and won their freedom. And now they will not surrender it easily."

"Mr. Minister, you must not forget that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics brings to nations not slavery, but true freedom, and so your people are not threatened with the loss of their freedom. They will be asked, in the manner approved by the Soviet Republics, whether they wish to join the family of the Soviet Union."

I felt that our conversation was becoming more and more tense. Evidently my words and resistance had so annoyed Mr. Molotov that the gentle tone began to fade from his voice. But I was so affected by all I had heard that I could not control myself. Therefore I replied that the whole Lithuanian nation had long since decided to be independent, and to live her own life. I do not have to guess what the answer to the question raised would be, provided no force was used.

"The word 'force' has been removed from our dictionary," Molotov hurriedly shot back in a stern voice. "We shall not use force, but we shall know how

to convince your people that their welfare demands this union, since only in this way, under the protection of the entire Soviet Union, can they live in peace, without fear of being drawn into the slaughter of war."

I expressed my disbelief that a country could be found that would allow itself to be convinced that it is advantageous to give up its freedom for the protection of a foreign state. The Lithuanian nation, who sacrificed so many of her sons for liberty, would be less apt to be thus convinced.

"You will see that before four months have passed, the people of all the Baltic States will vote for incorporation, which will take place without any disturbances, although you try to intimidate me," Mr. Molotov assured me. "Closing our conversation, I should like to advise you again to look reality straight in the eye, and to keep in mind the aims of our true policy, important for all mankind.

"Lithuania cannot remain an exception, and her future will depend upon the fate of all Europe, you must understand that," Mr. Molotov went on to explain. "You would be doing the most intelligent thing if you would accept without any hesitation the leadership of the Communist Party which is determined to effect the unification of all Europe and the application of the new order.

"Lithuania, as well as the other Baltic States, will be able quietly, even more quietly than before, and undisturbed to expand its national culture, only giving it a socialistic content."

He, Molotov, and the central government of the Soviet Union believe that the members of the present Lithuanian Government, keeping in mind the good of their country, will remain to cooperate further with the Soviet Union, at least so that the incorporation into the family of the Soviet Union would take place without any great disturbances on the part of the unreliable, poorly orientated persons.

The members of the present government surely would not wish the people to regard them as foes in the future . . .

These last remarks Mr. Molotov delivered standing, giving me to understand that all that was to be said had been said.

I rose also and, standing, replied that the words of Mr. Commissar had not convinced me. How my colleagues in the Government would react I did not know. Personally, I felt that I could no longer remain at the head of the Lithuanian Government, for I had been mistaken in believing the promises given by the Soviet Union that their armed forces came into Lithuania just to protect her neutrality, and not to interfere in her internal affairs. I was mistaken in so believing and therefore I must make the proper deductions. Furthermore, I did not wish to participate in the burial of Lithuania's independence.

"Such a step on your part at this time would be very unpleasant for us, and I am sure that you will think well before you decide," answered Mr. Molotov, walking to the middle of the room.

We took cool leave of each other, without that friendliness with which Mr. Molotov had greeted me. Going out I glanced at the clock. It was twenty-three minutes to four.

In the next room I found Mr. Natkevičius. He was talking to some official and waiting for me. Escorted to our car by this official, we returned to our legation. On the way we were silent, since Mr. Natkevičius had given me to understand that he did not wholly trust his chauffeur.

Once inside the legation, I began to relate in detail my conversation with Mr. Molotov. Mr. Natkevičius himself wrote down all I told him for the purpose of preparing a "Pro Memo."

Listening to me Mrs. Natkevičius began to weep so bitterly that we had to suspend our work in order to comfort her as best we could.

I went to bed at dawn. I felt as if I had just pulled through a serious illness; disaster had overtaken me so suddenly that I was still unwilling to believe it. On my way to see Molotov I had still thought that Mr. Natkevičius' pessimistic suppositions were exaggerated, and that it would now be demonstrated that they had no foundation. I could scarcely drag my feet as I went to the room which had been assigned to me.

Mr. Natkevičius awakened me the next morning at ten to inform me that the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs was calling me. Throwing on my robe I went to Mr. Natkevičius' office. It was Dekanozov, saying that he had just flown into Moscow that day and he must see me. Besides, he would like to show me the Agricultural Exposition of the Soviet Union.

I wanted to refuse, for I had planned to return home that day, but, on the advice of Mr. Natkevičius, I accepted, requesting him not to call for me before eleven.

I scarcely had time to dress and have a little breakfast, when Dekanozov arrived. Another person, whom he introduced as his assistant, newly appointed to the Moscow Legation in Lithuania, arrived with him. His name was Vasiljev; and later I actually did see him in Lithuania at the Moscow Legation.

We left for the Exposition in which I had not the slightest interest. I went only to be polite. I was accompanied by Mr. Natkevičius and Mr. Bagdonas, the secretary of our legation. We rode in our legation's car, while Dekanozov and Vasiljev went in their car.

"You have been back to Kaunas?" I asked Dekanozov, recalling his statement that he had flown into Moscow that morning.

"I had flown to see my family," he replied. "I had hoped to spend a few days with them, but I was suddenly instructed to return. You, Sir, are to blame for that."

We inspected the entire Exposition which interested me little, for I well knew how the Soviet Union's exhibitions are prepared and for what purpose. I was only amused when I saw women's stockings of the "Kotton" firm of Kaunas displayed in the Exposition as the product of White Russia.

At the end, Mr. Dekanozov said that he would like to show me the "seas of Moscow," which Mr. Natkevičius and Mr. Bagdonas had undoubtedly seen many times and would therefore be uninteresting to them.

We understood that Mr. Dekanozov wished to speak privately with me. Mr. Natkevičius and Mr. Bagdonas left for home, while I seated myself in Dekanozov's car, and we set out to admire the "seas of Moscow." Mr. Vasiljev was also with us.

When we reached the port Mr. Dekanozov disappeared somewhere. The installations of the port and later the sluices were shown and explained to me by Mr. Vasiljev. He was very courteous and spoke in a quiet, monotonous voice. While explaining he kept glancing into my eyes as if to determine whether I had understood.

After inspecting the sluices we returned to the port. Mr. Dekanozov had reappeared.

"I interrupted your breakfast this morning. Therefore we shall go in here and have a bite to eat," he offered. "I must admit that I am also hungry. What about you?" turning to Semionov.

"I wouldn't mind having something myself," he answered with a smile.

We went not into the main dining room but into a small, private room where an elaborate repast had been prepared, complete with drinks. We seated ourselves and began to eat. When I was offered a drink I replied that my doctor had forbidden it.

"Life is not worth living if one listens to doctors," Dekanozov pointed out, but did not insist. I had suspected that they wished to get me drunk in order to loosen my tongue. We ate in silence. Evidently my companions were hungry indeed, for they ate with gusto and drank much. Having satisfied his hunger, Dekanozov leaned back in his chair.

"Friend Molotov is very displeased with you," he said to me. "I received a scolding."

"Do you think that I am pleased with friend Molotov?" I answered. "Do you know what he told me?"

"I know," he replied. "I already knew what you would hear when you left for Moscow."

"And do you recall, Mr. Dekanozov, what you told me when trying to get me to participate in the government?"

"That was one political situation, this is another," he explained. "Political situations have completely changed."

"Everyone is responsible for his own words, even a politician," I told him. "Who can assure me today that conditions are to blame and not you, deliberately telling me lies."

I saw Dekanozov's face flush, he was greatly offended. Vasiljev also noticed it, and immediately interrupted our conversation, trying to mend the situation.

"Friend Dekanozov is a Georgian, and all Georgians are very frank and sincere people, like friend Stalin. Georgians do not know how to be hypocritical and therefore are sometime harsh," said Vasiljev. "You see, Sir, friend Dekanozov, as well as the entire administrative head (golovka) of our Union, actually is just the executive organ of the Communist Party. The Communist Party rules the Union; it alone makes the decisions which we all must carry out. Neither I, nor friend Dekanozov belong to those who make the decisions. We are all just the blind executors of the Party's decisions, therefore we cannot be

blamed for the Party's motives and change of tactics. Friend Dekanozov was then, as he is now, frank and sincere."

"In other words, today your party is determined to reinstate in its entirety the 'united and indivisible' Russia (edinuju i nedelimuju Rossiju) on the lines of the old czarist empire. It seems that at the sight of food an appetite was born."

"Do not say and do not think such a thing, Sir," cried Dekanozov, leaping from his chair. "We are not concerned with the 'united and indivisible,' but with all humanity, with the proletariat of the entire world. We must gather everything under one red flag,—and we will. This second World War will put all Europe into our hands, like so much ripe fruit. The third World War, which we will not avoid, will give us victory throughout the whole world."

"That is still a question," I said doubtfully. "Friend Molotov himself told me that the United States are seriously thinking of entering this war. On whose side—it's apparent. I doubt that, having won the war, the United States would be disposed to let you bring about a Communist order in all Europe."

"This nation will not fight us for Europe, I can assure you of that," stated Dekanozov. "And they will be even less inclined to fight for the little Baltic States which have no value in their eyes. What! Do you have oil refineries, gold mines? Perhaps they have capital invested in your industry? Or perhaps you are an important market for their products?"

"I shall explain frankly all to you," began Vasiljev in a honeyed tone. "Our leaders are very cautious in their policies. Our party always strives to examine seriously each question that life and circumstances bring forth, and only then does it make the proper decisions. It is our custom to become well acquainted with every country, its people, their ways, customs, and viewpoints, if we foresee that, on one level or another, it will be necessary for us to have dealings with them. I can tell you, Sir, that the Soviet Union has only two real enemies to consider today: Germany and Japan. But Germany will be conquered and trounced without us, and Japan will be crushed. As for the United States of America, in whom you personally, and the diplomats of the Baltic States,—we are well aware,—and the people of these States have so much faith, a faith which is in vain, she forms no problem at all for us. It is true that today this nation gives the impression of being a giant. The thing is that this giant is suffering from an incurable disease. Perhaps you do not know, Sir, that the inhabitant of the United States, no matter who he is, an ordinary laborer or a political leader, neither takes an interest in nor concerns himself with anything but money. Talent, or education, or culture is neither respected nor appreciated there, only the dollar. The dollar is their god, for whom they are ready to sacrifice not only their country's interests, but also the wellbeing and honor of their friends, parents, and even children. But there no one has any understanding of honor, since their only source of honor is that same dollar."

"The people of the United States like to talk of democracy, equality, and liberty, and even boast of these to others. But no one, aside from us, knows that it is a country of vile Nazism and inequality. Those of Anglo-Saxon origin are actually convinced that they alone are worthy people: they alone have the right to govern and dominate, while the rest are but animals fit only for hard labor. Those of German origin, of whom there are a great many, look upon others, not of their nationality, with the contempt so typical of the Germans, and they also have the greatest hatred for the Anglo-Saxons because they refuse to consider them as equals. In other words, all the inhabitants are divided into various national groups, and each group hates and despises some other group."

"Nowhere in the world will you find such sharp class distinction, such blind barriers between one class and another, and still worse, such barriers between the classes and the masses of the people, as in the United States. This class distinction is, of course, based on the dollar. Those who have piled up millions, will have nothing to do with those who, as yet, have no such pile. Those who have hundreds of thousands of dollars will have nothing to do with those who have no hundreds of thousands of dollars. They regard with the greatest disdain those who have less than they, and those who have more than they, with the greatest envy, and refuse to admit either into their sphere."

"On the whole, dollar-hunting (pogonia za dollarom), hate and envy are the basic principles of the social order of the United States. That sort of nation is dangerous to us neither as foe nor friend. Besides, we have no desire, and we shall never have the need for desiring, to be at war with her. But should there be any who dream of going to war against us, we shall know how to prevent the realization of that dream."

"When the time comes, we will destroy that nation from within by the hands of her own citizens . . . With the aid of that all-powerful dollar.

"As for the British, should they see danger in us, I understand very well that they are unable to fight us, and never will be able, alone. We could have had trouble only with Germany, but she will be trampled, and will fall of her own accord into our hands. France is already crushed, and, as a military power, will never recover."

"Moreover, she has belonged to us for a long time," put in Dekanozov. "Fifty thousand Communist teachers have long since been working there in our interests. The new French generations are already ours. We could have seized the government a long time ago, and we will—when the need arises."

"So you see, Sir, there are no such forces in the world today that could prevent our party from gaining power throughout Europe," continued Vasiljev. "Now you yourself must understand, Sir, why our party's aims have changed in regard to the Baltic States. Their incorporation, and therefore Lithuania's, in the Soviet Union is one of the first steps toward those aims. Our party can delay no longer, for such favorable circumstances might not repeat themselves. We wish that these first steps be taken without any disturbance. Latvia and Estonia cause us no concern, but your country is an entirely different case. Lithuania is a Catholic country, her inhabitants, her entire populace, are fanatically opposed to the aims of the party, and so we must be extremely careful. Friend Molotov knows that your people, especially the younger generation, have faith in you, therefore he wishes that you remain in the Government until your country is incorporated into the family of the Soviet Union. Your resignation at this time would be rather hard for us to explain to the people."

"Or we would have to explain your resignation in a way that would be unpleasant for you," threatened Dekanozov. "You would be doing the wisest thing if you would join the Party."

"This would please us very much, and we would try not to bother you with the usual formalities connected with joining the Party," added Vasiljev. "But the decision, of course, is up to you. I must also say that friend Molotov has further instructed us to request that his as well as our conversations with you remain confidential, and that there be no reports on this subject, either in public or at a Cabinet meeting, since these conversations took place on the basis of mutual trust."

I replied that I shall have to think about what action I shall have to take in this situation. "I shall not conceal the fact that I shall act in the best interests of my country."

"To influence the people favorably toward our aims is in the best interests of your country," stated Mr. Dekanozov.

Thus our conversation ended. They drove me back to our legation. I related this conversation to Mr. Natkevičius, and we immediately put it down in writing (Pro Memoria).

(signed) Dr. VINCAS KREVE MICKEVICIUS

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

My Commission Expires Jan. 7, 1951.

Sworn and subscribed to before me this 15th day of Sept. 1950.

(signed) CAROLINE M. GROTY, Notary Public.

APPENDIX B¹

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE FIRST SOVIET OCCUPATION OF LITHUANIA, 1940-41

1. MOSCOW INSTRUCTIONS ON DEPORTATIONS, ORDER NO. 001223

Strictly Secret.

INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING THE MANNER OF CONDUCTING THE DEPORTATION OF THE ANTI-SOVIET ELEMENTS FROM LITHUANIA, LATVIA AND ESTONIA

1. GENERAL SITUATION

The deportation of anti-Soviet elements from the Baltic States is a task of great political importance. Its successful execution depends upon the extent to which the county operative triumvirates and operative headquarters are capable of carefully working out a plan for executing the operations and of foreseeing in advance all indispensable factors. Moreover, the basic premise is that the operations should be conducted without noise and panic, so as not to permit any demonstrations and other excesses not only by the deportees, but also by a certain part of the surrounding population inimically inclined toward the Soviet administration.

Instructions regarding the manner of conducting the operations are described below. They should be adhered to, but in individual cases the collaborators conducting the operations may and should, depending upon the peculiarity of the concrete circumstances of the operations and in order to evaluate correctly the situation, make different decisions for the same purpose, viz., to execute the task given them without noise and panic.

2. MANNER OF ISSUING INSTRUCTIONS

The instructing of operative groups should be done by the county triumvirates within as short a time as possible on the day before the beginning of the operations, taking into consideration the time necessary for traveling to the place of operations.

The county triumvirates previously prepare necessary transportation for transferring the operative groups to the villages in the locale of operations.

In regard to the question of allotting the necessary number of automobiles and wagons for transportation, the county triumvirates will consult the leaders of the Soviet party organizations on the spot.

Premises in which to issue instructions must be carefully prepared in advance, and their capacity, exits, entrances and the possibility of strangers entering must be taken into consideration.

During the time instructions are issued the building must be securely guarded by the administrative workers.

In case anyone among these participating in the operations should fail to appear for instructions, the county triumvirate should immediately take measures to substitute the absentee from a reserve force, which should be provided in advance.

The triumvirate through its representative should notify the officers gathered of the decision of the government to deport an accounted for contingent of anti-Soviet elements from the territory of the respective republic or region. Moreover, a brief explanation should be given as to what the deportees represent.

¹ Copies of the original Lithuanian and Russian texts of these documents are deposited in the archives of the Lithuanian-American Information Center, 233 Broadway, New York 7, N. Y. Photostatic copies are deposited in the law library of the Library of Congress.

English translations of these documents have been made by the Lithuanian-American Information Center.

Special attention of the (local) Soviet-party workers gathered for instructions should be drawn to the fact that the deportees are enemies of the Soviet people and that, therefore, the possibility of an armed attack on the part of the deportees is not excluded.

3. MANNER OF OBTAINING DOCUMENTS

After the issuance of general instructions to the operative groups, they should definitely be issued documents regarding the deportees. Personal files of the deportees must be previously discussed and settled by the operative groups of townships and villages, so that there are no obstacles in issuing them.

After receiving the personal files, the senior member of the operative group acquaints himself with the personal files of the family which he will have to deport. He must check the number of persons in the family, the supply of necessary forms to be filled out by the deportee, and transportation for moving the deportee, and he should receive exhaustive answers to questions not clear to him.

At the time when the files are issued, the county triumvirate must explain to each senior member of the operative group where the deported family is to be settled and describe the route to be taken to the place of deportation. Routes to be taken by the administrative personnel with the deported families to the railway station for embarkation must also be fixed. It is also necessary to point out places where reserve military groups are placed in case it should become necessary to call them out during possible excesses.

Possession and state of arms and ammunition must be checked throughout the whole operative personnel. Weapons must be completely ready for battle, loaded, but the cartridge should not be kept in the chamber. Weapons should be used only as a last resort, when the operative group is attacked or threatened with an attack, or when resistance is shown.

4. MANNER OF EXECUTING DEPORTATION

Should a number of families be deported from one spot, one of the operative workers is appointed senior in regard to deportation from the village, and his orders are to be obeyed by the operative personnel in that village.

Having arrived in the village, the operative groups must get in touch (observing the necessary secrecy) with the local authorities: chairman, secretary or members of the village soviets, and should ascertain from them the exact dwelling of the families to be deported. After that the operative groups together with the local authorities go to the families to be banished.

The operation should be commenced at daybreak. Upon entering the home of the person to be banished, the senior member of the operative group should gather the entire family of the deportee into one room, taking all necessary precautionary measures against any possible excesses.

After having checked the members of the family against the list, the location of those absent and the number of persons sick should be ascertained, after which they should be called upon to give up their weapons. Regardless of whether weapons are surrendered or not, the deportee should be personally searched and then the entire premises should be searched in order to uncover weapons.

During the search of the premises one of the members of the operative group should be left on guard over the deportees.

Should the search disclose hidden weapons in small numbers, they should be collected by and distributed among the operative group. Should many weapons be discovered, they should be piled into the wagon or automobile which brought the operating group, after the locks have been removed. Ammunition should be packed and loaded together with rifles.

If necessary, a convoy for transporting the weapons should be mobilized with an adequate guard.

Should weapons, counter-revolutionary pamphlets, literature, foreign currency, large quantities of valuables, etc. be disclosed, a short search act should be drawn up on the spot, which should describe the hidden weapons or counter-revolutionary literature. Should there be any armed resistance, the question of arresting the persons showing armed resistance and of sending them to the county branch of the People's Commissariat of Public Security should be decided by the county triumvirates.

An act should be drawn up regarding those deportees hiding themselves before the deportation or sick, and this act should be signed by the chairman of the Soviet-party organization.

After the search the deportees should be notified that upon the decision of the Government they are being banished to other regions of the Union.

The deportees are permitted to take with them household necessities of not more than 100 kilograms in weight.

1. Suit
2. Shoes
3. Underwear
4. Bed linen
5. Dishes
6. Glasses
7. Kitchen utensils
8. Food—an estimated month's supply to a family
9. The money at their disposal
10. Haversack or box in which to pack the articles.

It is recommended that large articles be taken.

Should the contingent be deported to rural districts, they are permitted to take with them a small agricultural inventory: axes, saws and other articles, which should be tied together and packed separately from other articles, so that when embarking on the deportation train they are loaded into special freight cars.

In order not to mix them with articles belonging to others, the name, father's name, and village of the deportee should be written on his packed property.

When loading these articles into the carts, measures should be taken so that the deportee cannot use them as means of resistance while the column is moving along the highway.

At the time of loading, the operative groups together with representatives of the Soviet-party organizations shall prepare a list of the property and the manner in which it is to be preserved in accordance with instructions received by them.

If the deportee has at his own disposal means of transportation, his property is loaded into the vehicle and together with his family is sent to the designated point of embarkation.

If the deportees do not have their own means of transportation, wagons are mobilized in the village by the local authorities upon directives of the senior member of the administrative group.

All persons entering the home of the deportees during the execution of the operations or found there at the moment when these operations are begun must be detained until the conclusion of the operations, and their relationship to the deportee should be ascertained. This is done in order to disclose policemen, military police and other persons hiding from investigation.

Having checked the detained persons and ascertained that they are persons in whom the contingent is not interested, they are liberated.

Should the inhabitants of the village begin to gather around the home of the deportee during the operations, they should be called upon to disperse to their homes, and crowds should not be permitted to be formed.

Should the deportee refuse to open the door of his home in spite of the fact that he is aware that members of the People's Commissariat of Public Security are there, the door should be broken down. In individual cases neighboring operative groups performing operations in that vicinity should be called upon to assist.

The conveyance of the deportees from the villages to the gathering place at the railway station should by all means be done in daylight; moreover, efforts should be made that the gathering of each family should take not more than two hours.

In all cases throughout the operations firm and decisive action should be taken, without the slightest pomposity, noise and panic.

It is categorically forbidden to take any articles away from the deportees—except weapons, counter-revolutionary literature and foreign currency—or to use the food of the deportees.

All members of the operations must be warned that they will be held strictly responsible for attempts to appropriate individual articles belonging to the deportees.

5. MANNER OF SEPARATING DEPORTEE FROM HIS FAMILY

In view of the fact that a large number of the deportees must be arrested and placed in special camps and their families settled at special points in distant regions, it is necessary to execute the operation of deporting both the

members of his family as well as the deportee simultaneously, without informing them of the separation confronting them. After having made the search and drawn up the necessary documents for identification in the home of the deportee, the administrative worker shall draw up documents for the head of the family and place them in his personal file, but the documents drawn up for the members of his family should be placed in the personal file of the deportee's family.

The moving of the entire family, however, to the station should be done in one vehicle, and only at the station should the head of the family be placed separately from his family in a railway car specially intended for heads of families.

While gathering together the family in the home of the deportee, the head of the family should be warned that personal male articles are to be packed into a separate suitcase, as a sanitary inspection will be made of the deported men separately from the women and children.

At the stations the possessions of heads of families subject to arrest should be loaded into railway cars assigned to them, which will be designated by special operative workers appointed for that purpose.

6. MANNER OF CONVOYING THE DEPORTEES

It is strictly prohibited for the operatives conveying the vehicle-moved column of deportees to sit in the wagons of the deportees. The operatives must follow by the side and at the rear of the column of deportees. The senior operator of the convoy should periodically go around the entire column to check the correctness of movement.

The convoy must act particularly carefully in conducting the column of deportees through inhabited spots as well as in meeting passers-by; they should see that there are no attempts made to escape, and no exchange of words should be permitted between the deportees and passers-by.

7. MANNER OF EMBARKING

At each point of embarkation the members of the operative triumvirate and a person specially appointed for that purpose shall be responsible for the embarkation.

On the day of the operations the chief of the point of embarkation together with the chief of the echelon and of the conveying military forces of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs shall examine the railway cars furnished to see whether they are supplied with all necessities—(bunks, bed pans, lanterns, railings, etc.) and shall discuss with the commander of the echelon the manner in which the latter will take over the deportees.

Embarkation station shall be encircled by the soldiers of the conveying troops of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs.

The senior member of the operative group shall deliver to the commander of the echelon one copy of the list of deportees in each railway car. The commander of the echelon thereupon shall call out the deportees according to this roll and shall carefully check each family and designate their place in the railway car.

The possessions of the deportees should be loaded into the car together with the deportees, with the exception of the small agricultural inventory, which should be loaded into a separate car.

The deportees shall be loaded into railway cars by families; it is not permitted to break up a family (with the exception of heads of families subject to arrest). An estimate of 25 persons to a car should be observed.

After the railway car has been filled with the necessary number of families, it should be locked.

After the people have been taken over and loaded in the echelon train, the commander of the train shall bear responsibility for all the persons turned over to him for their reaching the destination.

After turning over the deportees the senior member of the operative group shall draw up a report to the effect that he has performed the operations entrusted to him and address the report to the chief of the county operative triumvirate. The report should briefly contain the name of the deportee, whether any weapons and counter-revolutionary literature were discovered, and how the operations ran.

Having placed the deportees on the echelon of deportees and submitted reports of the results of the operations performed, members of the operative group shall

be considered free and shall act in accordance with the instructions of the chief of the county branch of the People's Commissariat of Public Security.

DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR OF STATE SECURITY OF THE U. S. S. R.
Commissar of State Security of the Third Rank

Correct: (signed) MASHKIN _____ Signed: (SEROV).

2. THE PREPARATORY PLAN FOR THE LIQUIDATION OF IMPORTANT PERSONNEL BELONGING TO "ANTI-STATE" PARTIES IN LITHUANIA, DATED JULY 7, 1940

Translation :

Strictly Secret

Confirmed
(signed) A. SNIE KUS
Director of State Security Department
7th day of July, 1940.

PLAN OF THE PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES OF LIQUIDATION AND OPERATIVE LIQUIDATION OF THE LEADING PERSONNEL OF ANTI-STATE PARTIES: NATIONALISTS, VOLDEMARISTS, POPULISTS, CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, YOUNG LITHUANIANS, TROTSKYISTS, SOCIALDEMOCRATS, ESSERS (SOCIALIST REVOLUTIONARIES), NATIONAL GUARDSMEN AND OTHERS

The operation is to be effected simultaneously in all of Lithuania, the night of July 11 to 12, 1940.

Prior to July 10th, information is to be prepared regarding all people who must be isolated. In the "index cards" of all detainable people must be indicated the surname, name, father's name, year and place of birth, nationality, education, social origin, material situation /property/, the last place of employment and position, party membership and party work performed, a short summary of the compromising material, and at the end of the "index card" must be indicated the *verified* address of the place of permanent residence. If residing /or owning/ a summer house, include the address of the summer house, and the home telephone number.

Five groups of 1 to 4 persons each are to be made up of the operative personnel of the First Division and Kaunas Circuit workers to prepare the indicated "index cards." The work is to be distributed among them in the following manner:

First group—4 persons—prepares "index cards" for the leading membership of the Nationalists. The group's leader—Krastin.

Second group—2 persons—prepares "index cards" for the leading membership of the Voldemarists. The group's leader—Dembo.

Third group—1 person—Finkelstein, prepares "index cards" of Trotskyists and Essers.

Fourth group—4 persons—prepares "index cards" for Christian Democrats. The group's leader—Komodos.

Fifth group—3 persons—prepares "index cards" for Populists and Socialdemocrats. The group's leader—Macevičius.

Responsibility for the timely submission of the above indicated "index cards" is borne by Todes, chief of the First Division.

Gailevičius, chief of the II Division, must arrange for the timely established and verified addresses of the detainable persons. For this purpose, from July 8th an appropriate number of scouts must be detailed, who must be diligently briefed (instructed) regarding the retention of strictest caution during the work of establishment and verification of the addresses.

For the execution of these operations before the 10th of July must be organized a number of active groups, headed by capable workers. What persons are to be arrested by each group must be settled in advance. In order to strengthen the active groups, the required numbers of officers from the Crime Department and civil policemen must be mobilized. Their chiefs must be made acquainted with the operation beforehand; but they must not be told for what purpose these officers are to be mobilized. Executive: Zdanavicius.

For a smooth and successful execution of the action there shall be issued a special instruction on searches and arrests, and the instruction is to be delivered to the leaders of the groups in the evening before the actions begin. Executive: Gailevicius.

In order to provide the active groups with means of communications, prior to the day of action 30 motor cars must be in readiness. Executive: Snieckus.

In case of necessity to put rooms and flats under seal in the process of operations, the chief of the Police Office, Slavin, has to order 10 seals for wax and these seals must be ready before the 9th of July. For that date Slavin must provide 20 picket lanterns.

For the successful execution of the operations and for securing effective assistance on the spot, operative workers must be sent from Kaunas to the following places:

1) to Vilnius.....	8 men
2) to Siauliai.....	1 man
3) to Ukmerge.....	1 man
4) to Mariampole.....	1 man
5) to Panevezys.....	1 man

The chiefs of all Branches and of the Kaunas District must deliver to the Secretary of the State Security Department full lists of all employees at their Branches, before the 8th of July. Executive: Slavin.

The chief of the Investigation Branch, Razauskas, is to be charged with the duty of preparing before the 10th of July all necessary orders according to lists, put up by the groups in charge.

When the "Information" necessary for arresting the leading persons of the anti-State parties is ready, it must be checked with that in possession of the Minister for the Interior, Gedvilas. Executive: Snieckus.

The chief of the Investigation Branch, Razauskas, with the chief of the Kaunas Prison, Kucinskas, shall organize the housing of arrested persons and articles and documents taken in the course of searches.

In order to ensure strict isolation of persons to be arrested, care must be taken which persons should be located into which cells. They must be classified so that persons indicted on similar charges are not put into the same cells.

For the imprisonment of persons arrested, up to the 11th of July must be emptied the necessary number of cells in the Kaunas Prison, bearing in mind that there would be 200 arrests. For the same date a detachment of proved cell-inspectors must be found.

The chief of the prison, Kucinskas, must see that the prison guards are strengthened from the date of July 12th.

A special group of trial officers (law officers who conduct the preliminary part of a trial) shall be selected, and this group must be charged with the duty of starting at once, the arrests being concluded, with the trial of especially noted persons, the leading staff of the anti-State parties. Executive: Razauskas.

Outside pursuit of specially distinguished enemies of the State must be organized, beginning on July 9th up to the date of their arrest. For that purpose the chief of the 2nd Branch must organize eight local sentry stations.

From July 9th a conference of district chiefs must be convened; they are to hand in their ready material in order to compare the lists of candidates for imprisonment, and they must be given instructions on executing the whole operation. Responsible Snieckus.

At the conference of the district chiefs must be settled in advance who of the arrested persons, after local action, are to be sent to Kaunas and to Vilnius. Executive: Snieckus.

Considering the eventuality that persons who are to be arrested or such as are not yet on the lists, will be attempting to cross the State boundaries, an agreement with the frontier Army must be made in order to fortify the boundary guards from July 8th and to close the frontiers from July 11th to the 16th.

The action of isolating persons to be arrested among the Polish fugitives must begin on July 8th.

All active workers and policemen, who are to take part in the execution of the scheme, must be provided with firearms. Those who are not versed in the use of firearms, must be given special instructions, two academic hours each day, from July 9th to 10th, followed by an excursion to the drill-ground. Executive: Zdanavicius.

This plan must be carried out minutely and energetically. The Director or his deputy, however, considering eventualities, may change or supplement certain points.

JULY 7TH, 1940.

The plan prepared by

ZDANAVICIUS
Chief of State Security Police.

3. LETTER OF MECYS GEDVILA, MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR OF LITHUANIA TO PRESIDENT JUSTAS PALECKIS, ON JULY 16, 1940

TO MR. PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC :

For reasons of State security, I hold that it is necessary to deport from the territory of Lithuania, as persons dangerous to the Lithuanian State, and to settle in the Soviet Union, the former Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania, A. Merkys, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Urbšys, together with their families.

Mr. President, I ask for your consent.

(signed) M. GEDVILA
Minister of Internal Affairs

KAUNAS, 16th July 1940.

I confirm and consent.

(signed) J. PALECKIS
President of the Republic

KAUNAS, 16th July 1940.

4. NEGLIGENCE IN ACCOUNTING OF THE ANTI-SOVIET ELEMENTS; AND AN ORDER TO CARRY OUT ORDER NO. 001223 OF THE NKVD

Strictly Secret

ORDER² OF THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR FOR THE INTERIOR OF LITHUANIAN SSR OF YEAR 1940

Contents: About negligence in accounting concerning anti-soviet and socially alien element.

No. 0054

KAUNAS, November 28th, 1940.

In connection with the great pollution of the republic of Lithuania with the anti-soviet and socially alien element, the account concerning same acquires an especially great importance.

For the operative work it is important to know how many former policemen, white guardsmen, former officers, members and the like of anti-Soviet political parties and organizations are in Lithuanian territory, and where the said element is concentrated.

This is necessary in order to define the strength of the counter-revolution and to direct our operative-agencies apparatus for its digestion and liquidation.

Despite the importance of keeping all such accounts, our operative organs did not seriously undertake this work.

The materials cleared by the agencies-investigative apparatus remain scattered in the cabinets of operative collaborators without proper usage.

Executing the order No. 001223 of NKVD of the USSR about the accounting concerning the anti-soviet element and concerning the liquidation of negligence in this work.

I ORDER

1. Chiefs of operative branches of the Center and of county branches and units to take over within 3 days all files and cases entered on the account of 1st Spec(ial) division—the formulars and persons mentioned therein.

2. Within 10 days to take over into the 1st Specdivision all anti-soviet listed in the alphabetical files (index accounting).

² Taken from Lithuanian Archives—1, 19).

3. At the same time to undertake clarification of all anti-soviet and socially alien element on the territory of the republic of Lithuania and to transfer same to the jurisdiction of operative account of 1st Specdivision.

4. The accounts of persons mentioned in agency files, also in the alphabetical files (index accounting), to be concentrated in the Specdivision of NKVD of LSSR, for which purpose special cards must be filled in concerning each transferred person by the county branches and units of NKVD and by the City Council of Vilnius, and said cards must be mailed to the 1st Specdivision of NKVD of the LSSR.

5. The index account must cover all those persons who by reason of their social and political past, national-chauvinistic opinions, religious convictions, moral and political inconstance, are opposed to the socialist order and thus might be used by the intelligence services of foreign countries and by the counter-revolutionary centers for anti-soviet purposes.

These elements include:

a) All former members of anti-soviet political parties, organizations and groups: trotskysts, rightists, essers (socialist revolutionists), mensheviks, social democrats, anarchists, and the like;

b) All former members of national chauvinistic anti-soviet parties, organizations and groups: nationalists, Young Lithuania, voldemarists, populists, christian democrats, members of nationalist terroristic organizations ("Iron Wolf"), active members of student fraternities, active members of Rifemen's Association, Catholic terrorist organization "White Horse";

c) Former gendarmes, policemen, former employees of political and criminal police and of the prisons;

d) Former officers of the czar, Petliura and other armies;

e) Former officers and members of military courts of the armies of Lithuania and Poland;

f) Former polit(ical) bandits and volunteers of the white and other armies;

g) Persons expelled from the Communist Party and Comm-youth for anti-party offences;

h) All deserters, polit(ical) emigrants, re-emigrants, repatriates and contrabandists;

i) All citizens of foreign countries, representatives of foreign firms, employees of offices of foreign countries, former citizens of foreign countries, former employees of legations, firms, concessions and stock companies of foreign countries;

j) Persons having personal contacts and maintaining correspondence abroad, with foreign legations and consulates, esperantists and philatelists;

k) Former employees of the departments of ministries (from referents up);

l) Former workers of the Red Cross and Polish refugees;

m) Religionists (priests, pastors), sectants and active religionists of religious communities;

n) Former noblemen, estate owners, merchants, bankers, commercialists (who availed themselves of hired labor), shop owners, owners of hotels and restaurants.

6. For preparation of index accounts of anti-soviet elements all sources must be availed of, including: agencies' reports, special investigative materials, materials of party and soviet organizations, statements of citizens, testimony of the arrested persons, and other data. As a rule, statements, testimony and other official materials must first be verified in an agency manner.

7. Operative branches and county branches and units must prepare separate rosters for accountable persons who had departed elsewhere, and must take steps to clarify same. At the same time, cards of sought persons must be filled in and transferred to the 1st Specdivision.

8. Files-formulars must be introduced and transferred into active agency account concerning the former activists of anti-soviet polit-parties and organizations (trotskysts, mensheviks, essers, nationalist associations and the like), counter-revolutionary authorities of religionists (priests, mullas, pastors), responsible collaborators of police, ministries, foreign firms and the like, in accordance with available material about anti-soviet activity.

9. Chiefs of 1st Specdivision of NKVD of the LSSR are to report to me every day about the progress of this order.

10. The order is to be discussed in operative consultations and concrete means for its execution are to be provided for.

(Signed) GUZEVICIUS

People's Commissar for the Interior of Lithuanian SSR

The copy is authentic.
(Signature illegible)

[Note by translator:]

Above document No. 0054 mentions "Executing order No. 001223 of the NKVD of the USSR about the accounting concerning the anti-Soviet element and concerning the liquidation of negligence in this work . . ." It is evident that Order No. 001223 paved the way for the mass arrests and deportations of June 13-14, 1940.

A later order printed here, Order 0023 states "existence of a large contingent of persons, subject to operative accounting under Order 001223 of the NKVD of the USSR date 11th, October, 1939." It appears that Moscow Headquarters of the NKVD had issued its first order directing the preparations for mass liquidation of "the anti-Soviet and anti-social elements" of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania on the next day following the signing of the Non-aggression and Mutual Assistance Pact with Lithuania. That Pact was signed October 10, 1940.

5. DETAILED MEMORANDUM REGARDING COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY LEAFLETS WHICH WERE BEING DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY OF THE LITHUANIAN SSR

No. 2/1504 of 14 April 1941.

AA—4 copies

To—comrade FEDOTOV, State Security Commissar of Third Rank, Commander of the Section 2 of the GUGB (All-Union Board of State Security) of the NKVD of the USSR, City of Moscow.

DETAILED MEMORANDUM REGARDING COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY LEAFLETS SPREADING ON THE TERRITORY OF THE LITHUANIAN SSR

From the moment of the establishment of Soviet rule in Lithuania, the counter-revolutionary nationalist element developed an active anti-Soviet activity, choosing as the basic method of its hostile subversive work, the distribution of counter-revolutionary leaflets and anonymous papers.

In the main, the leaflets called for the overthrow of the Soviet government, the sabotage, the boycott of the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, spread angry lies regarding the Party and government leaders, and disseminated provocative rumors of a "coming war of the USSR with Germany," etc.

Mass dissemination of counter-revolutionary leaflets took place in all of the counties of the Lithuanian SSR.

The authors and disseminators of anti-Soviet leaflets and anonymous letters, who had been exposed in a number of instances, appeared to be members of the counter-revolutionary formations among former members of the anti-Soviet political parties and organizations, nationalistic school youths and (university) students.

Most actively, and on a mass scale, the leaflets were distributed by the hostile element during the period of preparation for the elections into the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

We cite the facts of dissemination of counter-revolutionary leaflets by individual counties of the Lithuanian SSR, from the moment of the establishment of a Soviet form of government to January 15, 1941:

IN THE CITY OF KAUNAS:

Beginning with September 1940, handwritten and multigraphed anti-Soviet leaflets began to appear systematically on the streets of the city of Kaunas, in the educational institutions, under the slogan:

"Long live independent Lithuania"

"Down with the communist terror"

"Lithuania for the Lithuanians"

etc.; up to 50 pieces of such leaflets were disclosed.

In consequence of the undertaken agency-operative measures, an anti-Soviet organization was exposed and liquidated. Its membership consisted of students of the secondary schools who called themselves "LNP"—"Lithuanian Independence Party," which maintained ties with organized groups in the secondary schools (gymnasia) of Kaunas, Vilnius, Ukmergė and other cities of the USSR, where to the counter-revolutionary leaflets were directed and where they were disseminated.

26 persons, active members of the organization, were arrested in the case.

Among the arrested persons were:

1. *Henrikas BLIUMENTALIS*—student, born in 1924, German, son of a lawyer, member of the "Kulturverband."
2. *Vytautas SVILAS*—student of the VIII Class, born in 1925, Lithuanian, son of the director of a department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Lithuania.
3. *Romualdas BORTKEVIČUS*—student of the III Course of the Superior Technical School, 18 years old, son of a peasant.
4. *Zigmas KAULAKIS*—student of the VIII Class of the secondary school, born in 1925, Lithuanian, from a family of intellectuals, son of a building proprietor.
5. *Eduardas BOKAS*—student of the VIII Class, born in 1925, Lithuanian, son of a civil servant.
6. *Eugenijus MACIEJŪNAS*—student, born in 1924, Lithuanian, son of an officer of the Lithuanian army.
7. *Julius BANDŽIUS*—student, born in 1925, son of an officer of the Lithuanian Army.
8. *Aras GINTAUTAS*—student, born in 1923, Lithuanian, son of an officer of the Lithuanian Army. And others.

We reported this case to you in detail, by No. 1215 of 12 November 1940.

During the period from October to the date of the elections in the city of Kaunas, anti-Soviet leaflets were distributed, addressed "To the Lithuanians," "To the Farmers," and an illegal counter-revolutionary newspaper "*Laisvoji Lietuva*" (Free Lithuania); these made their appearance on various dates in single pieces. The leaflets were typewritten and handwritten, and were multiplied by rotator or mimeograph. "*Laisvoji Lietuva*" was multiplied by rotator.

In pre-election days, the contents of these leaflets especially propagandized a boycott of the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

On 10 and 11 January 1941, we practically completed the agency-study of the file "Vrag" (The Enemy), which dissected the authors and disseminators of the counter-revolutionary newspaper, "*Laisvoji Lietuva*."

Arrested in the case were:

Povilas MALINAUSKAS—born in 1910, Lithuanian, employee of the telegraph agency "*Elta*," former National Guardsman.

Kostas SIPKAUSKAS—born in 1914, Lithuanian, employee of the "Žaibas" typography, former member of the Catholic youth organization "Pavasaris."

Vladas TELKSNYS—born in 1915, Lithuania, employee of the "Žaibas" typography, former member of the Catholic organization "Pavasaris."

Jonas JABLONSKIS—born in 1906, Lithuanian, former secretary of the Lithuanian Legations in Stockholm and Berlin, lately employed as editor of "*Elta*," telegraphic press agency of Lithuania. From a scientist's family.

During the search of MALINAUSKAS at the place of his employment, the following materials were found and seized:

- 1) 14 copies of the illegal anti-Soviet newspaper, "*Laisvoji Lietuva*."
- 2) 66 copies of anti-Soviet leaflets, including "*Litovets*" (The Lithuanian, in Russian), which had been disseminated earlier.
- 3) 40 copies of the bulletin of the organization "*Laisvosios Lietuvos Sąjunga*" (Association for a Free Lithuania).
- 4) 75 combat cartridges for a "*Parabellum*" pistol.

During the search of the private quarters of MALINAUSKAS, the following was found and seized:

- 1) A pistol of the "*Parabellum*" system, two clips for it and 72 combat cartridges.

2) A rotator, on which the counter-revolutionary newspaper "*Laisvoji Lietuva*" and counter-revolutionary leaflets were printed.

3) Two packages of wax and three packages of rotator paper.

It was established in the course of the investigation that this counter-revolutionary organization, calling itself—"Movement for a Free Lithuania"—"*Laisvosios Lietuvos Sajunga*," manufactured and disseminated only one issue—500 copies of the issue No. 1 of the newspaper "*Laisvoji Lietuva*," and several hundred counter-revolutionary leaflets.

/Two copies of the newspaper, the leaflets and photographs are enclosed with the packet pertaining to the city of Kaunas./

We informed you of this case in detail, by No. 1/186 of 24 January 1941

During the months of December and January, an anti-Soviet leaflet was disseminated in the University of Kaunas. It was mimeographed and directed "*To Lithuanian Men and Women Students*,"—signed: "*Association of Lithuanian Activists of the 'Partizanas' Branch of Kaunas*." In addition thereto, counter-revolutionary leaflets under the slogan of "*Lithuanians, we shall not surrender to the Moscovites*," unsigned, multiplied by rotator, were disseminated. Both leaflets appeared in small quantities, up to 10 pieces. Distributors of the latter leaflet were not exposed.

/An original leaflet and translation are enclosed, see the packet pertaining to the city of Kaunas./

At 22 o'clock on 16 February 1941, during the attempt of the nationalistic studentry and high school youths to organize an anti-Soviet demonstration in front of the monument to the unknown soldier in Kaunas, our previously decoded secrets enabled us to detain 10 persons, university and high school students, at the very beginning of the assembly (the demonstration was prevented).

The arrestee ——— during the interrogation admitted that he is a member of a counter-revolutionary organization, "*Association of Lithuanian Activists-Guerrillas*," active in the university of Kaunas which possesses a rotator and a mimeograph machine, publishes and prints counter-revolutionary leaflets signed—"Association of Lithuanian Activists-Guerrillas," which had been exposed previously.

In the light of the testimony of ———, 5 students are being investigated.

The case of ——— was agency-listed, an agency file entitled "*The Mutineers*" was started.

Simultaneously, an anti-Soviet newspaper, "*The Forbidden Idea*," was disseminated in secondary schools. In consequence of the undertaken measures, the anti-Soviet grouping which printed and disseminated this counter-revolutionary newspaper in the city of Kaunas, was exposed and liquidated (see the agency file, "*Organizer*"). "*The Forbidden Idea*" was mimeographed.

The following were arrested in this case:

Stepas LEONAS—born in 1921, Lithuanian, employee of the *Nemunas* shipping office, former Boy Scout leader, from a family of workers.

Aleksandras KANCLYVIS—born in 1910, German, jurist, former 1st Sergeant of the waterways police, from a family of peasants.

Elconora RUTELIONYTĖ—born in 1922, Lithuanian girl, student of the 9th Class, former member of Catholic and Girl Scout organizations, from a family of civil servants.

Feliksas POVILAITIS—born in 1920, seller of the magazine "*Maistas*" in the city of Vilnius.

Mykolas KAMINSKAS—born in 1895, former Nationalist and National Guardsman, employee of the Lithuanian Railroad Board.

A detailed report was submitted to you by No. 1/422 of 9 February 1941.

The following materials were found and seized during the search of the private quarters of LEONAS:

- 1) A mimeograph and necessary materials for the same.
- 2) 14 copies of the anti-Soviet newspaper, "*The Forbidden Idea*."
- 3) Anti-Soviet manuscripts for the published outlaw newspaper.
- 4) Anti-Soviet books published under the Smetona's government.

Anti-Soviet manuscripts, written by her for the newspaper "*The Forbidden Idea*," were seized from RUTELIONYTĖ.

8 copies of the newspaper were seized from POVILAITIS (he was arrested in Vilnius).

The investigation established that they prepared and disseminated up to 200 copies of the anti-Soviet newspaper, "*The Forbidden Idea*."

/Original newspapers "*The Forbidden Idea*" and photographs are enclosed in the packet pertaining to the city of Kaunas./

IN THE COUNTY OF KAUNAS

Leaflets were distributed in the following sections of the county:

1. **VILKIJA** (township center).

Beginning 14 October 1940, through 15 February 1941, six instances of distribution of counter-revol. leaflets were established, a total of about 600 pieces, which had been copied by hand or printed by rubber printing stamp letters. The majority of the leaflets were signed "SOL" (*Soyuz Osvobodzheniya Litvy*—in Russian, "*League for the Liberation of Lithuania*"). These leaflets are distributed by a group of students of the secondary school, which is being investigated by us in an agency manner.

On 14 February 1941, two members of this group were detained while distributing counter-revol. leaflets. One of the arrested—Vytautas LIEPA, 17, son of a former district chief of the political police, the other—VENCKUS, 20, worker. Both confessed their membership in the counter-revol. youth organization "SOL". They were released following the appropriate operational study.

2. **VELIUONA** Town.

In November 1940, 5 handwritten pieces of counter-revol. leaflets, signed "*The Iron Wolf*," were discovered; the authors are not exposed.

3. **DARSŪNIŠKIS** Town, Pakuonis township.

Handwritten counter-revol. leaflets, signed "LGR" (*The Circle of Liberation of Lithuania*), were discovered on 11 January 1941.

On 16 February 1941, two members of this circle were detained while distributing counter-revol. leaflets. One of them—Antanas LAPINSKAS, 25, former National Guardsman, a non-commissioned officer, author of the leaflets, was held by us. The second—Pranas VADVILAVIČIUS, 17, of a peasant family, was released.

4. **PAKUONIS** Town.

Five leaflets signed "LGR" (*Circle of Liberation of Lithuania*) were discovered. It was established that the aforesaid leaflets were identical with the leaflets disseminated in Darsūniškis.

5. **SEREDZIUS** Town, Vilkijo Township.

3 handwritten unsigned leaflets were discovered in January; their authors and distributors were not exposed.

/We enclose the original anti-Soviet leaflets in the packet pertaining to the county of Kaunas./

CITY AND COUNTY OF VILNIUS

During the initial period of existence of the Soviet government in Lithuania, dissemination of anti-Soviet leaflets in the city of Vilnius bore the earmarks of mass production. Subsequently, in connection with the arrests of a number of members of the counter-revolutionary organizations and other anti-Soviet elements, the dissemination abated somewhat. In the last few days, distribution of anti-Soviet leaflets in the Polish language gained again.

Anti-Soviet leaflets in the city of Vilnius are disseminated, in the main, by Polish anti-Soviet organizations, mostly among the student body. There are also instances of dissemination of leaflets in the Lithuanian language, and individual instances in Jewish by Zionist organizations.

Judging by the contents of the counter-revol. leaflets, a series of parallel Polish and Lithuanian organizations undeniably exist in the city of Vilnius, and each one of them publishes independently its own anti-Soviet leaflets, proclamations, and appeals. This supposition is confirmed by the testimony of a number of the arrested members of the counter-revol. organizations.

Counter-revolutionary leaflets are disseminated among the population of the city of Vilnius by various methods, for instance: they are mailed in sealed envelopes to specific addresses of individuals and institutions; are left lying in the hallways of residential homes, etc. There were instances of receipt of such

counter-revol. leaflets by a court investigator, the military commandant of the city, and others. Leaflets are also slipped in the clothing of the inhabitants in public places, such as theaters, cinemas and restaurants. All of the unearthed counter-revol. leaflets were printed by mimeographing and plating methods.

According to incomplete data covering the period of the existence of Soviet rule in Lithuania, the City NKVD office received the following number of counter-rev. leaflets, anonymous appeals and leaflets:

1. 28 pieces of the 1940-1941 edition of "*Poland in Combat*." This monthly leaflet, published by a Polish anti-Soviet nationalist organization, was printed by a plating method and was distributed from the moment of the establishment of the Soviet rule in Lithuania. Leaflets were discovered in schools and other places in the city, also—some were received by the agents. These leaflets appeared during the past five months.

2. One piece of an anonymous appeal "*To Polish Youths*" was discovered in December 1940 in the X Gymnasium. The publishing organ is unknown and its author was not exposed. Persons suspected of distribution of this leaflet are presently being investigated by an active agency.

3. Two pieces of leaflets entitled "*Glory to Thee, Youth*" were found. One was found in December 1940 in the hallway of the residence of DAVIDENAS, court's investigator for the 6th District of the City of Vilnius, who delivered it to us immediately upon finding same. The second copy was found at the same time in the IX Gymnasium. These leaflets are published as supplements to an outlaw newspaper, "*The Polish Morning*."

4. Two copies of an anonymous appeal "*To Fellow Countrymen*" were found in November 1940 in the III Gymnasium of the city of Vilnius.

5. An appeal to the Polish youth, calling to wage the struggle against the Soviet rule, a supplement to an outlaw newspaper published by Polish nationalist organizations under the title of "*Poland Tomorrow*," was found in November 1940 in the 1st Trades School.

At the same time, a leaflet entitled "TO PEOPLE OF GOOD WILL—APPEAL FOR HELP FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE CHURCH," was found in that school. The leaflet was typographically printed, published in Vilnius by a counter-revolutionary organization active among the clergy.

6. 21 pieces of anonymous leaflets—appeals "*To Polish Youths*" were distributed in the city in January: 8 copies in the III Gymnasium, one in the IX Gymnasium, one in the VIII Gymnasium, 12 in the I Trades School. The leaflets were of the 1941 edition.

7. 37 copies of leaflets entitled "*For Our Freedom and Yours*," published in Vilnius by a counter-revolutionary Polish organization called "*Association of Free Poles*," were distributed in the city since the establishment of Soviet rule in Lithuania. These leaflets were made by plating process, in Polish, and were most widely scattered. Leaflets bearing the same title are very frequently found even at the present time.

8. Two copies of leaflets entitled "*All-Pole*" (*Wszech-Polak*) were found in the city in January. These leaflets are published in the cities of Warsaw, Poznań, Kraków, Katowice and Lwów since 1940, printed by plating. The leaflets are of a severely anti-Soviet character, appealing to the Poles to fight against the Soviet government.

9. One leaflet entitled "*Poland is not yet lost*" was found in November in the Technicum of the City of Vilnius. The publishing organ is unknown.

10. One copy of a counter-revol. leaflet, "*Under the Freedom's Banner*," was found in the city in January 1941. Such leaflets are published by a Polish counter-revol. organization in the city, printed by plating. One member of this organization, a certain IZMAILOWSKI, a Pole, was exposed in the disseminating counter-revol. leaflets and is being readied for arrest.

11. Instances of dissemination of counter-revol. leaflets in the Polish language had taken place not only in the city, but in certain villages of Vilnius county. For instance, pupils of a village school at Ojrany, Małsiogala township, in November 1940 discovered 7 pieces of anonymous leaflets, handwritten in Polish, entitled "*The Polish Legion*." Measures are being taken to establish the handwriting, by comparing the writing of the element under investigation. In the event of identification of the authors, the latter will be held.

12. In November 1940, in the village of Antokolce of the same township, pupils of the village school reported 3 anti-Soviet leaflets, handwritten in Polish, entitled "*Brothers, take up arms*." The leaflet was signed "*Corporal Jan DEBIŃSKI*." The author is not yet exposed.

13. Analogousonyms were found in November 1940 in the village of Gaišiškes, Maišiogala township, by a local inhabitant. Another anti-Soviet leaflet was found in the same village, penciled in Polish, entitled "*The Legion, the Freedom Party.*" This leaflet was signed "*DEBICKI, Deputy Commander of the Staff in Ojrań.*" Two anonymous handwritten Polish leaflets, entitled "*Rise up, Brothers, to Combat,*" were signed "*Antoni JANKOWSKI.*" The authors and disseminators are not yet exposed.

14. 25 copies of counter-revol. leaflets, mimeographed in the Lithuanian language, entitled "*Lithuanian Army Combatants,*" were found in the city of Vilnius in November 1940. These leaflets appealed to members of the armed forces, Red Army men and commanders of the Lithuanian army, to overthrow the Soviet rule in Lithuania. These leaflets were published by a counter-revolutionary organization operating in the city of Vilnius, the so-called "*Committee for Liberation of Lithuania,*" and were distributed in the areas where military units of the Lithuanian army are stationed.

Investigation of the arrested members of this counter-revol. organization, conducted by the Special Branch of the 29th Rifle Corps, exposed the membership of the insurgent counter-revol. organization in the city of Vilnius, which sought to overthrow the Soviet government in Lithuania and whose members disseminated anti-Soviet leaflets.

Besides the anti-Soviet leaflets spread by Polish and Lithuanian anti-Soviet organizations in the city of Vilnius, Jewish anti-Soviet leaflets were also discovered. For instance: 3 pieces of anti-Soviet leaflets published by Zionist organizations were found in October and November 1940 in the city of Vilnius. One leaflet, entitled "*The Eternal Zionism,*" issue No. 4 dated 23 July 1940; the second, No. 5 of "*Our Rays,*" a bulletin of the Zionist movement in Lithuania; and the third, No. 4 of "*The Truth,*" dated 27 July 1940, all published in the cities of Kaunas and Vilnius. All of them were handwritten and multiplied by mimeographing. Authors are not yet exposed. Instances of dissemination of anti-Soviet leaflets by Jewish organizations were noted in the past two months.

Persons suspected of disseminating anti-Soviet leaflets are taken by us into active agency study. 53 persons directly distributing anti-Soviet leaflets were arrested within this period by the City office of NKVD.

BIENIEŻSKI, a Pole, arrested while distributing counter-revol. leaflets, gave detailed testimony regarding membership of a Polish nationalist organization, called "*The League of the Poles,*" operating in the city of Vilnius since 1939. That year, the organization waged a fight against the Lithuanian government; since the establishment of Soviet rule in Lithuania, the organization undertook a struggle against the latter. In the light of **BIENIEŻSKI's** testimony, 10 members of the organization are under study; they are engaged in dissemination of anti-Soviet leaflets and are being readied for arrest.

Among the persons arrested for disseminating the leaflets, the following quantity of anti-Soviet leaflets was found and seized from 28 persons:

	Pieces
1. Anti-Soviet leaflets " <i>Poland in Combat</i> "-----	149
2. Anti-Soviet leaflets " <i>Men and Women Comrades</i> "-----	2
3. Anti-Soviet leaflets " <i>Under the Red Yoke,</i> " transparencies-----	11
4. Anti-Soviet leaflets " <i>Panowie Bolzewicy</i> " (Gentlemen Bolsheviks)-----	1
5. Anti-Soviet leaflets " <i>From Sea to the Sea</i> "-----	1

During the search and arrest of **BARKOWSKI**, a Pole, the arrested member of the organization, anti-Soviet leaflets disseminated by him in the city of Vilnius were seized, together with his mimeograph machine.

During the search of **NOWICKI**—a member of a counter-revol. Polish organization arrested by us—94 copies of counter-revol. leaflets were found and seized. These were published by a Polish nationalist organization, called "*Poland in Combat.*" Investigation is continuing.

We have taken measures to expose the anti-Soviet organizations operating in the city of Vilnius. The entire apparatus of agents-informers of the City office of NKVD is mobilized for the probing of all lines of work. All persons noted distributing counter-revolutionary leaflets, are immediately detained by us.

We are enclosing herewith the following counter-revol. leaflets and anonyms unearthed in the city and county of Vilnius:

	<i>Pieces</i>
1. "Poland in Combat"-----	3
2. "Glory to Thee, Youth"-----	1
3. "For Our Freedom and Yours"-----	3
4. Appeal "To Fellow Countrymen"-----	1
5. Appeal "To Polish Youths of the City Vilnius"-----	1
6. "Brothers, Take Up Arms"-----	2
7. "The Legion, Freedom Party"-----	2
8. "Brothers, Rise up to Combat"-----	2
9. "Lithuanian Army Combatants"-----	2
10. "The Eternal Zion"-----	2
11. "Our Rays"-----	2
12. "The Truth"-----	2

UKMERGĖ COUNTY

From the moment of the establishment of Soviet rule in Lithuania, to 15 January 1941, counter-revolutionary sheets, leaflets, etc. were discovered in the following sections of the county:

7 October 1940, 3 pieces of paper were found in Želva town, with inscribed slogans: "Down with Communism," "People, Attend Churches, Obey Priests, Be Catholics," "Long Live Smetona," "Finder of this sheet, write 10 more like this," etc. Leaflets were unsigned, 4 x 5 cm. in size.

We suspect the (Catholic) priest and the co-operative's director, who is also the organist. However, samples of their handwriting do not match with the original handwriting of the leaflets. Agency study of persons suspected by us is under way.

The night of 6 to 7 November 1940, a sheet of paper 30 x 20 cm. was found in the city of Ukmergė. Smetona's portrait, clipped from a newspaper, was pasted thereon, with inscriptions: "Long Live Our Leader," "Down with Communism," etc. Students of the I Gymnasium are suspected. The guilty parties are not yet identified.

Two leaflets, each a unikat, were found on 21 and 22 November 1940 in the Normal College and Trades School. The leaflets were handwritten and copied in broken letters. The leaflets were signed "L. A. S." and were anti-Semitic and anti-Soviet in spirit. Students are suspected. The guilty parties are not identified.

Two sheets of paper were found 5 December 1940 in Vepriai town, containing handwritten slogans: "Down with Stalin," "Long Live the Vytyis (the Knight)," "Down with communists-bandits!" The guilty parties are not identified.

The night of 8 to 9 January 1941, on the Deltuva-Šėta highway, 4 leaflets of anti-Soviet contents were found. The leaflets were typewritten and multiplied by mimeograph, and were signed—"Association of Lithuanian Activists-Guerrillas." The leaflet called to combat the Soviet rule, to form a single united anti-communist front, and ended with the motto: "Free and Independent Lithuania."

We suspect that this leaflet was published by a counter-revol. organization operating in the University of Kaunas, for which an agency file "The Mutineers" was initiated.

20 December 1940, in Užulėnis village, Taujėnai township, a handprinted placard of anti-Soviet contents was found.

The night of 5 to 6 January 1941, in Gaigalai village, Pagiris township, 2 pieces of paper were found on the road, containing handwritten anti-election mottoes in ink. Format—one sheet 25 x 35 cm., the other—35 x 40 cm.

11 January 1941, on the Repšiai-Kovarskas road in Kovarskas township, a handwritten leaflet was found tacked to a telephone pole. Its contents: "Dear brothers and sisters of Lithuania! Do not vote for the ragged bums! Down with Stalin's Constitution." The guilty parties are not exposed.

Up to 10 December 1940, during the period of preparations for the election to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, in the city of Ukmergė and in the buildings housing the gymnasia, leaflets of counter-revol. contents were frequently found, printed by primitive methods on hand-made printing machine, with rubber letters.

10 students of the gymnasia were detained in consequence of the undertaken agency-operative measures. They admitted that they had engaged in an organized manner in manufacturing and distributing leaflets of anti-Soviet contents. They had made and distributed more than 500 pieces of various leaflets among the school youths and on the city streets. Some of them were taken into agency account, the rest of the students, of the 14-16 years age group, were released and turned over to their parents.

ROKIŠKIS COUNTY

14 instances of the appearance of anti-Soviet counter-revol. leaflets were noted in Rokiškis county. In most cases, distribution of counter-revol. leaflets was connected with the notable dates—the 23rd anniversary of the Great Socialist October Revolution and elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

1. 7 November 1940, Bonius ZOVĖ, resident of Kunigiškiai village, Svedasai county, found tacked to a pole on the *Kraštai forest highway*, 3 km. from Svedasai, a leaflet of counter-revol. contents, with the words: "Down with Communism. Long Live Free Lithuania." The leaflet was handmade, with colored blue pencil, on water-marked paper. The undertaken investigation did not identify the guilty party.

2. 8 November 1940, in the area of *Rokiškis railroad station*, a counter-revol. leaflet was found on the ground, with a picture depicting a violent counter-revol. attack on the leaders of the Party and the Soviet government. We suspect Vladas STALENIS, son of Petras, born in 1919, former member of "Young Lithuanians," to have made this leaflet. Expert analysis of the signature of STALENIS, compared with the leaflet's handwriting, established his authorship of this counter-revol. leaflet. STALENIS was taken into active agency elaboration.

3. 4 November 1940, in *Paliep* village, Panemun township, militiaman ALIENIOV of the Panemune precinct found tacked on the wall of the smithshop of KLIAUGAS, of Lithuanian nationality, a counter-revol. leaflet of the following contents:

"To the Combat! Fight the bolsheviks who burned down our property and freedom. Fight them with your whole heart and all powers. These Hams of the proletariat—chase them out, that our eyes should not see them any more . . .," etc.

The leaflet was handwritten in ink on ordinary paper, signed "*The Guerrillas*." Melchioras KOSTILKOVSKIS, volunteer of the Lithuanian White army who in 1919 had taken an active part in battles against the Red Army, and proprietor of the *Paliepė* estate,—is suspected of authorship of this leaflet. Melchioras KOSTILKOVSKIS was arrested, but did not admit his guilt in the preparation of the counter-revol. leaflet. Expert analysis is being made.

4. 17 December 1940, student Bronius ŠARKA found in the corridor of *Rokiškis gymnasium*, underneath a window, atop the radiator, 15 pieces of counter-revol. leaflets. The leaflets were of small size, stamped in a primitive manner, and depicted nationalist aspects of the bourgeois government of Lithuania. 10 pieces of identical leaflets were found by teacher KEISMANAS in the wardrobe. The leaflets were signed "*L GK*" and "*LIG Komitetas*." A group of students of *kulak and ateitininkai* (Catholic Students) background is suspected.

Leaflets of a different type, handwritten and multiplied by mimeograph, were found in the gymnasium on 12 December 1940. Suspicion of authorship of these counter-revol. leaflets, due to similarity of handwriting, is cast on Romualdas STALENIS, IX Class student, son of a well-to-do peasant and one of the leaders of the school's counter-revol. organization. All five of these leaflets contain a drawing of the fascist Swastika in the lower left corner. All suspects are taken into active agency elaboration.

5. 20 December 1940, on the *Rokiškis-Juozupavas road* 1.5 km. distant from Rokiškis a counter-revol. leaflet written in black drawing ink on drawing paper, was found. The following morning, 3 additional leaflets, similar to the first one, were found scattered on the same road. Two leaflets were unsigned, one was signed "*The Military Leader*," the fourth was signed "*The Committee*."

In connection with the finding of these leaflets, we detained a V Class student of the Rokiškis gymnasium—Vladas STRUMSKIS, born in 1926, Lithuanian, non-partisan, of poor peasant parents, resident of Kalneliškes village, Rokiškis township and county. In the course of interrogation on 21 January 1941, he

testified that he made the counter-revol. leaflets jointly with a student of the VII Class—Kostas ČERNIS, son of Tadas, born in 1925, Lithuanian, citizen of the USSR, non-partisan, son of peasants. Two leaflets were drawn by STRUMSKIS, two by ČERNIS. Kostas ČERNIS likewise confessed, upon interrogation by us, to having drawn and distributed the leaflets. ČERNIS and STRUMSKIS were held.

6. 25 December 1940, eleven penciled and ink-written leaflets, on ordinary white paper, were found scattered and tacked in a number of villages in the area of *Obeliai* town, Rokiškis county. They bore no signatures. The organist of the church at Aleksandravėlė, and a servant of the said church, Vladas MERKIS, are suspected. Both were taken into active agency elaboration, and handwriting comparison results are being analyzed.

7. 9 January 1941, in the area of *Patilčiai* and *Didsodė* villages, Juodupe township, 3 counter-revol. leaflets printed in home-made type, were found. Alfonsas ŠIMĖNAS, son of Vincas, born in 1909, former member of the Nationalists and the National Guard and, until 1941, employed as a frontier policeman on the Lithuanian side of the Lithuanian-Soviet boundary but discharged in connection with the dissolution of the border police,—was detained while distributing leaflets. He admitted his guilt, upon interrogation regarding the manufacture and distribution of counter-revol. leaflets directed against the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. He named his collaborators—Juozas ŠIMĖNAS, son of Pelikšas, born in 1920, Lithuanian of peasant stock, and—Pelikšas KOSTENAS, son of Jurgis, born in 1914, Lithuanian, of a peasant family, resident of *Jatkūnai* village, Juodupis township. Both of the latter likewise confessed their guilt, on interrogation. All of these persons were held.

8. On 23, 24 and 27 January 1941, in *Skapiškis* town, Rokiškis county, 11 counter-revol. leaflets, handwritten through carbon paper, were found. 5 leaflets were signed "A Worker". Agency is directed to expose the authors. Nothing was found during the search of suspects. We are unable to transmit 3 copies of some of the counter-revol. leaflets, inasmuch as these were of individual manufacture.

UTENA COUNTY

20 instances of discovery of the counter-revolutionary leaflets of various contents, and one anonymous letter, were registered in Utena county.

23 September 1940, in *Debeikiai* township, in the area of *Trumbatiškis* railway station, a typewritten counter-revol. leaflet was found:

"Fight against the communist party, against com. Stalin, against the Red Army, for the re-establishment of a nationalist Lithuania."

Instead of the signature, there was: *"Permitted by the military censorship."*

In consequence of the agency-operative measures—examination of the typewriter's peculiarities, verification of location of the typewriters and their owners in the *Debeikiai* township, analysis of writing styles, paper quality, and orientation of improved undercover agency work regarding the accountable element of *Debeikiai* township—on 10 October 1940 we succeeded in exposing and liquidating a counter-revol. organization of 6 members, which disseminated the said leaflets. Membership of this organization was as follows:

1. ROGAŽINSKAS—priest of *Debeikiai*, 29, of a landlord family.
2. The kulaks MATULIS, father and two sons:
 - a) father—Jonas MATULIS, 57, parish committee chairman.
 - b) son—Jonas MATULIS, 26, Guardsman.
 - c) son—Juozas MATULIS, 24, Guardsman, former frontier policeman.
3. Povilas RASČIUS, 19, kulak and Guardsman.
4. Povilas ŠUKYS, 19, kulak and Guardsman.

The search of the priest, ROGAŽINSKAS, yielded a "Mercedes" typewriter, on which the counter-revol. leaflets were typed. Investigation established this group's counter-revol. activities.

/We enclose copies of the counter-revol. leaflets in the packet pertaining to the city of Utena, No. 1./

Two handwritten crayoned leaflets were found 7 October 1940 in *Anykščiai* town, containing a slogan:

"Fight against the communist party, against comrade Stalin, against the Red Army."

Signatures: on one—*"Agricultural Tiller,"* on the other—*"Son of an Agriculturist."*

In consequence of the undertaken agency-operative measures—analysis of writing, "artistic formulation," writing style, quality of the pencil and paper, diligent study of the accountable element—the author of this counter-revol. leaflet was successfully identified and arrested on 15 October 1940. He was Vladas ŠLIŽYS, 17, of a kulak family, student of the Anykščiai gymnasium.

The search yielded a drawing folder whose missing sheets fitted the sheets of the counter-revol. leaflets, and a crayon pencil used in drawing the artistic counter-revol. leaflet. The counter-revol. activity was established by investigation.

/Copies of the leaflets are enclosed in the packet pertaining to the city of Utena, Nos. 2, 3./

20 October 1940, in Anykščiai town, a counter-revol. leaflet was found, hand-printed by stamping letters, in ink, with a motto:

"Fight against com. Stalin, against the Red Army, against Jews, for the establishment of Hitlerism and re-establishment of Smetona."

Regardless of the undertaken agency-operative measures—analysis of writing style, handwriting, paper quality, accountable element, undercover agents' work, etc.—the author of this counter-revol. leaflet was not exposed up to the present time.

/Copy of the leaflet attached in the packet for Utena county, No. 4./

27 October 1940, in Anykščiai, a handwritten counter-revol. leaflet, drawn in ink, with a pasted portrait of Smetona, was found:

"Against Stalin's Constitution, communist party, Jews,—for re-establishing Minister Raštikis and President Smetona."

The leaflet bore no signature. There was no success in exposing the author's identity, regardless of the undertaken agency-operative work.

/Copy of this leaflet is enclosed in the packet for Utena city, No. 5./

During the period of 18–23 November 1940, six counter-revol. leaflets of divers contents were found in Debeikiai town, written in ink, containing the fascist Swastika and a motto:

"Fight against the communist party, com. Stalin, Red Army, Jews, for the establishment of Hitlerism and restoration of Smetona."

They were unsigned. The author of these 6 leaflets was arrested in consequence of the undertaken agency-operative measures. He is—Kazys MIKELINSKAS, priest-pastor-dean of Debeikiai, born in 1889, a former hostage exchanged for communist prisoners.

The search yielded books with the signatures of MIKELINSKAS and a counter-revolutionary directive received by him from bishop PALTAROKAS and the Curia of Panevėžys.

/Photo-copies of the counter-revol. leaflets are enclosed in the packet pertaining to Utena city, Nos. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11./

19 December 1940, a counter-revol. ink-written leaflet was found in Anykščiai: *"Against voting for Stalin's bloc of communists and non-partisans."* It bore no signature. Thus far, there was no success in identifying the author and distributor of this counter-revol. leaflet.

/Photo-copy of the c-r leaflet is enclosed in the packet for Utena, No. 12./

28 December 1940, in Tauragnai town, a counter-revol. leaflet was found tacked to the dairy station, made of clipped printed letters from a newspaper, which were pasted on paper to form a motto: *"Against voting."* It bore no signature.

/Photo-copy enclosed in the packet for Utena, No. 13./

3 January 1941, a handwritten "printed" c-r leaflet was found in Skiemonys town, with a motto: *"Against voting."* It was unsigned. Its author and distributor was not identified.

/Photo-copy of the c-r leaflet enclosed in the packet for Utena, No. 14./

10 January 1941, in Tauragnai village, 3 copies of an identical typewritten c-r leaflet were found, a motto multiplied by mimeograph: *"Against the elections, for unification into an anti-communist bloc."* It was signed: *"Association of Lithuanian Activists-Guerrillas."* Authors and disseminators are not identified.

/Photo-copy of the c-r leaflets enclosed in the packet, No. 16./

On election day, two c-r leaflets of like contents were found in Skiemonys town; they were made of the clipped printed letters and pasted on paper to form a motto: *"Against elections."* There was no signature.

/Photo-copies of the c-r leaflet enclosed in the packet, Nos. 17, 18./

Two c-r leaflets of dissimilar contents were found in Utena on election day, both containing handwritten mottoes: "*Against voting.*" Leaflets were unsigned. Authors of these c-r leaflets were not exposed to the present.

/Photo-copies of the c-r leaflets enclosed in the packet, Nos. 19, 20./

2 January 1941, an anonymous handwritten letter was mailed to Militia in Maletai, with the slogan: "*Fight against the Soviet rules.*" It was signed: "*Exterminator of the parasites.*" No positive results were yielded by the undertaken agency-operative measures; the author is not exposed yet.

/A photo-copy of the anonyim enclosed in the packet as No. 21./

KĖDAINIAI COUNTY

In July 1940, prior to the elections to the People's Diet, 4 copies of handwritten anti-Soviet leaflets were found in Parnaravas village, with a motto: "*Do not go to People's Diet polls.*" Up to 40 copies of similar leaflets, made by one person, were found under the shed of a house in Krakės town. They were of an anti-Semitic and anti-communist character. Three persons were arrested in the case:

1. Aloizas DALBAKIS, 17, student of the Jesuit school, artisan's son.
2. Vytautas JAKIMAVIČIUS, 16, student of the same school, son of an estate owner who had been a deputy in the Diet of Smetona's government.
3. Petras GAUČAS, 30, blacksmith and iron worker.

Two copies of an anti-Soviet handwritten leaflet were found in Ariogala on the eve of the 2nd anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Its theme:—Do not observe the October festival, and threats directed at communists: "*Down with the Leninist-Stalinist festivals.*"

On 1 November 1940 we arrested the suspected author of the leaflet, who is also suspected of complicity in dissemination of anti-Soviet anonymous letters of a threatening character, addressed to individual representatives of the local organs. Jonas MAČENSKIS, son of Jurgis, 35, kulak, was arrested in the case. His accomplice was also arrested—Antanas DOCKA, son of Pranas, 33, blacksmith-iron worker, who confessed having written the anonyms under the tutorship by MAČENSKIS.

Four copies of an anti-Soviet terroristic handwritten and unsigned leaflet were found 6 January 1941 in Vabalai village, Baisogala township. We suspect Jonas KARECKAS, 24, son of a kulak, who was arrested by us. He engaged in anti-Soviet agitation and confessed it; but thus far he denies guilt in dissemination of the anti-Soviet leaflets.

In connection with the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, two mimeographed, and one handwritten, leaflets were found in Pašušvis town, Grinkiškis township, containing an appeal,—"*Do not go to the polls.*" Authorship is not yet established.

On the voting day of the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, various notes were found stuffed in the voting urns of the election precincts in Kėdainiai city. There were memos reading: "*You drenched the soil of our ancestors in blood. The brothers will rise against your injustice.*"—"You promised freedom,—you gave slavery." Clippings from magazines containing the pictures of Smetona's cabinet were inscribed: "*This is our Government, not Stalin's constitution.*" Authors are not yet exposed.

On the eve of the elections in Parnaravas township, one unsigned anti-Soviet leaflet, directed against voting, was found. Author is not exposed.

TELŠIAI COUNTY

The following facts of dissemination of counter-revolutionary leaflets in Telšiai county were established:

Leaflets of anti-Semitic character were scattered in the city of Telšiai in October 1940. According to all data, these were made by students of the Telšiai gymnasium, but the authors are not identified.

On 22 October 1940, mimeographed c-r leaflets of two formats were found scattered in the city and township of Telšiai. They were signed—"Saigūnas."

[Note: Saigūnas was a legendary Samagite prince.—Translator.]

The c-r leaflets were published and disseminated by a counter-revol. organization operating in the city, which was exposed and liquidated in an agency manner on 6 November. 10 persons, members of this organization, were arrested by us in the case.

1. Hnerikas GLAZAUSKAS, son of Česlovas, born in 1918, accountant of Telšiai county board, son of peasant tenants, fully confessed dissemination of the c-r leaflets.
2. Antanas ČIUŽAS, son of Antanas, born in 1922, native of Rietavas town and township, son of workers, student of the Telšiai Trades School, who disseminated the c-r leaflets in the city and county of Telšiai.
3. Kazys PUŠKORIUS, son of Antanas, born in 1921, native of Kindarallai village, Rietavas township, of a workers' family, student of the Telšiai Trades School, in person disseminated the c-r leaflets in the city and county of Telšiai.
4. Andrius CIURINSKAS, son of Antanas, born in 1907, native of Mednikai village, Žasliai township, Trakai county, teacher in an elementary school in the city of Telšiai, whose authorship of the leaflets is proved.
5. Vitoldas LILEIKIS, son of Adomas, born in 1915, native of Pavandenys village, Varniai township, Telšiai county, of a family of employees, office clerk of the County Hospital in Telšiai, fully admitted dissemination of the c-r leaflets.
6. Pranas GUŽAUSKAS, son of Stasys, born in 1911, native of the city of Šiauliai, until his arrest employed in a bookstore in Telšiai. GUŽAUSKAS printed the text of the c-r leaflets on a typewriter, and confessed.
7. Hermanagildas ŽVIRZDYNAS, son of Jonas, born in 1920, native of Telšiai, of a secondary education, employed as a synoptician of the Telšiai Meteorological Station, disseminated c-r leaflets in the city and county of Telšiai.
8. Liudas MOLAKAUSKAS, son of Juozas, born in 1920, native of Kantaičiai village, Plungė township, chauffeur by profession, lately employed as clerk in the office of the County Chief of Telšiai; he typed in the County Chief's office the text of the c-r leaflets and personally distributed same in the city and county of Telšiai. MOLAKAUSKAS confessed in full.
9. Adomas RAKAS, son of Adomas, born in 1923, native of Rietavas town, Telšiai county, member of a workers' family, student of Telšiai Trades School, disseminated c-r leaflets; fearing arrest, RAKAS unsuccessfully attempted to cross the border to Germany.
10. Zenonas TARVAINIS, son of Juozapas, born in 1920, native of Užvenčiai village, Šiauliai county, member of a peasant family, employed as superintendent of the Meteorological Station in Telšiai, author of the c-r leaflets. Being the leader of the c-r organization and fearing arrest, TARVAINIS illegally attempted to cross the border into Germany. He was detained in the area of Kretinga by Frontier Unit 105 of the NKVD.

All of the arrested persons were active members of an underground c-r organization, exposed in the city of Telšiai.

In December 1940, on the Telšiai-Žarenai highway, a handwritten penciled c-r appeal was found scrawled on a wooden chip, to boycott the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR; author was not yet exposed.

In January 1941, in Žarenai township, 6 handwritten c-r leaflets, multiplied by mimeograph, were found. A total of 6 copies. Author and disseminator were not exposed thus far.

Handwritten appeals to refrain from voting were discovered in Rietavas town in December. The undertaken agency measures established that these leaflets were written by a student of the gymnasium of Plungė—Kazys SUDARGAS, son of Kazys, who is in hiding at the present moment; he spent his winter recess in December at Rietavas.

On 11 and 12 January 1941, 15 pieces of a handwritten anti-election c-r leaflet were found in Luokė township; authors and disseminators are not yet exposed.

4 c-r leaflets were found around the polling precinct in Pavandenys estate, Varniai township, on 12 January 1941. The leaflets appealed to the inhabitants to boycott the voting for the nominees. These were multiplied by mimeograph. Leaflets of the same contents were found also in Žarenai township. They were signed: "*Lithuanian Patriots.*" Authors were not exposed.

It is necessary to note that few leaflets were distributed, and these were mostly written by hand. It may be supposed that authors were mainly kulaks.

All of the discovered and seized leaflets were tacked in the more secluded places or were scattered over the roads. For instance: 12 January 1941, militiamen of the Luoke precinct removed two leaflets of a similar format and identical contents, which were found on the road near Užėnai village, Luokė township. A leaflet of similar format and contents was found in the rear of the polling place in Beržuvenai village, Luokė township.

Vaclovas PABARČIUS, son of Jonas, born in 1903, employee of the dairy in Žemaičių Kalvarija town, was arrested on 12 January 1941 for anti-Soviet agitation during the elections to the Supreme Soviet and the Nationalities Soviet of the USSR. A c-r leaflet, drawn by colored pencil and appealing to refrain from voting for the nominees, was found at the same time. The search of the prisoner's quarters yielded pencils which had been used in drawing the said leaflet. The leaflet was not multiplied: one original.

/We enclose samples of the leaflets, 3 of each, and 1 copy of those which were not multiplied./

MARIJAMPOLĖ COUNTY

Up to 15 January 1941, in an official manner and through agency work, 90 counter-revolutionary leaflets were discovered and taken out of circulation in Marijampolė county. Of these—51 were handwritten, 39—mimeographed.

By their contents, the leaflets fall into 3 categories:

1. Appeals to Lithuanians to unite for the struggle against bolshevism, for the re-establishment of a mighty insurrectionist Lithuanian.
2. Anti-Semitic pieces.
3. Appeals to refrain from voting for the nominees to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

In September 1940, in the area of the homestead of kulak brothers, VELIUONIŠKIS, who owned 34 ha. of land, and in the area of Balsupe village, Marijampolė township, insurrectionist leaflets and a Tricolor flag were discovered and removed. The undertaken agency-operative measures established that the leaflets and the flag were put out by Vytautas VELIUONIŠKIS, bookkeeper of the co-operative, and his brothers—Stasys VELIUONIŠKIS, working on his farm, and Juozas VELIUONIŠKIS, student of the Marijampolė gymnasium. Brothers VELIUONIŠKIS were arrested.

Mimeographed anti-Soviet leaflets were scattered in the city of Marijampolė and in the townships of Sasnava, Krosna and Liudvinavas, on the eve of the anniversary of the October Revolution. The searches of the suspects established that these leaflets were distributed by a gymnasium student, Vytautas BRIZGYS, son of Stasys, born in 1922, native of Išlančiai village, Sasnava township, who escaped during the search of the adjoining room. 15 leaflets were seized in his room. Measures of search for BRIZGYS are taken.

Handwritten c-r leaflets were seized in the room of Vladas EIDUKEVIČIUS, born in 1921, student of the Trades School, on the farm of his father who owns 26 ha. He planned to scatter the same on 7th November, during the planned demonstration in Marijampolė.

Albinas BALITAS and his brother—Vincas BALITAS were arrested in January 1941, in Kalvarija town. They were suspected of scattering c-r appeals to refrain from voting. The search yielded 3 pistols, 130 cartridges, about 3 kgr. of ammonite and 8 capsules.

On 12 January 1941, the date of elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, a Tricolor flag was flown in Šaraišupiai village. It was established in an agency manner that the flag was put out by a kulak who owned 30 ha. of land—Kazys KARNAUSKAS, son of Antanas, National Guardsman and Boy Scout. KARNAUSKAS was arrested; the investigation continues.

On 11 January 1941, our agent "Dirteve" brought 2 c-r leaflets appealing to the Lithuanians to refrain from voting for the candidates to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. They were signed: "Lietuvai Gelbėti Komitetas" (Committee to Save Lithuania). These leaflets were given to our agent by a priest, Rev. LUCKUS, whose case is under elaboration in the agency file "The Jesuits." This priest told "Dirteve" that he had given analogous leaflets to gymnasium students for distribution, but he gave no names.

13 anonymous letters were seized in Marijampolė post office. These appealed to refrain from voting. The authors are not yet exposed.

/Originals of the leaflets and anonymous letters are enclosed in the packet for Marijampolė county./

ŠAKIAI COUNTY

From the moment of the establishment of Soviet rule on the territory of Šakiai county, frequent instances of dissemination of counter-revolutionary leaflets had taken place. In individual instances, c-r leaflets spread on a fairly large scale. The first c-r leaflets were discovered in the county in the early part of October 1940. These leaflets were thrown in a package, at night, into the corridor of the office of the County Chief. They were handwritten on clean white paper and multiplied, under a motto—“*Down with the communists, enslavers of the Lithuanian People.*” Caricature drawings, libeling the Party and Government leaders, were scattered about the same time.

Within two-three days, similar leaflets appeared on the road from Šakiai to Lukšiai, and subsequently on other roads. In the given instance, dissemination of the leaflets concurred with the recess of gymnasium students for a day of excursions. Exactly a week later, leaflets were again scattered and pasted throughout the city of Šakiai and on the road to Lukšiai. The leaflets proclaimed: “*Do not believe the communists. They promised free education in schools, while in fact they introduced paid schooling.*”

All of these facts tended to confirm that these leaflets were disseminated by students of the local gymnasium.

In consequence of the undertaken agency-operative measures, it was established in January 1941 that gymnasium students did engage in the preparation and distribution of anti-Soviet leaflets. No arrests were made, inasmuch as all suspects were minors.

Just before the observance of the 23rd Anniversary of the October Revolution, in the area of Kriukai village, Paežer liai township, a package of leaflets was thrown on the road on 4 November 1940. Our investigation established that the leaflets were thrown by a stranger on horseback who passed the spot in the direction of Sereždius, Kaunas county. The disseminator was not identified.

On 19-20 October, in the area of Gelgaudiškis, caricature drawings of Party and Soviet Government leaders were scattered. The consequent investigation showed that these drawings were scattered by gymnasium students from Gelgaudiškis, and from Jurbarkas township, Raseiniai county.

Students were detained and were later returned, in person, to their parents with a warning.

A large mass of leaflets was scattered in January, during the election campaign. On 9-11 January, leaflets were scattered in townships of Barzdai, Žvirgdžaičiai, Jankai, Griškabūdis, and Lekėčiai. The leaflets were of 3 kinds, but all of them appealed to refrain from voting on election day.

Some leaflets were written on thin paper, mimeographed, of counter-revol. content, of a clearcut nationalist outlook, and signed “*Committee No. 27.*” These leaflets were scattered mostly in the townships of Jankai, Barzdai, Griškabūdis, and Žvirgdžaičiai.

Other leaflets were scattered principally in Lekečiai township. These were mimeographed on clean unlined paper, under the slogan of refraining from voting “*for Jews.*” These were signed “*Būrelis No. 95.*” “*Būrelis No. 115.*” Leaflets of analogous contents were also scattered in Jankai and Lukšiai townships. The undertaken measures did not expose the authors and distributors.

/We enclose original c-r leaflets found in Šakalai county, in the packet for Šakiai county./

VILKAVIŠKIS COUNTY

On the territory of Vilkaviškis county, dissemination of leaflets of a c-r character involved large quantities, especially during the pre-election period and the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

On the night of 11 to 12 January 1941, in Keturalakiai township, on the Keturalakiai-Gižai highway, 16 c-r leaflets, printed by plating method in drawing ink, on white paper, were posted on telegraph poles. All of the leaflets were timely removed. 3 persons were arrested for the dissemination. One of them—BISKIS was detained with evidence on his person, a single leaflet. His testimony led to the arrest of two more—KULBOKAS and BALČIŪNAS. All of the prisoners confessed their guilt in dissemination, but denied that they had made these leaflets. It appears from their testimony that prisoner KULBOKAS found a leaflet tacked to the wall of his barn; he read it and gave it to BALČIŪ-

NAS, who behaved just as KULBOKAS before him and transferred it to BISKIS, who was arrested. There are no other data regarding these leaflets.

The social background of the prisoners:

Vytautas BISKIS—son of Vincas, born in 1898, native of Balsupiai village, Marijampolė township and county, Lithuanian SSR, prior to his arrest owned 30 ha. of land, resided in Biržiniai village, Keturvalakiai township, Vilkaiviškis county.

Petras KULBOKAS, son of Matas, born in 1918, Lithuanian, formerly belonged to no parties or organizations, until his arrest lived with his mother who owns 27 ha. of land, native and resident of Biržiniai village, Keturvalakiai township, Vilkaiviškis county.

Jonas BALČIŪNAS, son of Jonas, born in 1917, native of Kareišupka village, Sasnava township, Marijampolė county, under former Smetona's order in Lithuania was a National Guardsman, until his arrest resided in Biržiniai village, Keturvalakiai township, Vilkaiviškis county.

/Samples of the leaflets are enclosed in duplicate./

In the period of 5 to 12 January 1941, in Pilviškiai township, Vilkaiviškis county, on the border of Šakiai county, 18 leaflets of c-r contents, printed by printing method in black drawing ink on yellow paper, were found posted on telegraph poles and trees along the road. Disseminators were not exposed. There is agency data to the effect that these were published by a c-r group made up of the kulaks inhabiting Barzdai township in Šakiai county. The group of kulaks is under elaboration by us.

/Leaflets in triplicate are attached./

On the night of 12 January 1941, in Pilviškiai township on the border of Šakiai county, that is, in the same place where the aforesaid leaflets were found,—8 leaflets of c-r contents were found pasted on poles and trees, written on white paper in black drawing ink, in large printed letters, as we suppose—by trafaret. Distributors were not exposed. It must be noted that similar leaflets were scattered in large quantities on the territory of Šakiai county.

/Leaflets in triplicate are enclosed./

In the morning of 12 January 1941, in Gižai township, Vilkaiviškis county, 2 leaflets of c-r content, penciled on white paper by the same hand, were found. There are no data regarding its author. We are mailing you one exemplar, inasmuch as we have only 2 copies.

On 21 December 1940, in Kybartai gymnasium, one leaflet of c-r content was found, appealing to students to restore Smetona's government in Lithuania. It was printed by a hand operated home-made press. It was established in an agency manner that the leaflet was published by DOBRILLO, priest of the Kybartai church, who was taken into active agency elaboration.

/Note: Canon Dabrila was brutally murdered, in church vestments, by the NKVD.—Editors, *Lith. Bulletin*./

Some additional handwritten leaflets of c-r content were found on the territory of Vilkaiviškis county during the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. We are not enclosing same, inasmuch as they are all different and are necessary for the exposal of their authors.

/Original leaflets are enclosed./

TRAKAI COUNTY

Counter-revolutionary leaflets were found in the following inhabited points in Trakai county, during the period of the existence of Soviet rule in the Lithuanian Republic.

3 November 1940, agency data were received to the effect that Rokh Yakubovich PIEWCZYNSKI, worker, resident of the city of Trakai, possesses and distributes anti-Soviet leaflets among the city's inhabitants. The investigation established that PIEWCZYNSKI received 2 c-r leaflets from Jan Stepanovich WRÓBLEWSKI, born in 1916, peasant, residing in Bobruvka village, Trakai township, and that WRÓBLEWSKI, in his turn, had received these leaflets from Zygmunt Sylwestrowicz URBANOWICZ, former Polish forest warden and member of the OZON. According to the testimony of URBANOWICZ, he received these leaflets from an anti-Soviet organization operating in the city of Vilnius,

through a stranger, a Captain SEVERN. We received no other testimony from URBANOWICZ.

The leaflets were mimeographed. One was entitled—"Poland in Combat." The title of the second was not established, inasmuch as the leaflets received by PIEWCZYNSKI had been turned over to Kajetan WIERSZYCKI, and the latter destroyed same.

URBANOWICZ, WRÓBLEWSKI and PIEWCZYNSKI were arrested. No leaflets were found during the search of their quarters.

At 11 o'clock A.M. on 7 November 1940, 2 km. from the town of Aukštadvaris, Trakai county, an anti-Soviet leaflet was found pasted on a telegraph pole. The leaflet was a multiplied copy, handwritten in Lithuanian, and was signed—"LKG" (Committee to Save Lithuania). The undertaken agency-operative measures thus far failed to expose its author.

20 November 1940, in Kaliukšai village, Aukštadvaris township, a mimeographed c-r leaflet, "Poland in Combat," was found pasted on the wall of the barn belonging to citizen RADZEWICZ. Citizen Adam ALEKSIUN, who had resided in Kaliukšai village, of Polish nationality and a former volunteer of the Polish army, presently residing on Dobraya Rada Street, house No. 8, city of Vilnius, is suspected of having distributed the leaflet.

In a conversation with our informer "Ryedkti," ALEKSIUN said that—"in the city of Vilnius, there is an anti-Soviet organization which possesses an illegal radio transmitter and, presently, is acquiring arms."

ALEKSIUN was taken into active agency elaboration.

19 December 1940 in Lentvaris (Landworowo) town, at 10 A. M., Komsomol member Shimon SAGALOVICH discovered 3 anti-Soviet leaflets scattered in the snow around the Catholic church. SAGALOVICH delivered one to the district plenipotentiary, and destroyed other 2 leaflets.

22 December 1940 in Valkininkai town, Trakai county, a penciled leaflet written on student's paper was found posted on the well. We suspected that gymnasium students are guilty of this manufacture. Samples of students' handwriting were taken. The comparison established that the handwriting of one of the students—Stasys JANKAUSKAS, born in 1925 of a peasant family—is identical with the leaflet's handwriting. This finding is being verified by experts.

9 January 1941, a typewritten anti-Soviet leaflet was posted on the home of citizen MUNKIEWICZ in Lygonys village, Rūdiškė township. It was signed—"Polish Warrior." The author is not yet exposed.

12 January 1941, three leaflets depicting the fascist Swastika were found posted in Gryžnikai village, Onušké township, on a telegraph pole in the field.

/Copies of the translation of the leaflets are enclosed./

RASEINIAI COUNTY

93 pieces of counter-revolutionary leaflets were discovered in Raseiniai county, from the moment of the establishment of Soviet rule in Lithuania, up to 15 January 1941. These were posted or scattered mainly in the following townships and inhabited points:

Kražiai township, Pašvinčiai village—11 pieces; Girkalnis township, Kodaičiai village—30 pieces; Viduklė township, Viduklė town—25 pieces; Kelmė township, Kelmė town—6 pieces; Raudon township, Pamituviai village—4 pieces; Raseiniai township, Allejai village—3 pieces; Betygala township, Betygala town—7 pieces; Jurbarkas city—1 piece. Total 93.

Most of the c-r leaflets were discovered during the period of elections to the Supreme Soviet on 12 January 1941, on the 23rd anniversary of the October Revolution, and on Catholic holidays, to wit: the nativity, three kings (The Epiphany—*Translator*), and similar. Multiplication of the c-r leaflets was made in most cases by hand, and only 10 pieces were multiplied by letters carved from wood.

In consequence of the agency-operative measures taken for the exposure of the authors of the c-r leaflets, we uncovered and liquidated three c-r groups operating among youths. Two of them operated among gymnasium students in Jurbarkas city and Kelme town; and one—among the youths of Allejai village. 16 persons were arrested.

In the city of Jurbarkas:

Vytautas MOCKUS, son of Augustinas, born 1918, son of a former presiding justice of Jurbarkas circuit court; a reserve officer of the Lithuanian army, owned a large farm; two revolvers were seized from him.

Eduardas MOCKEVICIUS, born 1925, brother of MOCKUS, student of the IX Class of gymnasium; a combat hand grenade was seized during his search.

Leopoldas PUČILIAUSKAS, son of Andrius, born 1922, kulak's son, father owned 70 ha. of land; a mimeograph for multiplication of the c-r leaflets was seized during his search.

Stepas VAITKEVIČIUS, son of Andrius, born 1924, of peasant stock, student of the IX Class in gymnasium.

Vladas PORŠCALIS, son of Antanas, born 1923, of poor peasants, student of the IX Class of gymnasium.

Vincas POCIUS, son of Leopoldas, born 1923, kulak's son, father had 50 ha. of land, student of the IX Class in gymnasium.

In the town of Kelmė:

Jonas RUSAS, son of Juozas, born 1909, military science teacher in the gymnasium, a reserve officer, former platoon commander of National Guardsmen, a civil servant; the search yielded a revolver and 11 combat cartridges; the organizer of c-r groups.

Edmundas MOSLIALSKIS, son of Teklius, born 1921 of peasant stock, teacher of a grammar school, former Guardsman; the search yielded a revolver and 41 combat cartridges.

Eugenijus MERKIS, son of Jonas, born 1917, lawyer's son, kulak owning 23 ha. of land, former Guardsman and Boy Scout, student of the X Class in gymnasium.

Vytautas BUTKUS, son of Juozas, born 1920, kulak's son, father owned 90 ha. of land, former Guardsman, student of the X Class in gymnasium.

Eduardas JOKUBAUSKAS, son of Vladas, kulak's son, father owned 80 ha. of land, former Guardsman and Boy Scout, student of the IX Class in gymnasium, born in 1924.

Lūdas KARPIS, son of Benediktas, born 1920 of poor peasants, former Guardsman, student of the IX Class in gymnasium.

In Raseiniai city:

Pranas KMITAS, son of Andrius, born 1914, of medium peasants, owns 20 ha. of land, former Guardsman.

Pranas MOŽINTS, son of Džidorius, born 1914, of kulaks, owns 20 ha. of land, former Guardsman.

Petras ČIUŽAS, son of Antanas, born 1914, of poor peasants, former Guardsman.

Stasys POCIUS, son of Jonas, born 1921, of medium peasants.

All of the above named persons were members of c-r groups, all disseminated c-r leaflets and admitted their guilt.

Besides this, in consequence of investigation and agency-operative measures, the initiator of dissemination of c-r leaflets and caricatures was exposed—Pranas KLIKNA, VII Cass student of Kelme gymnasium. He testified on interrogation that he was assisted in drafting and scattering the c-r leaflets by his father—Petras KLIKNA, a kulak, former policeman and platoon commander of the National Guard, who disappeared during our attempt to arrest him (searching measures are ordered). KLIKNA resided in Pašvenčiai village, Kražiai township.

Furthermore, we are actively elaborating a c-r group of 4 persons, among them—PAŠKEVIČUS, a (Catholic) priest by Juodaičiai village. This group was making preparations to distribute leaflets in quantities on election day. One figure of this elaboration was arrested by us on the eve of the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

All of the distributed c-r leaflets were, in their majority, signed "*League for the Liberation of Lithuania*," "VZC", "PP", "MB".

/Samples are enclosed./

ŠVENČIONĖLIAI COUNTY

Since the moment of the establishment of the Soviet rule in Lithuania, the County division of Švenčionėliai uncovered altogether one counter-revolutionary leaflet which was found at the railway station on the eve of the October festival. It was entitled "*Poland in Combat*."

The investigation established that c-r leaflet "*Poland in Combat*" was brought from the city of Vilnius. Kazimir Voitslovich SZYBKOWSKI, born in 1924, was questioned on this. He testified that he knew the membership of a c-r organization operating in the city of Vilnius, in the VI Class of the VIII Gymnasium, called "*Polska Partja Walcząca*" (Polish Fighting Party), which is

engaged in distribution of c-r leaflets and publishes two papers—"Jutro Polski" (Poland's Tomorrow) and "*Polska w Walce*" (Poland in Combat).

The materials were forwarded for elaboration by the City Board of Vilnius. No other leaflets oronyms were found in the county.

/Original copy of the c-r paper "*Poland in Combat*" is enclosed in the packet pertaining to the City of Vilnius./

BIRŽAI COUNTY

A great many counter-revolutionary leaflets were found in Biržai county, since the moment of the establishment of Soviet rule, to 15 January 1941.

The majority of the disseminated leaflets were written in ink or with pencil; an insignificant number was printed by mimeograph. They were posted mainly in places of large gatherings of people, such as: on dairy buildings in townships, on telegraph poles along the roads, etc.

The contents of the leaflets were basically directed against the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. We cite some:

"... Elections to the Supreme Soviet are nearing. Not one of us, Lithuanians, must go to the polls. If we should go to the polls, we would become enemies of our own People and would place a noose on our own necks, just as through the elections to the People's Diet. No one can force you to vote. Do not fear the threats of the communists. Failure to have the imprint of a voting stamp on one's passport will be an honor to a true Lithuanian. Those who go to the polls and carry the voting stamp in the passport, will be deemed to be enemies of the Lithuanian People and, when the government will be overthrown, we shall settle accounts with such traitors. **WE SHALL NOT GO TO THE POLLS.**"

"... *Brave Lithuanians!* We are suffering a new period of serfdom, with commissars sitting on our necks. But we shall not suffer long, inasmuch as the Lithuanians will not be slaves. We shall stir and march against the rule of the Asiatics. Latvia already revolted, Estonia even more so, and Germany threatens the USSR for inhuman oppression. An opportune moment will come, and we Lithuanians will rise up in arms. *Fight for Freedom. Fight for the heroes' graves. Fight for survival.*"

A group of 7 pupils of the elementary school, who distributed c-r leaflets, was exposed in December 1940 in Papié town. The pupils were mostly children of poor and medium peasants, aged 12-13 years. It was established that its leader was the son of a poor man who had received land in the fall of 1940.

The investigation established that the pupils lacked any supervision by their parents or teachers. In the evenings, they read criminal literature and engaged in hooliganism.

Parents and teachers of the said pupils were called in. The accused pupils related to their parents the details of their c-r activities. Not a single instance of the appearance of c-r leaflets was noted in Papié township since then.

TAURAGĖ COUNTY

In Tauragė county, several counter-revolutionary leaflets were discovered, which appealed to overthrow the Soviet rule in Lithuania, to make an armed uprising, to disrupt the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Thus:

Toward the end of December 1940, leaflets were posted on a fence in the city of Tauragė, which appealed to the Lithuanians to rise up in arms against Soviet rule and the bolsheviks. The leaflets were printed by rotator and were signed—"The 118th Brigade of the Iron Wolf." The undertaken measures established that these leaflets were distributed by students of the local gymnasium:

Antanas JUOZAPAITIS, born 1922, civil servant's son.

Pranas KINDERIS, born 1922, son of a laundress.

Albertas BRUNEVIČIUS, born 1923, son of a civil servant.

They were likewise engaged in destroying the portraits of the leaders of the bolshevik party and the Soviet government. All of them were held.

C-r leaflets appealing to disrupt the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR were discovered in the early part of January 1941 in the townships of Laukuva, Kvédarna and Kaltinėnai. The investigation established that these leaflets were disseminated by members of a c-r organization of students of the Šilalė Gymnasium, who called themselves—"Punitive Detachment of Lithuanian Fascists."

This group consisted of 7 persons, headed by a gymnasium student TALLAT-KELPŠA, born in 1923, son of an estate owner. Also—Vytautas RAUDŽIUS, born in 1923, son of peasants. Petras DARGIS, born in 1924, son of peasants, and others, a total of 7. All of them were held by us. The investigation is in progress.

/Original c-r leaflets are enclosed in the packet for Taurage county./

LAZDIJAI COUNTY

The following c-r leaflets were discovered on various occasions in the county seat and other inhabited points in the county:

6 November 1940, through information provided by s/o (secret informer) "Leonas", 5 copies of multiplied handwritten leaflets proclaiming "*Down with the bolsheviks,*" were found in the roof-gutter pipe of the Pavasaris Building in the city of Lazdijai.

It was established in consequence of the investigation that the author of these leaflets was the s/o himself, that is—Joselis OKUNEVIČIUS, son of Chaimas, born in 1919, native of Lazdijai, Seinaï county, a Jew, citizen of the LSSR, non-partisan, literate, without a definite occupation, who desired to earn money easily. By chantage, demands and threats, he attempted to extort money from citizen PUNSKIENĖ (wife of Kalmanas PUNSKIS) who was released from custody. In his work as an s/o (secret informer), he decoded himself, and was arrested on 5 January 1941.

In the process of investigation, it was established that he himself fabricated the leaflets—with the purpose of earning money. In the past, OKUNEVIČIUS had been an agent of the police.

The end of December 1940 and the beginning of January 1941, c-r leaflets directed against the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR appeared on telegraph poles, trees and homes in the villages of Veisiejai and Leipalingis townships. Altogether 20 pieces of leaflets were seized, of which 15 pieces were handwritten in ink and appealed "*Citizens, do not vote for the ragged bums*"; the rest—5 pieces—were mimeographed under a slogan—"Lithuanians, let's not be *svoloch'es, let's show that we are worthy children of Gediminas*" /Note: Russian "*svoloch*" means the lowest kind of a rascal, riffraff, renegade.—Translator/. Thereafter followed an appeal against going to the polls, ending with: "*Long Live the Lithuanian Community!*"

In consequence of the agency-operative measures, we uncovered and, on 9 January 1941, liquidated a counter-revolutionary terrorist group of 8 persons. Members of this organization sought to conduct the agitation against the forthcoming elections, to disseminate c-r leaflets and, at an opportune moment, to seize by force the Soviet establishments in the county:

The prisoners:

Antanas RUDZIKAS, son of Petras, born 1907, native of Padumbliai village, Kapčiamiestis township, Seinaï county, Lithuanian, citizen of the LSSR, married, teacher in Kalviai village, member of the National Guard, Nationalists, League for the Liberation of Vilnius, and Lithuanian Teachers Association.

Povilas ZULONAS, son of Jonas, born 1912, native of Ševydīs village, Kupiškis township, Panevėžys county, Lithuanian, citizen of the LSSR, non-party, veterinarian technician (*vettekhnik*) by profession, single, employed as a veterinarian in Veisiejai town, born in a family of kulaks, member of the National Guard (*Šauliai*).

Jurgis STABINGIS, son of Jurgis, born 1897, native of Petraškaï village, Veisiejai township, Seinaï county, Lithuanian, citizen of the LSSR, non-party, married, employed as foreman in the forestry project of Veisiejai Forestry Ward, member of the National Guard.

Dzidas MITŪZAS, son of Jonas, born 1917, native of Žagare town, Šiauliai county, Lithuanian, citizen of the LSSR, non-party, single, employed as a technician-clerk of the Seinaï Forestry District, tried for hooliganism in 1940 and conditionally sentenced to 3 months.

Steponas SEKMANAS, son of Antanas, born 1910, native of Kaunas, Lithuanian, citizen of the LSSR, non-party, employed as forest warden of the Veisiejai Forestry Ward, member of the National Guard.

Jonas VALENTA, son of Jonas, born 1910, native of Veisiejai town, Seinaï county, Lithuanian, citizen of the LSSR, single, non-party, employed on

seasonal projects in the forests as laborer, member of the *Pavasaris*, (Catholic youths) and the National Guard.

Stasys PALIKTIS, son of Stasys, born 1901, native of Barteliai village, Veisiejai township, Seinai county, Lithuanian, citizen of the LSSR, non-party, single, worked as a tailor in Bobrai village, member of the National Guard.

The search during the arrest of STABINGIS yielded 16 pieces of c-r mimeographed leaflets, the same as had appeared among the residents of the place. A typewriter was seized from SEKMANAS.

A secret informer, militiamen and local inhabitants uncovered a series of leaflets, calling against the voting, on 8, 9, 12 and 19 January 1941, in the villages of Mikyčiai, Šlavantai and Šventežeris. Their authors and distributors are not yet exposed. A total of the seized leaflets: in Mikyčiai—16 pieces, in Šlavantai—2 pieces, in Šventežeris—7 pieces.

/Original c-r leaflets are enclosed in the packet for Lazdijai county./

ALYTUS COUNTY

4 mimeographed leaflets, entitled "*Union of the Lovers of the Country*," were found 6 October 1940 in Kiauniai village, Alytus township. Disseminators are not yet exposed.

2 leaflets were found 6 November 1940 in a mailbox in the town of Stakliškės. They were entitled: "*Lithuanians, we shall not submit to the Muscovites*," and signed "*Fraternity of All Lithuanians*." Authors and disseminators are not exposed.

4 leaflets were distributed 27 November 1940 in the villages of Danuškiiai and Zizėnai, Miroslavas township. They were mimeographed, entitled "*Lithuanian Farmer*," and signed "*Association of the Lovers of Lithuania*." 5 leaflets of the same contents, directed against the communist party and the Soviet Union, were found at the same time in Mimnas township. Authors and disseminators were not exposed.

6 copies of leaflets entitled "*Peasants of Lithuania*" and "*Lithuanian*" were found in November 1940 in Krokelauskis village, Simnas township. The leaflets were mimeographed, directed against the communist party and the Soviet rule. Authors and distributors were not exposed.

4 leaflets entitled "*Lithuanians, Awaken*," mimeographed, signed "*Union of the Fatherland's Lovers*," were found 6 December 1940 in Verbiejai village, Simnas township. They were directed against the communist party and the Soviet Union. Disseminators are being identified.

11 leaflets entitled "*Lithuanians, Awaken*" and 4 entitled "*Lithuanian*," were found 8 December 1940 in the villages of Samūniškės, Ryliškės and Veismūnai, Merkinė township. All of the leaflets were multiplied by mimeograph and signed "*Union of the Fatherland's Lovers*."

The same leaflets were scattered in the villages of Gilučiai and Kavalčiukas, Simnas township. Authors are not exposed.

16 leaflets directed against the elections to the Supreme Soviet, signed "*Union of the Fatherland's Lovers*," were distributed 23 December 1940 in the villages of Varnagiriai, Santaika and Krokelauskis, Simnas township.

The same leaflets appeared 5 January 1941 in the village of Dapkuškės and Varnagiriai, Simnas township; 6 leaflets were mimeographed, 4 handwritten.

The disseminator of these leaflets, the organist TAMOSIŪNAS, resident of Pūnia village, was arrested.

13 handwritten leaflets, directed against the Socialistic regime and the elections to the Supreme Soviet, were found 10 January 1941 in the villages of Ryliškės and Druskininkai.

10 anti-Soviet handwritten leaflets were found 12 January 1941 in the city of Alytus.

4 anti-Soviet leaflets were found 15 January 1941 in the village of Dvaričiai, Daugai township.

11 handwritten leaflets were found 11 January 1941 in Seirijai township.

Anti-Soviet leaflets, entitled "*Brothers, Lithuanians*," were found 2 January 1941 in Liškiava village, Merkinė township.

Leaflets of the same contents were disseminated 12 January 1941 in Liškiava village. Authors are not exposed.

A counter-revolutionary organization of students was uncovered in the gymnasium of Alytus, and is presently in the process of elaboration. According to

agency data, it was engaged in manufacturing and distributing anti-Soviet leaflets signed "*Battalion of Death*." The said organization is being readied for liquidation.

2 leaflets entitled "*Lithuanian Farmers*," signed "*Union of the Fatherland's Lovers*," were posted 29 December 1940 in Meteliai village, Seirijai township. These leaflets were distributed by—Jonas LAIBANIS, son of Antanas, born in 1920, Lithuanian, of a peasant family whose head owns 20 ha. of land, a member of the "*Parasaris Federation*" (of Catholic youths). LIABANIS was arrested.

Furthermore, on suspicion of dissemination of anti-Soviet leaflets, Juozas TOBULA, son of Martynas, born in 1910, from a family of peasants estate owners, whose father owned 74 ha. of land,—was arrested 26 December 1940. In the past, he had been a member of the "*Parasaris Federation*" and a leader of the National Guard group. He admitted that, during a mass meeting dedicated to elections of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR held on 26 December 1940, he distributed leaflet of c-r contents.

/Original anti-Soviet leaflets, disseminated and found in Alytus county, are enclosed in the packet for Alytus county./

Regarding the counties of:—*Šiauliai, Zarasai, Panevėžys, Kretinga and Mažeikiai*,—in the absence of complete data pertaining to dissemination of c-r leaflets on the territories of these counties,—we shall forward the materials as a supplement hereto. Furthermore, in a separate memorandum, we shall report the mass distribution of c-r leaflets on the date of the "Independence of the Lithuanian state"—16 February 1941.

SUPPLEMENT: 16 packets containing the originals, photo-copies and translations of anti-Soviet leaflets, by counties and cities of the Lithuanian SSR.

/signed/ GUZVICIUS

Narkom (People's Commissar) of Internal Affairs of the LSSR, Senior Major of State Security Forces

/signed/ TODESAS

Chief of Division II of the UGB of the NKVD of the LSSR

(B) THE NEVER-COMPLETED REPORT FOR APRIL AND MAY 1941

Regarding Counter-revolutionary Leaflets for the Months of April-May 1941

In connection with the decision of the Party and government of the Lithuanian SSR regarding the compulsory grain delivery quotas,—numerous instances of dissemination of a counter-revolutionary leaflet were noted. The original was typewritten and multiplied by mimeograph, taking the form on an appeal to the peasants and bearing the title—

"BROTHERS-PEASANTS!"

This c-r leaflet was found and seized in the area of Garliava town, Kaunas county, 2 pieces; in the area of Petrašiūnai, 2 pieces; at Pažaislis near Kaunas, 1 piece; 3 leaflets were removed from mailboxes in the city of Kaunas.

Analogous leaflets were also distributed in Pajevonis and Kybartai townships of Vilkaviškis county, in Veiveriai township of Marijampolė county, in Utena county, in Biržai county. 10 pieces of these c-r leaflets were discovered and seized by us. Their authors and disseminators are not exposed.

Numerous instances of dissemination of another, typewritten and multiplied by mimeograph, c-r leaflet were noted in the latter part of April and in the early part of May. It was entitled:

"LITHUANIAN INFORMATION BUREAU IN BERLIN"

and contained further, in the corner—"KOVOK"—"FIGHT." These leaflets were disseminated in the various parts of the city of Kaunas. One leaflet was found and seized in Carpentry Shop No. 72; two pieces were removed from a mailbox; one copy was discovered on the Žalioji Street; one was found by a militiaman on a stone bench on the Green Mountain; one copy was found in Aleksotas, near the mill; 3 copies were found in the backyard of 39 Benediktinai Street.

Furthermore, instances of dissemination of the same leaflets were noted in the vicinity of Luoke town, Telšiai county, in the cities of Trakai, Mažeikiai, Kretinga, and Vilnius.

This leaflet called on "*The Lithuanians*," in the event of Germany's war against the USSR, to collaborate fully—to seize the airdromes in cities and villages for the German landing parties, to seize post offices and to conduct diversionary actions in the rear of the RKKK Workers Peasants Red Army.—*Translator.*

On the eve of 1st May, about 15 leaflets of various forms and contents were found in a number of places in the city of Kaunas, on the streets and stuffed into mail boxes,—short notes written on pupil's paper, leaflets with c-r slogans and libel against the leaders of the Party and government. Some of these were written by printed letters and multiplied by mimeograph; some were set by primitive rubber-stamp letters and multiplied by mimeograph, without a title or a signature.

Authors of one of these leaflets, which had been distributed in the city of Kaunas under a slogan—"DOWN WITH COMMUNISM AND JEWS, LONG LIVE INDEPENDENT LITHUANIA," with the National Guard's cross in the corner,—were exposed in the city and arrested. They were gymnasium students:

1. Liūdas KONČIUS, son of Ignas, born in 1925, son of a professor of the University of Kaunas, student of the II Gymnasium.

2. Mykolas JAGUČANSKIS, son of Marijonas, born in 1924, son of an estate owner, father owned 150 ha. of land and owned a cinema house. His father is presently employed in Narkomzem (People's Commissariat of Agriculture), in the division of planning.

On 16 May, on a shelf in the building of the Narkomat (People's Commissariat) of Commerce, at 38 Stalin's Prospect,—ALPERINAS, a worker of the Narkomat, picked up a leaflet with a c-r slogan against comrade Stalin, made of clipped letters pasted on a piece of linoleum and thereafter ink-printed by pressing into paper.

Two analogous offprints on the newspaper "*Tarybų Lietuva*" (Soviet Lithuania), dated 16 May 1941, were on 18 May removed from a mail box in the building of the *Partprosveshcheniya* (Party's Educational Division).

Abram LIPŠICAS, director of the printing establishment formerly owned by Gubsky, 35 Stalin's Prospect, on 18 May found squeezed into the doorway a Jewish newspaper "*Der Emes*," which contained three offprints with analogous slogans against comrade Stalin. Authors of this c-r slogan are not exposed.

On the eve of 1st May, also on the date of the 1st May festival, mass instances of dissemination of c-r leaflets were noted in the counties.

UTENA COUNTY

Especially unfavorable situation in this regard exists in Utena county, where the hostile element systematically and in mass formation distributes c-r leaflets. The c-r leaflets are mostly handwritten, multiplied by mimeograph, or are made by primitive setting of wood-carved letters.

A certain ADAŠKEVIČIENĖ was detained in 13 May in the town of Anykščiai, while distributing c-r leaflets. Her arrest yielded 2 c-r appeals calling to prepare for the struggle against the Soviet rule. The appeal was signed—"Orūnas Daumantas, Director of the Propaganda Division; Adris Vidimantas, Secretary of the Propaganda Division. Published by . . ." /Note: The last word ineligible on the copy.—*Translator.*

6 c-r leaflets, printed by setting letters carved of wood, discoursing on the formation of a Lithuanian government in Germany, praising fascism and Hitler, were found 13 April 1941 in Pakalnių village, Utena county. The authors are not exposed.

During the days of observance of the 1st May festivities, 5 pieces of c-r leaflets were distributed in Anykščiai town, Nevaitis village, and Malėtai town. All of these leaflets were handwritten and appealed to pay no levies, to deliver no grains. Authors are not exposed.

VILKAVIŠKIS COUNTY

5 handwritten c-r leaflets were found 1st May—3 in the city of Vilkaviškis, 1 in Mažučiai village, and 1 in Bartininkai township. Authors are not exposed.

BIRŽAI COUNTY

Repeated instances of dissemination of c-r leaflets took place.

17 pieces of handwritten leaflets, multiplied by mimeograph, were found 30 April in the town of Pasvalys. Contents—appeal for an insurrection against

the Soviet rule, also appeal to peasants to pay no taxes and to make no grain deliveries to the State. They were signed "Zalų Partizanų Štabas" (The HQ of Green Guerrillas) and "Spaustuvė Vytis" (The Knight printing office).

The leaflets were scattered on the road. The authors are not exposed.

ŠIAULIAI COUNTY

C-r leaflets appealing to fight against the Soviet rule for the "liberation of Lithuania," were scattered the night of 30 April in five townships: Lygumai, Gruzdžiai, Meškučiai, Žagarė, Radviliškis, and in the city of Šiauliai. The leaflets were handwritten and multiplied by mimeograph. In the corner, the leaflets contained a round seal reading: "The Tauragė Committee of Liberation of Lithuania"; underneath it—a signature of the same title. Authors are not exposed.

PANEVĖŽYS COUNTY

15 c-r leaflets were found posted in Šimonyų township on 26 and 27 April; 2 c-r leaflets were posted in a gymnasium of Ramygala; 2 c-r leaflets were found in Vidžiai township. Authors were not exposed.

MAŽEIKIAI COUNTY

6 pieces of handwritten c-r leaflets were distributed in Tirkšliai township, appealing to ignore the 1st May festival. Authors are not exposed.

UKMERGĖ COUNTY

Throughout March and April 1941, eight instances of dissemination of leaflets, handwritten and multiplied by mimeograph, were noted at various times, in various places.

A poster of c-r contents was found 11 March/41 on the Ukmerge-Kovarskas highway.

A poster of pasted-on flags and c-r inscriptions was found 16 March/41 on the Taujėnai-Kovarskas highway, near Žibučiai village.

A leaflet with slogans of a c-r character was found 16 March/41 in the area of Svirnal homestead, Kovarskas township.

A leaflet of c-r contents, handwritten in ink and signed "LLNS", was found 17 March/41 in the area of the Catholic church in Šateliai town.

Their authors were not apprehended.

Two c-r leaflets, handwritten, were found 6 May/41 in Šešuoliai town, appealing to overthrow the Soviet rule. Same leaflets were found 18 April/41 in Lyduokai town, Žemaitkiemis township.

Principal methods of distribution of these c-r leaflets were scattering on roads, in corridors of institutions, on city streets, and packing into mail boxes.

6. REPORT OF THE ACCOUNTING (APRIL 16, 1941)

/Translation/

/By hand/ Incoming No. 87 V

26

/By hand/ I have read.

3/V-41 A. D. (signature illegible)

Strictly Secret. Very Urgent.

TO ALL CHIEFS OF COUNTY BRANCHES AND PRECINCTS OF THE NKGB OF THE LITHUANIAN SSR, CHIEF OF THE UNKGB FOR THE CITY OF VILNIUS, CHIEFS OF NKGB UNITS ON RAILWAYS, DEPUTY COMMANDERS OF FRONTIER UNITS 105, 106, AND 107, CHIEFS OF KRO, SPO, SECTION ONE, DEPARTMENT TWO, DEPARTMENT THREE AND SECTION FIVE OF THE NKGB OF THE LITHUANIAN SSR.

To comrade _____
city of _____

Without a precise and correct accounting of the accountable element, without a proper study of the political situation in the county, city, etc.; without an accounting of the county's pollution with all sorts of counter-revolutionary, anti-Soviet and insurrectionist element; without a study and accounting of all former "had-been" people—/officials and military personnel/; without an accounting of relationship ties abroad, of the families of the repressed, policemen, etc.—there can be no complete and correct development of the agent-operational work of our organs on the spot.

Regardless of the great importance of placing on a required level the accounting for the counter-revolutionary and anti-Soviet element on the spot, chiefs of county branches of the NKGB do not accord due attention to this problem and, to this date, did not properly organize and adjust the work of accounting for the counter-revolutionary element.

Accounting regarding estate owners is conducted for the past seven months; nevertheless, a great many counties are unable, to this date, to provide precise data; there are no exact account data regarding the [—Page 2—] former refugees from former Poland, no accounting data regarding former policemen, officers, clergymen, members of all sorts of anti-Soviet parties and formations, family ties abroad and [family ties] of those refusing to repatriate, and many others.

Such a situation can no longer be tolerated; the study of the political environment within the county and of the improvement of accounting must claim exclusively paramount attention and first-rate significance.

Chiefs of the county branches of the NKGB must carry out a precise operational accounting regarding the entire counter-revolutionary and anti-Soviet element, regarding all former people ["have beens"] within the area of their respective counties, and they must utilize such accounting in their operational work.

Chiefs of the operational departments of the Narkomat must elaborate and within the next few days dispatch to outposts the detailed lists regarding the accountable element, and must decide the manner and order of accounting, as well as accountability before the Narkomat, each according to his own special line.

Chiefs of county branches of the NKGB must ensure the exact execution, within the prescribed terms of time, of the instructions given by the *Otdelys*.

I forewarn all chiefs of county branches regarding the necessity of organizing proper accounting for the accountable element on the spot and its elaboration (*razrabotka*).

People's Commissar of State Security of the Lithuanian SSR
Senior Major of State Security
/GLADKOV/

No. 23
"18" April 1941.
city of Kaunas.
zt

Authenticated: *Inspector-Codifier*
(signed) SEMYOKHINA /Semyokhina/

7. ON THE ORGANIZATION OF THE OPERATIVE ACCOUNTING

Strictly: Secret.

ORDER OF THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR OF STATE SECURITY OF THE LSSR FOR YEAR 1941

Contents: No. 0023. On the organization of the operative accounting in the county branches of the NKGB.—

No. 0023 of 25 April 1944.

City of Kaunas.

A fighting task has been placed upon the NKGB organs of Lithuania by the party and government—the purging of the Lithuanian SSR from the counter-revolutionary and hostile element.

We shall be able to effect this important political objective successfully and speedily only if the operative accounting is well arranged.

Practical experience of the work of the NKGB of the LSSR shows that the most important and, in the past, most active collaborators of the bourgeois organs

of the government, army and intelligence institutions, also of the former counter-revolutionary political parties and organizations, frequently do not fall within the field of observation of the NKGB organs and are not fully screened.

Existence of a large contingent of persons, subject to operative accounting under Order No. 001223 of the NKVD of the USSR, dated 11 October 1939, *regardless of concrete data concerning their anti-Soviet activities*, obligates the NKGB of the LSSR at the present time, because of the activation of the counter-revolutionary element on the territory of the LSSR, *to specify separately in its accounting work and screening of the counter-revolutionary and hostile elements, the categories of particularly dangerous persons, whose accounting must be organized in first priority order and within the shortest time possible.*

In view thereof, the county branches and subdivisions of the NKGB must immediately organize the accounting of all the accountable element, in conformance with the instructions given you during the briefing consultation and in our directives.

Noting the quite unsatisfactory performance of the accounting up to the present, we consider the continuation of such a situation intolerable in any event.

I THEREFORE ORDER :

1. Individually all Commanders of the county branches and subdivisions and their deputies to organize immediately the work of performance of the proper operative accounting of all the accountable element.

2. In the first place, to expose, take under account and furnish to the NKGB of the LSSR detailed data concerning the accountable element, in conformance with the listing of the accountable element enclosed herewith.

3. By 5 May 1941, to supply the NKGB of the Lithuanian SSR with the data regarding the number of persons already taken into account by you according to the listing of the categories enclosed herewith.

4. To organize immediately the factual re-checking of the accounted-for contingent by places of residence, and to start a file-formular or an accounting folder for each, and to register same with the 2nd Division of the NKGB of the LSSR /See: Order No. 001223 of the NKVD of the USSR of 11 October 1939/.

5. To start the scrutiny of the archives, also the exposal of the persons of the aforesaid categories through the existing agency (network), and simultaneously to verify their location as to place of residence, so that they be taken into operative accounting immediately.

6. Tracing files must be opened for all persons of this category, whose whereabouts could not be ascertained at their former place of residence, in conformance with Order No. 001530 of the NKVD of the USSR of 9 December 1940, and to direct these files for publication of persons wanted in the Lithuanian SSR—to the 2nd Division of the NKGB of the LSSR.

7. Every 5 days (the 5th, 10th, 15th, etc.) to submit to the 2nd Division of the NKGB of the LSSR a summary of the results of the work in compliance with this order as per enclosed form.*

8. I reiterate that, alongside the work of accounting and tracing of the contingents enumerated hereinabove, the apparatus of the NKGB must conduct the exposal and organize the accounting and screening of the residual contingents subject to accounting who are not listed in the aforesaid summary, namely: members of the parties—Krikdeims (Christian Democrats), Lyaudintinki (Populists), Esdeks (Social Democrats), Essers (Social Revolutionaries), leadership personnel and active members of the Ateitininki (Catholic Youths) and other Catholic organizations, also the rank and file personnel of the parties and organizations whose leadership is subject to primary priority accounting according to the present order—/rank and file Tautininki (Nationalists), Shaulisty (National Guardsmen), etc./.

NOTE: Detailed listing of the categories subject to accounting will be additionally forwarded within the next few days.

In the event of omission of certain categories in the prepared lists,—supplement same and inform us.

9. All work of accounting of the persons of the listed categories must be completed and formulated by 1 June 1941.

Once again I forewarn the Commanders of the county branches of the NKGB and their deputies *that the success and achievement of the objective of our measures for the crushing of the counter-revolution depend on the timely, precise and instant organization of the operative accounting.*

10. For the task of organization and direction of the accounting work, an operative group is created hereby within the 2nd Division of the NKGB, composed of:

1. Deputy Commander of the 2nd Division, Lieutenant of the State Security Forces —comrade MEDVEDEV.
2. Operative Plenipotentiary of KRO (Counter-Intelligence Division) —comrade YERIGO.
3. Operative Plenipotentiary of SPO (Social Political Division) —comrade GADLYAUSKAS.

—who are to be relieved of all other work.

SUPPLEMENT: listing and accounting forms.

People's Commissar of State Security of the Lithuanian SSR
Senior Major of the State Security Forces—
 (signed) GLADKOV

Authentic—

Codifier of the Secretariat:
 (Signed) SEMYOKHINA

8. THE "FIVE-DAY CUMULATIVE SUMMARY NO." SHOWS WHO IN LITHUANIA SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS THE ANTI-SOVIET AND COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY ELEMENT. THE SUMMARY WAS DISTRIBUTED IN LATE SPRING, 1941. IT IS DIVIDED IN TWO PRINCIPAL SECTIONS: SPO (SPECIAL DIVISION) AND KRO (MILITARY COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE). THESE FIVE-DAY SUMMARIES ARE BASED ON THE DAILY SUMMARIES

Strictly Secret

FIVE-DAY CUMULATIVE SUMMARY No. —

ACCOUNT OF ANTI-SOVIET AND COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY ELEMENT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ORDER OF NKGB OF LITHUANIAN SSR NO. 0023 OF THE 25TH OF APRIL, 1941, OF "....." COUNTY BRANCH OF NKGB OF LITH. SSR. FOR THE PERIOD OF "....." THROUGH "....." 1941

Characteristics	Investigated and taken into prosecuting account	Cleared on the covered territory	Instituted files forms	Instituted accounting files	Instituted cleared files
1	2	3	4	5	6
I. ON ACCOUNT OF SPO:					
FIRST SECTION					
a) Former leading officials of state apparatus:					
1) Basic referents.....
2) Directors of departments and up.....
3) County Chiefs.....
4) County Military commanders.....
5) Policemen.....
6) Gendarmes.....
7) Prison-keepers (who had done administrative work).....
8) Prosecutors.....
9) Members of field military courts.....
10) Members of Military Courts.....
11) Members of the Supreme Tribunal.....
12) Members of Appellate Courts.....
13) Members of Circuit courts (who had taken part in political trials).....
14) Investigators of especially important legal prosecutions.....
15) Officials of Zvalgyba (Security).....
16) Officials of Criminal Police.....

Characteristics	Investigated and taken into prosecuting account	Cleared on the covered territory	Instituted files forms	Instituted accounting files	Instituted cleared files
1	2	3	4	5	6
I. ON ACCOUNT OF SPO—Con.					
FIRST SECTION—Continued					
a) Former leading officials of state apparatus—Continued					
17) Officers of the 2nd (intelligence division of the General Staff of the Lithuanian Army).....					
18) Active participants of the bands of Plechavicius, Ber-mont-Avalov, Von Der Goltz, who had served against the Soviets in battle.....					
19) Trotskyists.....					
20) Essers.....					
21) Leading social-democrats.....					
22) Security provocateurs.....					
23) Families of the repressed.....					
24) Estate landlords.....					
25) Sizeable manufacturers.....					
26) Sizeable merchants and large houseowners.....					
SECOND SECTION					
LITHUANIAN NATIONAL COUNTER-REVOLUTION					
a) Leadership personnel of the organiza-tion of tautininki:					
1) Members of committees starting with apylinkės (districts) to chief leadership.....					
2) Activists-agitators.....					
3) Regular contributors to political press of tautininki.....					
b) Leadership of the organization "Jaunoji Lietuva":					
1) Chiefs of subdivisions from apy-linkės (districts) to members of the supreme board.....					
2) Activists-agitators.....					
3) Regular responsible contribu-tors to magazines "Jaunoji Karta" and "Akademikas".....					
Leadership personnel of the organiza-tion of tautininki and voldemarists among the inteligentsia and student youths:					
1) Neo-Lithuania.....					
2) Filiae-Lituaniae.....					
3) Geležinis Vilkas (The Iron Wolf).....					
4) Lietuva.....					
5) Vilnija.....					
6) Romuva.....					
7) Plienas.....					
8) Ramovė (reserve officers).....					
g) Leadership personnel of the association of merchants and industrialists (Ver-slininky Sajunga).....					
d) Former leadership of the Chamber of Labor (Darbo Rūmai).....					
e) Members of the central and county committees of the association of teachers named after BASANA-VICIUS.....					
zh) All active members of the voldemarist organization "The Iron Wolf", regu-lar contributors to magazines "Zygis" and "Tėvų Žemė".....					
z) Leadership personnel of the organiza-tion "Saulių Sajunga" (Riflemen's Association) beginning with platoon leaders and ending with supreme commander; members of the su-preme board; members of the staff, active members of the councils of subdivisions—companies, comple-ments—both male and female. Regu-lar contributors to the magazine "Trimitas".....					

Characteristics	Investigated and taken into prosecuting account	Cleared on the covered territory	Instituted files forms	Instituted accounting files	Instituted cleared files
1	2	3	4	5	6
I. ON ACCOUNT OF SPO—Con.					
THIRD SECTION					
POLISH NATIONAL COUNTER-REVOLUTION					
1) Leadership personnel of the party of "National Union Camp" (OZON) and regular contributors to press organs; active pilsudskites.....					
2) Leadership personnel of the party of "Nonpartisan Bloc" (BB) and regular contributors of press organs.....					
3) Leadership personnel of the "Polish Socialist Party" (PPS) and regular contributors to press organs.....					
4) Leadership personnel and all active members of the "Party of National Democrats" (ENDEKI) and regular contributors to press organs.....					
5) Leadership personnel of the organization of "Strzelcy" (Riflemen) and regular contributors to the press.....					
6) Leadership personnel of the organization of "Legionaries" and regular contributors to the press.....					
7) Leadership personnel of the organization of "Harcerstwo" (Boy Scouts) and regular contributors to the press.....					
8) All personnel of the "Polish military organization" (POW).....					
9) Active members of bourgeois-nationalistic and fascist organizations of youth and regular contributors to their press.....					
10) Former leading officials of state apparatus.....					
11) Policemen.....					
12) Employees of security police.....					
13) Officers of intelligence and counter-intelligence branches.....					
14) Prison-keepers.....					
15) Prosecutors and judicial personnel who had had relations with political trials.....					
16) Cadre officers of active service and non-commissioned officers of active service (who had served a long time in the army as superterm cadre members).....					
17) Settlers.....					
18) Officers and non-commissioned officers of KOP (Frontier Guard Corps).....					
FOURTH SECTION					
JEWISH NATIONAL COUNTER-REVOLUTION					
a) Leadership personnel of all Zionist organizations and regular contributors to the press organs.....					
b) Leadership personnel of the "Bund" and regular contributors of their press.....					
v) Leadership personnel of Jewish militarized and fascist formations:					
1) "Association of the Jews who had battled for the Lithuanian Independence".....					
2) "Association of Jewish Combatants".....					
3) "Betar", "El-At".....					
4) Revisionists Party.....					

Characteristics	Investigated and taken into prosecuting account	Cleared on the covered territory	Instituted files forms	Instituted accounting files	Instituted cleared files
1	2	3	4	5	6
I. ON ACCOUNT OF SPO—Con.					
FIFTH SECTION					
RUSSIAN WHITE-EMIGREE FORMATIONS					
a) All members of the organization of "Fraternal Russian Truth" (BRP)					
b) All members of the organization of "Russian Fascists Association" (RFS)					
v) All members of the organization "General Association of Soldiers" (ROVS)					
g) All members of the organization of youths "National Labor Association of the New Generation" (N'TSNP)					
d) All members of the organization of "Mladorosy" (Young Russians)					
c) All officers of the white armies, counter-intelligence and punitive detachments					
SIXTH SECTION					
UKRAINIAN NATIONAL COUNTER-REVOLUTION					
a) All members of the "Association of Ukrainian Nationalists" (OUN)					
b) All members of the "Ukrainian National-Democratic Association" (UNDO)					
SEVENTH SECTION					
WHITE RUTHENE NATIONAL COUNTER-REVOLUTION					
a) All leadership personnel of all nationalistic counter-revolutionary White Ruthene formations and regular contributors to their press organs					
II. ON ACCOUNT OF KRO:					
1) Employees of foreign legations, permanent representatives of foreign firms and counter agents of:					
a) Germany					
b) Italy					
v) Japan					
g) England					
d) France					
e) U. S. A.					
zh) Scandinavian countries					
z) Baltic Countries					
i) Vatican					
k) Other countries					
2) Germans who had registered for departure to Germany and later refused to depart					
3) Members of "Kulturverband" and "Mannschaft"					
4) Contrabandists and smugglers having connections with Germany					
5) Persons residing in the frontier zone who have relatives in Germany					
6) Families and nearest relatives of persons who had fled abroad (traitors of the country)					
7) Persons who had attempted to flee from the Lithuanian SSR to Germany under an excuse of repatriation					
8) Repatriates arriving in the Lithuanian SSR from Germany					

9. INSTRUCTIONS TO PREPARE THE 5-DAY ACCOUNTING SUMMARIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH ORDER 0023

INSTRUCTION ON THE PREPARATION OF FIVE-DAY ACCOUNTING SUMMARIES OF A/S (ANTI-SOVIET) AND K/B (COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY) ELEMENTS, IN CONFORMANCE WITH ORDER NO. 0023 OF THE NKGB (PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIAT OF STATE SECURITY) OF THE LITH. SSR DATED 25 APRIL 1941

1) Only the categories listed therein are to be entered in the summary. Leadership personnel must in no event be confused with the rank and file personnel.

2) Each county branch and subdivision prepare the data concerning its own particular county; the operative branches of the NKGB prepare the data only for the city of Kaunas.

3) For the more convenient and presentable utilization of the summaries, they must be prepared with cumulative totals, that is, to the total figures of the disclosed and accounted-for cases in the preceding five-day summaries, must be added the data for the current five-day period and this cumulative total figure is to be entered in the in the next five-day summary. Let us suppose that in the column "Disclosed and taken into investigative account" for 15th May a total of 100 persons is listed, and during the current five-day period 50 persons are disclosed; consequently, 150 persons must be shown in that column of the 20th May summary, also in the other columns. Furthermore, in order to show the work achieved within the current five-day period, it is necessary to indicate the total figure by a numerator, and the current five-day data—are to be indicated by a denominator. For instance,—100+50 will make the total figure for 20th May, wherein the figure 50—is the data of the current five-day period; this means that 150/50 must be shown in the summary as of 20th May in the above indicated column. The numerals and fractions must be written legibly and must not be blurred, in order to allow for no error.

4) In column 2, "Disclosed and taken into investigative account," all persons disclosed in consequence of the study of the archive materials, agency reports, testimony of the arrested persons and witnesses, are to be entered, regardless of whether the charges against these persons are established or not. All transient agency and accounting cases are to be entered similarly.

According to the degree of disclosure of new persons, this column is gradually enlarged by the accumulating total.

In column 3, "Verified on the covered territory," are entered all those persons among the disclosed and taken into investigative account, whose residence within the territory of the respective county is verified.

In column 4, "Instituted formular folders," are entered all persons for whom formular and agency files are made and registered with the Division 2 of the NKGB.

In column 5, "Instituted accounting folders," are entered all persons concerning whom the Division 2 had published a search within the territory of the republic.

EXAMPLE:

Classification	Disclosed and taken into investigative account	Of These			
		Verified on the covered territory	Instituted formular folders (incl. transient agency cases)	Instituted accounting folders	Instituted tracing cases
1	2	3	4	5	6
Former policemen	137/17	120/15	13/3	75/23	/1-

*Acting Commander, Division 2 of the NKGB of the Lith. SSR
Senior Lieutenant of State Security Forces*

(PYADYSHEV) /signed/ Pyadyshev

**10. "PEOPLE'S ENEMIES" (THE DAILY SUMMARIES UPON WHICH WERE
BASED THE FIVE-DAY CUMULATIVE SUMMARIES)**

Translation

Strictly Secret

DAILY SUMMARY No. -----

Of the account of the anti-Soviet, criminal and socially
dangerous element in the county of -----

For " " ----- 1941.

Classification	Total instituted files/persons	Of these	
		For arrest files/persons	For exile files/persons
SECTION ONE			
<i>Active members of counter-revolutionary parties and participants of anti-Soviet, nationalist, white-guardist organizations (the Tautininki, Catholic organizations, Shaulists, etc.)</i>			
LITHUANIAN NATIONAL COUNTER-REVOLUTION.			
a/ Leading personnel of the organization of Tautininki (Nationalists):			
1. Committee members, beginning with apylinkės (districts) up to the main leadership			
2. Activists-agitators /according to data/			
3. Regular contributors to the political press of the Tautininki			
b/ Leadership of the organization "Jaunoji Lietuva" (Young Lithuania):			
1. Chiefs of the subdivisions beginning with apylinkės (districts) up to members of the supreme board			
2. Activists-agitators /according to data/			
3. Regular responsible contributors to the magazines—"Jaunoji Karta" (The Young Generation) and "Akademikas" (The Academician)			
v/ Leading personnel of the organization of Tautininki and Voldemarists among the intelligentsia and studentry—			
1. Neo-Lithuania			
2. Filiae Lituaniae			
3. The Geležinis Vilkas (The Iron Wolf)			
4. Lietuva (Lithuania)			
5. Vilnija (The Vilnius Area)			
6. Romuva			
7. Plienas (The Steel)			
8. Ateitininki (Catholic Students "Future" Fraternity)			
9. Ramovė /reserve officers/			
f/ Leadership of the association of merchants-industrialists ("Verslininkų Sąjunga"/, central and county committeemen /according to data/			
d/ Former leadership of the Chamber of Labor /Darbo Rūmai/ — /central committeemen/			
e/ Members of the central and county boards of the teachers association named after Basanavičius			
zh/ The entire membership of the Voldemarist organization "The Iron Wolf," regular contributors to the magazines—"Zygis" (Action) and "Tėvų Žemė" (The Fatherland)			
z/ Leading personnel of the organization "Saulių Sąjunga" (The National Guard)—from platoon commanders to commander-in-chief of the association; members of the central board, members of the association's staff, members of councils of the subdivisions—companies, regiments, both male and female. Regular contributors to the magazine "Trinitas" (The Trumpet)			
l/ Catholic organizations:			
1. Members of the central Catholic Action			
2. Editors of Catholic newspapers			
3. Leadership of the Christian Democratic Party			
4. Leadership of the association "Darbo Federacija" (Federation of Labor)			
5. Leadership of the "Pavasarniki" (The Spring—Catholic youth association)			
6. Leadership of "The White Steed"			
k/ Leftist bourgeois parties:			
1. Liaudininki (The Populists) /in the presence of the material data/			
2. Social-Democrats /likewise/			
3. Zionists-Socialists /likewise/			

Classification	Total instituted files/persons	Of these	
		For arrest files/persons	For exile files/persons
SECTION ONE—Continued			
POLISH NATIONAL COUNTER-REVOLUTION			
1. Leading personnel of the party of "The Camp of National Unity" /OZON/ and regular contributors to the press organs; active Pilsudskites/county committeemen and upwards/.....			
2. Leading personnel of the party of "The Non-Partisan Bloc" /BB/ and regular contributors to the press organs /county committeemen and upwards/.....			
3. Leading personnel of "The Polish Socialist Party" /PPS/ and regular contributors to the press organs /according to data/.....			
4. All active members of "The Party of Populist Democrats" /the Endeki/ and regular contributors to press organs.....			
5. Leading personnel of the organization "Strzelcy" (The Riflemen) and regular contributors to the press—platoon commanders and upwards.....			
6. Leading personnel of the organization "The Legionnaires" and regular contributors to the press—platoon commanders and upwards.....			
7. The entire personnel of "The Polish Military Organization" /POW/.....			
8. Leadership of the bourgeois-nationalist and fascist youth organizations and regular contributors to their press.....			
JEWISH NATIONAL COUNTER-REVOLUTION			
a/ Leading personnel of the Zionist organizations and regular contributors to the press organs /county committeemen and upwards/.....			
b/ Leading personnel of the "Bund" and regular contributors of their press organs /county committeemen and upwards/.....			
v/ Leading personnel of the Jewish militarized and fascist formations:			
1. "Association of Jewish Veterans of the Wars for Lithuanian Independence" /committeemen/.....			
2. "Association of Jewish Combatants" /county committeemen and upwards/.....			
3. "Betar", "El-AI" /town committeemen and upwards/.....			
RUSSIAN WHITE-EMIGREE FORMATIONS			
a/ All members of the organization "Fraternal Russian Truth" /BRP/.....			
b/ All members of the organization "Russian Fascist Association" /RFS/.....			
v/ All members of the organization "General Russian Warriors Association" /ROVS/.....			
g/ All members of the organization "National Labor Association of the New Generation" /NTSNP/.....			
d/ All members of the organization "Mladorossy" /Young Russians/.....			
UKRAINIAN NATIONAL COUNTER-REVOLUTION			
a/ All members of the "Union of Ukrainian Nationalists" /OUN/.....			
b/ All members of the "Ukrainian National Democratic Union" /UNDO/.....			
WHITERUTHENIAN NATIONAL COUNTER-REVOLUTION			
a/ Leading personnel of all nationalistic counter-revolutionary Whiteruthenian (Byelorussian) formations and regular contributors to the press organs /county committeemen and upwards/.....			
THE K/R (COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY) ELEMENT			
a/ Active participants of the bands of—Plechavičius, Bermondit-Avalov, von der Goltz, Grigaliūmas-Glovackis, who had campaigned against the Soviets in Lithuania.....			
b/ Trotskyists.....			
c/ Essers (Socialist Revolutionaries) /if material data available/.....			

Classification	Total instituted files/persons	Of these	
		For arrest files/persons	For exile files/persons
SECTION TWO			
<i>Former security officers, gendarmes, leadership personnel of the former police and prison wardens, including rank-and-file policemen and prison guards concerning whom compromising materials are available.</i>			
1. Commanding personnel of the police			
2. Members of the ordinary police ranks—according to data			
3. Gendarmes (military police)			
4. Prison wardens /leading personnel/			
5. Ordinary prison guard personnel—according to data			
6. Security officers of the <i>szalg'ba</i> , <i>Saugumas</i>			
7. Criminal police officers—leadership personnel			
8. Ordinary employees of the criminal police—according to data			
9. Officers of the 2nd /Intelligence/ Section of the General Staff of the Lithuanian Army			
10. Provocateurs of the security office			
11. Polish policemen /commanding personnel/			
12. Members of the police ranks /Polish/—according to data			
13. Security employees of former Poland			
14. Officers of the intelligence and counter-intelligence sections of former Poland			
15. Prison wardens of former Poland—leadership personnel			
16. Prison guards of the ranks—according to data			
17. Officers and non-commissioned officers of the Frontier Guard Corps of former Poland			
SECTION THREE			
<i>Former sizable estate owners, sizable manufacturers and high officials of the former Lithuanian state apparatus.</i>			
1. Basic referents (government bureau counsellors)			
2. Directors of the departments and upwards			
3. County prefects			
4. Military commandants of counties			
5. Prosecuting state attorneys			
6. Members of the field summary courts martial			
7. Members of the military courts			
8. Members of the Supreme Tribunal			
9. Members of the Appellate Chambers			
10. Members of the Circuit Courts who had taken part in political trials			
11. Inquestors (investigators) of the especially important trials			
12. Estate owners /who had owned upward of 100 hectares of land or individual enterprises/			
13. Sizable manufacturers /whose enterprises were nationalized/			
14. Sizable merchants and sizable home owners /turnover in excess of 250,000 Litas annually or assets valued at —250,000 Litas/ (\$25,000)			
15. Former prosecuting attorneys and judges of former Poland who had contact with political trials			
SECTION FOUR			
<i>Former officers of the Polish, Lithuanian and White armies concerning whom compromising materials are available.</i>			
1. Officers of the Lithuanian army /according to data/			
2. Officers of the former Polish army /according to data/			
3. All officers of the White armies, counter-intelligences and punitive organs			
SECTION FIVE			
<i>Criminal element continuing to engage in criminal activities</i>			
SECTION SIX			
<i>Prostitutes, formerly registered in the former police organs of Lithuania and Poland, who presently continue to engage in prostitution</i>			
SECTION SEVEN			
<i>Persons arrived from Germany under repatriation, also Germans registered for repatriation to Germany who had refused to leave, concerning whom materials are available regarding their anti-Soviet activity and their suspected contacts with foreign intelligence services.</i>			
1. Persons who had registered to leave for Germany but subsequently refused to leave /in the presence of material data and suspects/			

Classification	Total instituted files/persons	Of these	
		For arrest files/persons	For exile files/persons
SECTION SEVEN—Continued			
2. Members of the "Kulturverband" and "Mannschaft" /if data are available/			
3. Contrabandists and smugglers, connected with Germany /according to data/			
4. Persons having relatives in Germany /according to data/			
5. Persons arrived in the Lithuanian SSR from Germany or by way of Germany /if data are available regarding their anti-Soviet activity and data of relationship with the German or other intelligence services/			
6. Employees of foreign Legations, permanent representatives of foreign firms and agencies of			
a/ Germany			
b/ Italy			
v/ Japan			
g/ England			
d/ France			
e/ America			
zh/ Scandinavian countries			
z/ Vatican			
j/ Other states			
/according to available data/			
7. Former employees of the Legations of Lithuania abroad			
SECTION EIGHT			
<i>Members of families of the persons of the categories indicated in sections 1, 2, 3 and 4, who had resided with them or were maintained by them until the moment of their arrest</i>			
1. Members of families of the participants of counter-revolutionary nationalist organizations, whose (family) heads passed into an outlaw status and are in hiding from government organs			
2. Members of families of the participants of counter-revolutionary organizations whose (family) heads had been sentenced to VMN /the supreme penal measure—death. <i>The Translator</i> /			
3. Families of the repressed for counter-revolutionary activities			
4. Families of the traitors of the homeland /who had fled abroad/			
SECTION NINE			
<i>Refugees from former Poland</i>			
NOTATION:			
1. In the column "Total instituted files/ persons," enter the total number of the instituted cases for detention and exile; in entering, show the number of cases by numerator, and the total number of persons embraced in these files by denominator.			
2. In the column "For arrest files/persons," show the number of the instituted cases by numerator, and the number of persons by denominator.			
3. In the column "For exile files/persons," show the number of cases by numerator, and the total number of persons subject to the exiling, by denominator.			

COMMANDER:—

---“-----”-----1941

City of—

I

*Strictly Secret.***ABSTRACT ON FORMULARIZATION OF THE FILES FOR ARREST AND DEPORTATION.—****1. The file for arrest.**

1. The folder.
2. Description of the papers found in the file.
3. The abstract /detailed contents of the materials is to be reduced to writing quite concretely/.
4. The abstract of the archivarian materials.
5. Testimony of witnesses.
6. The verification (of the whereabouts).
7. The decision to arrest—4 copies.
8. The order.
9. The protocol of the search.
10. The inventory of the /basic/ property.
11. The protocol of the inquest.
12. The report of the collaborator who conducted the operation.

ANNOTATION :

1. Accounting index card No. 1 for Department 2 of the NKGB.
2. Transcript of the basic documents of the file /the decision to arrest, the abstract, the inventory of the property, etc./ must be left in the county branch, too, for further utilization.

2. The file for deportation.

1. The folder.
2. Description of the papers found in the file.
3. The verification (of the whereabouts).
4. Transcript of the decision to arrest the head of the family /or an abstract of the inquest file of the person already arrested/.
5. The decision to deport.
6. The inventory of the property.
7. The report of the collaborator who conducted the operation.

ANNOTATION :

1. Accounting index card No. 1 for Department 2 of the NKGB is made for every adult of 16 years upwards in a single copy.
2. Transcripts of the basic documents of the file /the decision to arrest, the abstract, the property inventory, etc./ must be left in the county, branch, too, for further utilization.

Attest—(signed) RODIONOV

II.

Strictly Secret.
Exemplar No.--2

MEMO

The verification of the whereabouts must be conducted in a most cautious conspiratorial manner.

In verifying the whereabouts utilize:

1. The current passportization of the population. Verifying data to be gained from the passport bureaus through the UO (County Branch) Chiefs of the NKVD under the pretext of inspection of the progress of passportization.

2. Grain deliveries—under the pretext of inspection of the progress of grain deliveries to the state.

3. Agency facilities to be utilized widely in identifying the persons of interest, without in any event explaining to the agents the purpose of the identifications.

4. Under the pretext of passportization and grain deliveries, in case of necessity—dispatch the operational personnel and militia workers for the task of identification /in every such case, the action must proceed only in behalf of the passport desks of the militia/.

III.

Strictly Secret.
Exemplar No. 2

MEMO REGARDING PROPERTY STATUS.

In the dossier of the property status the following must be shown:

1. The number of hectares owned prior to the establishment of the Soviet rule in Lithuania and amount of landholdings at the present time.—Arable land, forests, pastures to be indicated separately.
2. The number of horses owned.
3. Large horned cattle.
4. Small cattle.
5. Living structures.
6. Farming structures.
7. Agricultural machinery and inventory: flailers, seeders, reapers, indicating also—mechanical or horse traction.
8. Collateral income—mills, smithies, etc.

Abstracts regarding the property status to be gained from the Volispolkoms (Township Executive Committees), Uispolkoms (County Executive Committees), land and financing organs under the pretext of passportization, fixing of the quotas of grain deliveries and other innocent plausible pretexts, in every case acting in behalf of the militia.

IV.

Strictly Secret.

MEMO

1. Active members of counter-revolutionary parties and participants of anti-Soviet nationalist white-guardist organizations /Tautininki, Shaulists, Catholic organizations, etc./.

2. Former security officers, gendarmes, directing personnel of the former prisons, also the rank-and-file policemen and prison guards regarding whom compromising materials are available.

3. Sizable land owners, sizable manufacturers and officials of the former Lithuanian state apparatus.

4. Former officers of the Polish, Lithuanian and White armies, concerning whom compromising materials are available.

5. Members of families of the indicated categories who had lived with them or were maintained by them.

6. Members of families of the participants of counter-revolutionary organizations who had passed into outlaw status and are in hiding from government organs.

7. Members of families of the participants of counter-revolutionary organizations whose (family) heads were sentenced to VMN (The supreme penal measure—death. The Translator.)

8. Persons who had arrived from Germany under repatriation, also the Germans who had registered for repatriation to Germany and refused to leave, concerning whom materials are available of their anti-Soviet activity and suspect relations with foreign intelligence services.

An accounting file must be instituted for every person taken into accounting, according to the enumerated categories. The following documents must be enclosed in an accounting file:

- 1/ Agency materials,*
- 2/ Archivarian materials,
- 3/ Full identifying data regarding the family head /questionnaire/
- 4/ Identifying data for the family members /questionnaire/
- 5/ Abstract according to agency and official data.
- 6/ Detailed abstract of the property status.

*Informer's reports.

11. JOINT NKGB-NKVD ORDER ON USE OF NKVD "OPERATIONAL TROOPS"

36

/handwritten/ Incoming No. 97 v
3/VI-41

Strictly Secret.

ORDER

OF THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR OF STATE SECURITY
OF THE LSSR
AND

OF THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR OF THE INTERIOR
OF THE LSSR FOR YEAR 1941.

No.-3/6 Contents: Regarding the utilization of the operational troops of the NKVD for operations waged by the organs of the NKGB.

No.-3/6 of 26 April 1941.

City of Kaunas.

In connection with the bisection of the People's Commissariat of the Interior [into two Commissariats: the NKVD and the NKGB] and the retention of the operational troops of the NKVD within the system of the People's Commissariat of the Interior, utilization of the operational troops for the operations waged by the departments of the NKGB- /SPO, KRO, Sledchast, etc./, and by county branches, must observe the following order:

1. Notifications regarding the necessary number of troops for the waging of an operation, must be presented by operational Otdyels in written form, well in advance, at the main office—to People's Commissar of the Interior—comrade GUZEVIČIUS, or to his Deputies; in the city of Vilnius,—in the absence of the Narkom, to his Deputy-comrade DONTZOV, or to chief of the NKVD Board—comrade VILDŽIŪNAS.

2. The command of an operational regiment shall satisfy the NKGB demand in conformance with the notifications confirmed by the Narkom of the Interior of the latter's Deputies, and in Vilnius—by Deputy Narkom or Chief of the UNKVD, in the strength required for the operations waged by the NKGB.

Narkom of State Security of the LSSR

Senior Major of State Security /GLADKOV/

Narkom of the Interior of the LSSR

Senior Major of State Security /GUZEVIČIUS

(handwritten) Attested: SEMYOKHINA

3. "Classified List" Dated April 26, 1941.

Strictly Secret.

THE LIST OF CLASSIFICATIONS OF COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES BY PERSONS WHO ARE SUBJECT TO OPERATIONAL ACCOUNTING

1. The Line of S. P. O.

a/ Former leading officials of the State apparatus:

1. Head referents.
2. Department heads and upwards.
3. County prefects.
4. County Military Commandants.
5. Policemen.
6. Military police.
7. Prison employees /who had done administrative work/.
8. Prosecutors.
9. Members of the military field courts.
10. Members of Circuit courts /who had taken part in political trials/.
11. Members of Courts-Martial.

12. Members of the Supreme Tribunal.
13. Members of the Appellate Chambers.
14. Investigators for especially important trials.
15. Officials of the Žvalgyba [Security Police].
16. Officials of the Criminal police.
17. Officers of the 2nd /Intelligence/ Department of the Lithuanian Army's General Staff.
18. Active members of the bands of PLECHAVIČIUS, BERMONDT-AVALOV, von-der-GOLTZ, who had taken the field against the Soviets in Lithuania.
19. Trotskyists.
20. SR's [Socialist Revolutionaries].
21. Leading members of the Social Democracy.
22. Agent-provocateurs of the [Tsarist] Security.
23. Families of the repressed.
24. Estate owners.
25. Sizable manufacturers.
26. Sizable merchants and sizable building proprietors /whose property was valued not less than 60,000 Litass/. [\$10,000.]

ANNOTATION:

The accounting regarding the last category is to be conducted jointly with the organs of the RKM and organs of the Narkomfin [People's Commissariat of Finance].

LITHUANIAN NATIONAL COUNTER REVOLUTION.

a/ Leadership personnel of the Tautininki [Nationalist] organization; committeemen beginning with the apylinkės [district] up to chief leadership; activists-agitators and regular contributors to the political press of the Tautininki /after subdividing them according to office held by them/.

b/ Leadership personnel of the "Jaunoji Lietuva" [Young Lithuania] organization, beginning with district leaders up to members of the supreme boards; activists-agitators and regular responsible contributors to the magazines "Jaunoji Karta" [The Young Generation] and "Akademikas" [The Academician].

v/ Leadership personnel of the Tautininki and Voldemarist organizations among the intelligentsia and students, such as:

1. Neo-Lithuania,
2. Filiae Lituaniae,
3. Geležinis Vilkas [The Iron Wolf],

— Page 3 —

4. Lietuva [Lithuania],
5. Vilnija [The Vilnius Area],
6. Romuva,
7. Plienas,
8. Ramovė /reserve officers/.

g/ Leadership of the Association of Tradesmen /Verslininkų Sąjunga/.

d/ Former leaders of the Chamber of Labor /Darbo Rūmai/.

e/ Members of the central and county boards of the association of teachers named after Basanavičius.

zh/ All regular members of the Voldemarist organization "The Iron Wolf," regular contributors to the magazines "Žygis" and "Tėvų Žemė."

z/ Leadership personnel of the "Saulėi Sąjunga" [National Guard] organization, starting with platoon commanders up to commanders-in-chief of the Association, members of the central board, members of the Staff of the Association, active members of councils of the subdivisions—companies, units, both male and female.

Regular contributors to the magazine "Trimitas" [The Trumpet].

POLISH NATIONAL COUNTER-REVOLUTION.

1. Leadership personnel of "The Camp of National Unity" /OZON/ party and regular contributors to its press organs.

2. Leadership personnel of the "Non-partisan Bloc" /BB/ party and regular contributors to its press organs.

3. Leadership personnel of the "Polska Partja Socjalistyczna" /PPS/ [Polish Socialist Party] and regular contributors to its press organs.

4. Leadership personnel and active members of the "Party of National Democrats" /the Endeki/ and regular contributors to its press organs.

5. Leadership personnel of the "Strzelcy" organization [Riflemen, equivalent to "Šaulių Šąjunga" of Lithuania and the National Guard in the United States] and regular contributors to its press.

— Page 4 —

6. Leadership personnel of the "Legionaries" organization and regular contributors to its press.

7. Leadership personnel of the "Harcerstwo" [Boy Scouts and Girl Guides] organization and regular contributors to its press.

8. The entire membership of the "Polish Military Organization" /POW/.

9. Active members of bourgeois-nationalist and fascist organizations of youths and regular contributors to their press.

10. Former directing officials of the state apparatus.

11. Policemen.

12. Security officers.

13. Officers of the intelligence and counter-intelligence departments.

14. Prison wardens.

15. Prosecutors and judges connected with political trials.

16. Cadre officers of the regular army and non-commissioned officers on active duty/who had served long terms in the army in excess of conscription term—the cadre personnel/.

17. Settlers.

18. Officers and non-commissioned officers of the KOP /Frontier Guard Corps/.

JEWISH NATIONAL COUNTER-REVOLUTION.

a/ Leadership personnel of all Zionist organizations and regular contributors to their press organs.

b/ Leadership personnel of the "Bund" and regular contributors to its press organs.

— Page 5 —

v/ Leadership personnel of Jewish militarized and fascist formations.

1. "Association of Jewish Veterans of Wars for Lithuanian Independence."

2. "Association of Jewish Combatants."

3. "Betar."

4. "El-Al."

RUSSIAN WHITE-EMIGRE FORMATIONS.

a/ All members of the "Fraternity of Russian Truth" /BRP/.

b/ All members of the "Russian General Association of Warriors" /ROVS/.

v/ All members of the "Russian Fascist Association."

g/ All members of the youth organization of "National Labor Association of the New Generation" /NTSNP/.

d/ All members of the "Mladorosi" [Young Russians] organization.

e/ All officers of the White armies, counter-intelligencies and punitive detachments.

UKRAINIAN NATIONAL COUNTER-REVOLUTION.

a/ All members of the "Association of Ukrainian Nationalists" /OUN/.

b/ All members of the "Ukrainian National Democratic Union" /UNDO/.

WHITERUTHENIAN NATIONAL COUNTER-REVOLUTION

a/ Leadership personnel of all nationalist counter-revolutionary Whiteruthenian [Byelorussian] formations and regular contributors to their press organs.

II. The line of K. R. O.

1. Employees of foreign legations, permanent representatives of foreign firms and counter-agents of:
 - a/ Germany
 - b/ Italy
 - v/ Japan
 - g/ England
 - d/ France
 - e/ U. S. A.
 - zh/ Scandinavian countries
 - z/ Baltic countries
 - i/ Vatican
 - k/ Other countries.
2. Germans who had refused to leave for Germany.
3. Members of the "Kulturverband" and "Mannschaft."
4. Contrabandists and smugglers, connected with Germany.
5. Persons residing in the frontier zone who have relatives in Germany.
6. Families and next of kin of persons who had fled abroad.
7. Persons who attempted to flee from the Lithuanian SSR to Germany under the guise of repatriation.
8. Repatriates arrived in the Lithuanian SSR from Germany or by way of Germany regarding whom sufficient data is available concerning their connections with the German or other foreign intelligence services.

Attest: /signed/ , SEMYOKHINA

**12. REGARDING NEGLIGENCE IN ACCOUNTING WHICH STILL
PERSISTED**

(by hand) YUDIN
TO

Strictly Secret

CHIEFS OF: RO, KRO, SPO OF THE NKGB OF THE LITH. SSR,
CHIEF OF THE VILNIUS UNKGB OF THE LITHUANIAN SSR,
CHIEFS OF COUNTY BRANCHES AND PRECINCTS OF THE NKGB,
COMMANDERS OF RAILWAY UNITS AND OPERATIONAL POINTS.

To Deputy Chief of the U.O. of the NKGB in Alytus
comrade *Yudin*
city of *Alytus*

Regardless of its great political importance, order No. 0023 of April 25, 1941, by the People's Commissar of State Security of the Lith. SSR, promulgated in compliance with the directives by the NKGB of the USSR, was not fully understood and is not being executed in practice by chiefs of certain county branches and precincts, by departmental chiefs of the UNKGB of Vilnius, and by chiefs of departments of the central apparatus.

Five-day summaries required by the said order concerning the accounting for the anti-Soviet element, are being dispatched with gross delay and only after several reminders.

A first five-day summary regarding the situation as of May 1st, was received from the UNKGB of Vilnius—on May 12th and only after repeated demands by Department 2 and by the leadership of the Narkomat; the second five-day summary was not received up to this date. Comrade SHUSTAREV, chief of the Kaunas County branch, transmitted his second five-day summary only on May 16th; chiefs of the County branches of: Tauragė, Telšiai, Utyany [Utena], Švencionėli [Švenčionėliai], and chiefs of the KRO and SPO presented no five-day summaries whatsoever as of May 10th.

Summaries themselves, as submitted by county branches and precincts, attest to a formal and irresponsible outlook toward execution of this politically important order.

— Page 2 —

The county branch of Šiauliai, regardless of the great pollution of the county with anti-Soviet element and the mass of members of the formerly existent counter-revolutionary parties and organizations, disclosed in neither the first nor the second five-day summary and failed to take into accounting any mem-

ber whatsoever under the classification of "Polish national counter-revolution," or under any classification indicated in the summary,—and this in the presence of a great quantity of archive materials of these counter-revolutionary organizations and of other institutions of Smetona, which are at the disposal of the county branch.

Furthermore, the Šiauliai county branch does not trade [the present home addresses of] the disclosed persons and does not take them into an operational accounting. Thus, for instance, of the 100 persons disclosed to have been former policemen, not one person was traced and none taken into respective operational accounting.

The Šakiai county branch, regardless of the fact that, in the past, this county had been the mainstay of counter-revolution, keeps but solitary individuals under account by all categories. Such categories as the leadership personnel of the Tautininki [Nationalists] organization, the Voldemarists, "Jaunoji Lietuva" [Young Lithuania], "Šaulių Sąjunga" [the National Guard], etc., are entirely missing in the accounts.

In a county as large as that of Panevėžys, likewise, only solitary individuals were taken into an accounting. Of the disclosed 93 former policemen, not one was traced within the serviced territory and none were taken into an operational accounting. None of the leadership personnel of the Tautininki, Šaulisty, not to mention other categories, were taken into an operational accounting.

The summaries submitted by Zarasai county branch for the first and second five-day periods, differ not at all from one another. The summary for the second five-day period was made by copying mechanically the figures of the first summary. Furthermore, of the 174 policemen carried under a dossier accounting, not one was traced and taken into an operational accounting. Likewise, the whereabouts of no one was —Page 3— traced, of the 602 persons listed in the dossier accounting of the regular contributors to the political press of the Tautininki and of the 1,762 persons of the leadership personnel of the "Šaulių Sąjunga" organization.

In Ukmergė county, of the 2,214 persons of the leadership personnel of the "Šaulių Sąjunga" identified within the serviced area, only 16 persons were taken into an operational accounting.

The situation is analogous in certain other county branches.

Five-day summaries are, for the most part, improperly drawn by the county branches, each branch prepares them in its own peculiar manner, so that it is quite impossible to draft an over-all summary for the republic on the strength of the five-day summaries received. Certain branches enter a cumulative total, some record in the summary what had been disclosed and accounted-for within the past five days, while in some counties it is difficult even to surmise what figures were entered in the five-day report.

The UNKGB of Vilnius in its submitted summary did not at all indicate the quantity of anti-Soviet element identified and taken into the dossier accounting.

The Vilkaviškis county branch indicated 103 policemen in the column 2 of "Disclosed and taken into dossier accounting," and showed 148 persons in the column 3 of "Traced within the serviced territory," although column 3 must be deduced from column 2. All other items were similarly filled in.

The summary prepared by Ukmergė county branch was drafted incorrectly: it indicated 10 persons in column 2 of "Disclosed and taken into dossier accounting," and showed 305 persons in column 3 of "Traced within the serviced territory." Of the leadership personnel of the "Neo-Lithuania" organization, 3 persons were shown disclosed and taken into dossier accounting, but 780 were marked traced within the serviced territory. Of the leadership personnel of the "Šaulių Sąjunga" organization, 22 persons were shown disclosed and taken into dossier accounting, but 2214 were shown traced within the serviced territory. —Page 4— All other items were similarly filled in. Besides, the figure of "2214" appears doubtful. If ordinary members of the "Šaulių Sąjunga" organization were included in that figure, it is improper and must be ascribed to so-called—rubbing of the eyes. ["Pulling the wool over the eyes."]

An analogous situation is evident in the summary submitted by Zarasai county branch, where the number of the regular contributors to the political press of the Tautininkai is marked—602 persons, the leadership personnel of the "Šaulių Sąjunga"—1762 persons, which doubtless does not accord with reality and likewise means the rubbing of the eyes.

The facts cited above glaringly attest that chiefs of the county branches and precincts, chiefs of the Otdyels of the Narkomat, failed to understand that responsibility which has been placed upon them by the above-mentioned order, and consequently they failed to organize its execution in a proper manner.

Deeming such a situation to be intolerable for the future—

I PROPOSE :

1) That chiefs of the county branches and precincts and their deputies, chief of the UNKGB of Vilnius, chiefs of KRO and SPO, commanders of railway units and operational points,—personally assume leadership in the task of fulfilling order No. 0023 of April 25th, current year, of the NKGB of the Lith. SSR, and that they complete the task no later than by the 1st of June.

2) That chiefs of branches and precincts, in person, prepare and verify the five-day summaries, and that misleading confusion and the rubbing of the eyes be in no event allowed.

Only those categories must be entered in the summaries which are indicated in the enumeration of classifications. Ordinary members of the Tautininkai, "Šaulių Sąjunga," and other organizations, need not be listed in the summaries: this category is accountable in a routine manner in accordance with order No. 001223 of the NKVD of the USSR.

Crossing out of individual classifications in the summary and entering of new ones in their place, must in no event be permitted.

— Page 5 —

3) In order that the categories enumerated in the summary be more accurately reflected in accounting, I PROPOSE that an over-all summary be drafted on the strength of definitely verified data of the situation as of May 20th. In drafting the summary, the herewith attached instruction must be strictly observed.

4) Either an accounting folder or a formular file must be instituted for every disclosed and traced person of the categories enumerated in the summary.

All the materials pertinent to a given person must be concentrated in these files.

A precisely and clearly drafted dossier [*spravka*, an abstract or digest] must be enclosed in each folder.

The dossier must be drafted in triplicate by multiplication. Of these, one copy must be basted in the folder as the first sheet, the second copy must remain unbasted, and the third copy must be forwarded immediately to the NKGB simultaneously with the five-day summary. Whenever the folder is requisitioned by the Narkomat, the second exemplar is retained at the County branch for further summarizing work.

5) Submit the over-all five-day summary not later than by the 22nd of May.

Enclosure:

a) instruction

b) "500" pieces of summary blanks.

By direction—

Narkom of State Security of the Lith. SSR Senior Major of State Security
GLADKOV

Attested:

Acting Chief of Department 2 of the NKGB of the Lith. SSR
Senior Lieutenant of State Security
(Pyadyshev) /signed/ PYADYSHEV

May 17th, 1941

No. 5/2405

city of Kaunas

vf

6. Special Forms for "Research in Archives"

Strictly Secret

TO ALL CHIEFS OF COUNTY BRANCHES AND PRECINCTS OF THE NKGB OF THE LITHUANIAN SSR

To Deputy Chief of Alytus U.O.
comrade Yudin
city of Alytus

Supplementing the instruction of the Narkom of State Security of the Lithuanian SSR, No. 5/2405 of April [May] 17, 1941, we are forwarding forms—summaries for filling, regarding:

- a) former policemen
- b) collaborators of the political police
- v) officers of the White army
- g) operators of the 2nd (intelligence) Department of the General Staff of the Lithuanian Army
- d) county prefects
- e) employees of courts, prosecutor's offices, members of field courts-martial
- zh) leaders of the Tautininki [Nationalists]
- z) leaders of the Shaulists [National Guardsmen] and counter-revolutionary organizations,

who were disclosed by [the study of] the archive materials of the former Smetonite institutions and traced within the territory of the serviced county. We repeat that these summaries are to be filled only regarding persons disclosed by archive materials. While general summaries pertaining to the agentura work, formular and accounting work, are to be filled regarding all persons for whom files were instituted. (General summary embraces agentura, inquest, archive materials, statements of citizens, etc.).

The dossier regarding persons disclosed from archive materials, is to be basted in the agency or accounting file, as an official document corroborating the service in the police, or membership in an organization, etc.

Enclosure: "130" pieces of summary blanks.

*Deputy Narkom of State Security of the Lith. SSR—
Major of State Security—*

BYKOV.

*Acting Chief of Department 2 of the NKGB of the LSSR—
Lieutenant of State Security—*

PYADYSHEV.

May 17th, 1941

No. 5/2408

Attested:

*Chief of Section 1 of Department 2 of the NKGB of the Lith. SSR
Junior Lieutenant of State Security*

KABLUKOV

Enclosure:

Strictly Secret.

DAILY SUMMARY OF ACCOUNT REGARDING ANTI-SOVIET ELEMENTS

For " "..... 1941.

Item Nos.	Classification	Disclosed and accounted for the previous day	Disclosed and accounted for this day	Total disclosed and instituted cases	Remarks:
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Active members of k/r parties and members of a/S nationalist white-guardist organizations— a/ Tautiminki..... b/ Voldemarists..... v/ Shaulists..... g/ Young-Lithuanians..... d/ Leaders of Catholic organizations..... e/ Leaders of Jewish fascist organizations..... zh/ Others.....				
2.	Former security, military police and leadership personnel of the police— a/ Security officers..... b/ Military police..... v/ Policemen.....				
3.	Estate owners, manufacturers, responsible officials of the Lithuanian bourgeois apparatus— a/ Estate owners..... b/ Manufacturers..... v/ Responsible officials.....				

13. MOSCOW ORDERS FOR THE DIRECTION, PREPARATION, AND EXECUTION OF PURGES IN LITHUANIA

2

ORDER OF THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR OF STATE SECURITY OF THE LSSR FOR YEAR 1941.

Contents: No. 0037 Preparations for the operation.—

No. 0037 of May 23, 1941.

City of Kaunas.

In carrying out the directive No. 77, of May 19, 1941, of the People's Commissar of State Security of the Union of SSRs, State Security Commissar or 3rd Rank—comrade MERKULOV,—

I ORDER:

I. For the direction, preparation and execution of the operation of purging the Lithuanian SSR from the hostile anti-Soviet and criminal and socially-dangerous element, to create at the NKGB of the Lithuanian SSR an Operational Staff made up of:

1. Deputy Narkom of State Security of the LSSR, Major of State Security—comrade **BYKOV** /to lead/.
2. Deputy Chief of SPO [Secret Political Department] of the NKGB of the LSSR, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade **KHOLEVO**.
3. Deputy Chief of Intelligence Department [RO] of the NKGB of the LSSR, Captain of State Security—comrade **BAKULIN**.

4. Deputy Chief of Department 2, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade MEDVEDEV.
5. Deputy Section Chief of KRO, [Counter-Intelligence Department] Sergeant of State Security—comrade POPOV.
6. Section Chief of SPO of the NKGB of the LSSR, Junior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade GERASIMOVICH.
7. Deputy Section Chief of Department 3—comrade IVANOV.

— Page 2 —

II. To request the Narkomvnutryel [People's Commissar of the Interior—the NKVD]—comrade GUZEVIČIUS, that he delegate the following comrades to the personnel of the Directing Staff on behalf of the NKVD, for co-ordinating the problem of preparation for the operation along the NKVD line and for the preparation itself:

1. Department Chief of the URKM [Headquarters of Worker Peasant Militia]—comrade GUZEYEV
2. Commander of the Operational Regiment of the NKVD troops, Colonel—comrade NIKOLIN, and in the latter's absence—Chief of Staff, Major—comrade ANTONOV.

All of the indicated comrade collaborators of the NKGB are to be relieved of all other duties until the conclusion of the operation.

III. For effecting the preparatory work on the spot regarding detection, accounting, formularization of cases, and for effecting the operation itself, Operational Trios with the participation of NKVD operators are hereby ordered to be formed in county branches and precincts, at the Vilnius City Board, and at the railway precincts of the NKGB, embracing the following:

1. Alytus county.

- a) Deputy Chief of the County Branch of the NKGB of the LSSR, Junior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade YUDIN.
- b) Senior Operational Plenipotentiary of the Secretariat of the NKGB of the LSSR, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade KARYAGIN.
- v) Chief of the NKVD County Branch—comrade BUROVENKOV.

2. Biržai county.

- a) Deputy Chief of the County Branch of the NKGB of the LSSR, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade GUSKOV.
- b) Senior Operational Plenipotentiary of SPO of the NKGB of the LSSR—comrade MIRSKY.
- v) Deputy Chief of the UO [County Branch] of the Militia [uniformed police], Lieutenant of Militia—comrade SKVORTZOV.

3. Vilkaviškis county.

- a) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKGB, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade SHUREPOV.
- b) Senior Plenipotentiary of SPO of the NKGB of the LSSR, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade PLOTKIN.
- v) Chief of the UO of the NKVD—comrade BARTKEVIČIUS.

— Page 3 —

4. Zarasai county.

- a) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR, Sergeant of State Security—comrade KOSOLAPOV.
- b) Section Chief of Department 2 of the NKGB, Sergeant of State Security—comrade LIKHVINTZEV.
- v) Chief of the U/O of the NKVD—comrade GUŽAUSKAS.

5. Kedainiai county

- a) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR, Sergeant of State Security—comrade MOCHALOV.
- b) Deputy Section Chief of SPO of the NKGB of the LSSR, Junior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade OVSEYENKO.
- v) Chief of the U/O of the NKVD of the LSSR, Lieutenant of Militia—comrade KOVALYOV.

6. *Kretinga county.*

- a) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR, Junior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade PETRUSHENKO.
- b) Section Chief of KRO of the NKGB of the LSSR, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade LUNWOF.
- v) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKVD, Junior Lieutenant of Militia—comrade BERYOZIN.

7. *Kaunas county.*

- a) Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR, Sergeant of State Security—comrade SHUSTARYOV.
- b) Senior Operational Plenipotentiary of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR, Sergeant of State Security—comrade SERDUN.
- v) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKVD of the LSSR, Senior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade KOROLENKO.

8. *Marijampolė county.*

- a) Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR—comrade PETRIKAS.
- b) Deputy Section Chief of KRO of the NKGB of the LSSR, Sergeant of State Security—comrade BOGODUKH.
- v) Deputy Chief of Militia, Lieutenant of Militia—comrade STYEPIN.

9. *Mažeikiai county.*

- a) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR, Junior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade MUKHIN.
- b) Senior Investigator of the Inquest Part of the NKGB of the LSSR, Sergeant of State Security—comrade KRYMOV.
- v) Chief of the U/O of the NKVD of the LSSR—comrade BALSIS.

— Page 4 —

10. *Pancvėžys county.*

- a) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR. Sergeant of State Security—comrade NOVIKOV.
- b) Lieutenant of State Security of the NKGB of the LSSR—comrade DOBROTVORSKY.
- v) Chief of the U/O of the NKVD of the LSSR—comrade MOROVKIN.

11. *Rokiškis county.*

- a) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR, Sergeant of State Security—comrade ZAITZEV.
- b) Senior Operational Plenipotentiary of KRO of the NKGB of the LSSR, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade RODIONOV.
- v) Chief of the U/O of the NKVD of the LSSR—comrade ROMANAUSKAS.

12. *Raseiniai county.*

- a) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR, Sergeant of State Security—comrade KLEMIN.
- b) Senior Investigator of the Inquest Part of the Vilnius City Board of the NKGB of the LSSR, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade SIDORENKO.
- v) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKVD of the LSSR—comrade JANULEVIČIUS.

13. *Lazdijai county.*

- a). Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR, Sergeant of State Security—comrade MIROSHNICHENKO.
- b) Senior Operational Plenipotentiary of KRO of the NKGB of the LSSR, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade STEPANYAN.
- v) Chief of the U/O of the NKVD of the LSSR—comrade ZAVADSKAS.

14. *Telšiai county.*

- a) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR, Junior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade MOROZOV.

- b) Deputy Chief of the Cadres [Personnel] Department of NKGB of the LSSR, Senior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade BABSKY.
- v) Chief of the U/O of the NKVD—comrade TAURINSKAS.

15. *Trakai county.*

- a) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR, Sergeant of State Security—comrade GRISHACHYOV.
- b) Deputy Chief of AKHO [Administration Property, or Supply Department] of the Vilnius City Board of the NKGB of the LSSR, Junior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade VYLKAVITZKY.
- v) Chief of the U/O of the NKVD of the LSSR—comrade ŠTENDELIS.

— Page 5 —

16. *Tauragė county.*

- a) Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR—comrade MARTAVIČIUS.
- b) Senior Operational Plenipotentiary of RO of the NKGB of the LSSR, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade YERMAKOV.
- v) Chief of the U/O of the NKVD of the LSSR—comrade LIEPA.

17. *Utena county.*

- a) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR, Junior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade KUZMIN.
- b) Senior Operational Plenipotentiary of KRO of the Vilnius City Board of the NKGB of the LSSR, Sergeant of State Security—comrade METYOLKIN.
- v) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKVD of the LSSR—comrade MALGFEEYEV.

18. *Ukmergė county.*

- a) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade KARPACHEV.
- b) Deputy Chief of the Vilnius City Board of the NKGB of the LSSR, Senior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade ANOKHIN.
- v) Chief of the U/O of the NKVD of the LSSR—comrade LISAS.

19. *Štauliai county.*

- a) Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR—comrade MACEVIČIUS.
- b) Deputy Chief of Inquest Part of the NKGB of the LSSR, Senior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade VILENSKY.
- v) Chief of the U/O of the NKGB [NKVD] of the LSSR—comrade VITSAS.

20. *Šakiai county.*

- a) Deputy Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR, Junior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade BALAMUTENKO.
- b) Senior Operational Plenipotentiary of SPO of the Vilnius City Board of the NKGB of the LSSR, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade SURMAOH.
- v) Chief of the U/O of the NKVD of the LSSR—comrade BISČIULIS.

21. *Švenčionys county.*

- a) Chief of the U/O of the NKGB of the LSSR, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade VASILIEV.
- b) Chief of Department 5 of the NKGB of the LSSR, Junior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade MIKHAILOV.
- v) Chief of the U/O of the NKVD of the LSSR—comrade BLINOVAS.

— Page 6 —

IV. An Operational Staff is to be formed at the Vilnius City Board of the NKGB of the LSSR, of the following personnel:

1. Chief of the UNKGB of the LSSR, Major of State Security—comrade SHA-ROK.
2. Deputy Chief of SPO, Junior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade BYE-LOV.

3. Deputy Chief of KRO, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade BOGATOV.
 4. Chief of Section 2, of the UNKGB of the LSSR, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade KHARCHENKO.

5. Chief of the UNKVD of the LSSR—comrade VILDŽIŪNAS.

V. In conformance with the directive No. 77 of May 19, 1941, by the Narkom of the Union, files must be formularized regarding every accounted-for person slated for elimination. The following document must be filed in each such folder /in the absence of the indicated documents—insert depositions of witnesses, or statements of citizens corroborated by testimony of witnesses/:

- a) data of the agentura [information by the network of agent-informers];
- b) archival data;
- v) full identifying data regarding head of the family /the questionnaire/;
- g) identifying data regarding members of the family /questionnaire/;
- d) abstract according to agency and official data, and abstract according to archive data;
- e) itemized abstract regarding property status.

VI. Operational Trios must account to the Staff every day regarding the number of persons who are subject to elimination, detected and taken into accounting within the past 24 hours, by dispatching to the NKGB a special memo with enclosed summaries in duplicate.

VII. Operational Trios are hereby ordered to be formed at the ODTOS [branches of the Road Transport Department] of the NKGB of the LSSR, embracing the following personnel:

1. *Kaunas.*

- 1. Chief of the ODTO, Senior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade SAVCHENKO.
 - 2. Senior Operational Plenipotentiary, Junior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade GAPONENKO.
- Page 7 —
- 3. Chief of the Railway Militia outpost—comrade DUBOV.

2. *Vilnius.*

- 1. Chief of the ODTO, Lieutenant of State Security—comrade IVANOV.
- 2. Senior Operational Plenipotentiary, Junior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade PUGACH.
- 3. Chief of the Railway Militia outpost—comrade MAZUROV.

3. *Šiauliai*

- 1. Chief of the ODTO, Junior Lieutenant of State Security—comrade MIKHLIK.
- 2. Senior Operational Plenipotentiary—comrade SHILLOV.
- 3. Chief of the Railway Militia Outpost—comrade MOZGOVOY.

VIII. The necessary numbers of operational personnel are to be assigned to the Operational Staff and Trios.

Deputy People's Commissar of State Security of the LSSR, Major of State Security—comrade BYKOV, with the participation of the NKVD, is to prepare an operational plan for the carrying out of the operation, subject to my approval.

Deeming this task to be of exceptional importance, I order the Chiefs of operational departments of the NKGB, Chiefs of county Branches and Precincts—to mobilize the entire operational personnel of the county branches and precincts for a successful execution of this objective within a minimum time.

The Narkomvnyudye!—comrade GUZEVIČIUS, is requested to direct local organs of the Militia that they extend collaboration with the organs of the NKGB in carrying out the operation /identification, etc./.

[Written in by hand:] After acquainting yourself with these contents, immediately return same.

Do not apprise the operational personnel of the contents of this order.

People's Commissar of State Security of the LSSR

Senior Major of State Security—
 ✓GLADKOV/

Authenticated.—

Assistant Operational Plenipotentiary of the Secretariat for codification

SEMYOKHINA /Semyokhina/

[On the reverse side—three handwritten acknowledgements:]

I have read: /Two illegible signatures/

29/V-41.

I have read 26/V-41.

/One illegible signature/

14. A KREMLIN ORDER OF MAY 31, 1941, ON DEPORTATIONS

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST
REPUBLICS
PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIAT
OF STATE SECURITY

ar

Strictly secret.

[1]

Liter. "-----"

Recvg. No. ----- to No. ----- of ----- yr. 194
In reply refer to No., numeral and Division

"---31/V (May) yr. 1941
No. 4/4/9174
MOSCOW,
Dzerzhinsky Plaza, 2
Short Summary:

[2]

TO NARKOM (People's Commissar) OF STATE
SECURITY OF THE LITHUANIAN SSR SENIOR
MAJOR OF STATE SECURITY FORCES
comrade GLADKOV.
city of Kaunas.

Having acquainted himself with your special
report No. 1/933 of 10 May 1941 regarding the
anti-Soviet manifestations from the direction of
the former Tautiniki (Nationalists), Shaulisty
(National Guardsmen), policemen and kulaks, in
connection with the carrying out of the measures
pertaining to compulsory grain deliveries to the
state, People's Commissar of State Security of
the Union of SSR—comrade MERKULOV—
ORDERED:

To ready for exiling into remote places of the
Union of SSR of the anti-Soviet minded persons,
who conduct active counter-revolutionary agita-
tion.

Communicated to you for the execution.—
*Deputy Chief of the Board 3 of the NKGB of the
USSR*

*Captain of State Security Forces—
(Signature) (SHEVELEV)*

*Chief of Division 4 of the Board 3 of the NKGB of
the USSR*

*Captain of State Security Forces—
(Signature) (RODIONOV)*

[3]

[4]

[1] /Rubber stamped/

Secretariat of VSLK of LTSR /In Lithuanian/
Secretariat of NKGB of LSSR /In Russian/
RECEIVED /In Lith. and Russian/
1/7385 5 June 1941

[2] /Handwritten resolution/

C (omrade) DEMBO
For execution.
(signed) GLADKOV
4/VI 41 (4 June 1941)

[3] /Handwritten resolution/

C (omrade) SHEPELEV
1. I have given directions to the counties.
2. Elaborate in an operative consultation of the unit commanders.
8.6.41 (8 June 1941)
(signed) TODESAS

[4] /Rubber stamped in a quadrangle/

2nd Division of VSV of VRLK of LTSR /In Lithuanian/
2nd Division of UGB of NKVD of LSSR /In Russian/
RECEIVED /In Lith. and Russian/
10.VI.1941 Recvg. No. 2/2485

15. DOCUMENT ON THE SOVIET POLICE APPARATUS IN LITHUANIA

*STRICTLY SECRET
Highly Urgent
Exclusively Personal*

TO ALL OPERATIVE TRIUMVIRATES OF COUNTY BRANCHES AND SUBDIVISIONS OF NKGB
OF LITHUANIAN SSR

City-----
Comrade-----
Comrade-----

Supplementing the earlier instruction regarding the manner of effecting the operation known to you, we submit that the following be effected:

1. Supply all members of the triumvirate with the enclosed 3 copies of the instruction regarding the manner of conducting the operation, for use in briefing the personnel taking part in the operation.

2. Think over and determine where, in what quarters the personnel of the operative groups shall receive briefing, where the means of transportation shall be concentrated for transporting the operative groups to the place of operation.

Note: as a rule, briefing of the operative personnel must proceed at that inhabited point where the precinct triumvirate is located and wherefrom the participants of the operation shall disperse to the points of designation.

3. Prepare in advance, for distribution to leaders of oper(ative) groups, the files, rosters of the deportees and the exact itineraries of movement of the columns towards the points of embarkation, indicating the places of initial gathering, distances in kilometers between each point and other necessary documents.

4. Prepare plain paper, chemical (ink) pencils for supplying the leaders of the groups.

5. Arrange to supply the necessary weapons and cartridges for arming sov(iet) part(y) active.

6. Briefing of men, being dispatched for the operation, is to begin with such calculations as to enable them to arrive ahead of time at the places of operation, especially in the remote regions. Transport necessary for transferring the operative personnel must be concentrated in advance at the designated places.

7. Together with first secretaries of Ukoms (County Committees) of the party, discuss and work out a plan for summoning, under plausible excuses, the workers of the sovietpart(y) active marked for participation in the operation, after pre-arranging the points for their concentration and the manner in which they will have been incorporated in the oper(ative) group, in order that the same be not decoded prematurely.

8. Do not forget to consider the problem of organization of the feeding the oper(ative) personnel, detached for the operation.

9. Thoroughly filter and weed out the unreliaables among the local active selected for participation in the operation.

10. Provide for the senior leaders of the oper(ative) groups an opportunity to visit personally the region of their operation for a preliminary study of the environment, location of homes of the deportees, the roads, etc.

11. Have in mind that the oper(ative) personnel at your disposal (workers of NKGB, NKVD, Militia) must be employed in the capacity of leaders of oper(ative) groups, commanders of Red Army reserve groups and chiefs of the points of embarkation.

12. Commanders of the columns of deportees, chiefs of the assembly points, leaders of the villages, chiefs of transport at the points of dispatch of the oper(ative) groups, persons responsible for issuing the weapons, etc., in view of the shortage of available operative personnel, are appointed from among the seniors of the operative group, directly charged with carrying out the operation.

13. You may employ the Red Army men of the troops of NKVD and the recruits from the training units of frontier guard detachments, for the personnel of the reserve groups, you may also include them in the capacity of the third members of the oper(ative) groups, effecting the arrest (uprooting).

14. *Operative group effecting the arrest (uprooting) is to be constituted in the following manner:*

a) Leader of the group, in any case must be an operative worker of NKGB, NKVD, or Militia, or an officer of the polit(ical) personnel of the troops of NKVD. In individual cases it is permissible to appoint as leader of

the oper(ative) group an experienced worker from the personnel of sovpartactive (soviet party active).

b) A member of sovpartactive or a junior commander of the troops.

c) A Red Army man of the troops of NKVD or of a frontier detachment, or a local militiaman, etc.

d) These are supplemented by two to four members from among the local village active, who conduct the listing of property and aid in carrying out the operation.

Men must be organized into operative trios in advance, if possible having in mind their personal qualities.

15. Immediately take means to provide for the reception and quartering of men arriving in the district and precincts /operative personnel, troops of NKVD/.

16. Caution the operative workers and Red Army men being dispatched to you that they must not loiter around the streets and must not walk in large groups, in order to avoid a disclosure of their presence in small county cities and towns.

17. Chiefs of the points of embarkation, together with the workers of DTO and commanders of the echelons, are to work out, on the spot, a concrete order of loading the deportees into the echelons, basing themselves on the embarkation facilities of each and every station.

18. The plans, worked out by you, concerning the execution of the operation, also the instruction sent to you—regarding the manner of effecting the same, report to the first and second secretaries of Ukoms (county committees) of VKP /B/ (All-Russian Communist Party, Bolshevik) on the eve of the operation.

We repeat once more, the task of purging Lithuanian SSR of the counter-revolutionary element—is a complicated and responsible mission. It cannot be dealt with superficially, in reliance that somehow everything will work out. An operative triumvirate is personally responsible for the success of the operation being effected.

The operation must be executed with precision, intelligently, without noise or panic, in exact compliance with the instruction of the People's Commissar of State Security of the Union of SSR—comrade MERKULOV.

*People's Commissar of State Security of LSSR
Senior Major of State Security*

/GLADKOV/

6TH JUNE, 1941
City of Kaunas
No. 1/1160

Correct: signature illegible.

16. A MOSCOW ORDER ON COMBATTING ANTI-SOVIET ACTIVITIES

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIS-
TIC REPUBLICS PEOPLE'S
COMMISSARIAT OF STATE
SECURITY

6th JUNE 1941
"-----"-----yr. 194
No. 4/4/9908
MOSCOW,
Dzerzhinsky Plaza, 2
Short summary

[1]

am.

Liter. "-----"

Recvg. No. ----- to No. 1/993 of 10 May 1941
In reply refer to No., numeral and Division

Strictly secret.

To CHIEF OF SPO OF THE NKGB (Chief of the Social Political Division of the People's Commissariat of State Security) OF THE LITHUANIAN SSR

[2]

[4] comrade TODESAS
city of Kaunas.

In the report "regarding the anti-Soviet manifestations in connection with compulsory grain deliveries," mention was made of the exposure and liquidation, in various places of the LSSR, of the counter-revolutionary insurgent organizations, which had conducted agitation against grain deliveries and had been preparing a counter-revolutionary insurrection.

[3]

We ask to report in greater detail the data regarding the indicated liquidated c-r organizations, also to inform of the results of the measures undertaken for combatting the hostile activities (in connection with the laying of grain reserves) of the kulaks and other anti-Soviet elements on the territory of the LSSR.

5

Chief of the Division 4 of the Board 3 of the NKGB of the USSR
Captain of State Security Forces
 (Signature) (RODIONOV)
Chief of the Branch 3 of the Division 4 of the Board 3
Senior Lieutenant of State Security Forces
 (Signature) (RUDAKOV)

- 1 /Rubber stamp/
 Secretariat of VSLK of the LTSR /In Lithuanian/
 Secretariat of NKGB of the LSSR /In Russian/
 RECEIVED /In Lithuanian and Russian/
 1/7672 12 June '41
- 2 /Rubber stamped in a quadrangle/
 2nd Division of VSV of VRLK of LTSR /In Lithuanian/
 2nd Division of UGB (State Security Board) of NKDV of the LSSR /In Russian/
 RECEIVED /In Lith. and Russian/
 21 June 1941 Recvg. No. 2/3050
- 3 /Rubber stamped in a quadrangle/
 2nd Division of VSV of VRLK of LTSR /In Lithuanian/
 2nd Division of UGB of NKVD of LSSR /In Russian/
 RECEIVED /In Lith. and Russian/
 13 June 1941 Recvg. No. 2/3028
- 4 /Handwritten resolution/
 H (To—above the name of Todesas)
 Start urgently
 (illegible signature)
 12/VI (12th June)
- 5 /Handwritten resolution/
 To C(omrade) Shepelev
 Comply urgently.
 Talk it over with me.
 (signed) TODESAS 12/VI

17. TWO NKVD-NKGB DOCUMENTS ON DEPORTATIONS, JUNE 19, 1941

2. NKVD-NKGB DOCUMENTS

(a)

Translation from the Russian

Strictly secret.

To comrade GLADKOV, People's Commissar of State Security of the LSSR Senior Major of State Security Forces.

REPORT.

We report that, according to the preliminary memo for the city of Kaunas, the following contingent of the socially dangerous element was slated for isolation:

Membership of nationalist counter-revolutionary formations-----	220 families ; 605 people
Security officials, police, etc-----	85 families ; 215 people
Estate owners, capitalists, important officials-----	79 families ; 409 people
Repatriates, regarding whom compromising materials are available-----	36 families ; 69 people
Refugees from former Poland-----	64 families ; 73 people
TOTAL-----	494 families ; 1371 people

In consequence of the intensified work for exposal and taking into accounting files of the element slated for isolation, the number of prepared cases has grown, during the operation, to 724, which were distributed for execution among the regional trios in the following manner:

I region.....	146
II region.....	182
III region.....	160
IV region.....	103
V region.....	133
Total	724

Of this quantity, the leadership of the Narkomat (People's Commissariat), First Secretary of Gorkom (City Committee) of the party, the operative staff and, in individual instances, regional trios, sifted or delayed for verification or pending receipt of complementary data—85 cases (immediately prior to the operation itself or during its running course), including:

Membership of the Nationalist counter-rev. formations.....	36
Security men, policemen, etc.....	12
Estate owners, capitalists, etc.....	30
Repatriates	1
Refugees	6
Total	85

46 family heads, 82 singles and 112 members of families, a total of 240 people, were not isolated, among these:

Left by reason of illness.....	23
Absent at the time of the operation.....	122
Hid prior to the operation.....	23
Escaped during the operation.....	1
Turned out to have been arrested previously, left home for reasons of senility or other reasons.....	71
Total	240

Actually isolated (according to categories)

	For arrest	For exile	Total
Membership Nat. c-r.....	218	519	737
Policemen, security men, etc.....	88	280	368
Estate owners, capitalists, etc.....	124	523	647
Former officers.....	8	45	53
Patriates.....	29	67	96
Refugees.....	36	28	64
Total.....	503	1,462	1,965

that is, the number of the isolated exceeded by 594 persons the preliminary estimate. The increase occurred nearly exclusively to the credit of the exiles. This is explained by the fact that, in making the original estimation, individual peculiarities of the families were not taken into cognizance: illness or excessive age of the family's head, multiplicity of children, etc.

In effecting the operation, the following arms and valuables were seized:

Fire arms.....	15 pieces
Cold arms.....	2 pieces
Cartridges of various calibers.....	1, 341 pieces
American dollars.....	175 pieces
Various coins.....	96 pieces
Gold and silver wares.....	159 pieces
Soviet money.....	50, 000 rubles

Gold and silver ware was seized from persons whose possessions exceeded in quantity the necessities of accustomed life.

Regarding the property subject to confiscation, the list of addresses for transfer to the Gorsoviet (City Council) was prepared.

The operation was begun according to the previously confirmed plan, during the hours of one and two o'clock A. M. on June 14th and ended in the morning of June 19th; furthermore, the fundamental number of persons was taken on the night of 13th to 14th June.

During the execution of the operation the following incidents took place:

On 14th June, cadet of the VSH*—VORONIN was conducting, as the group's senior, a search in the residence of BARONAS, a former substantial merchant. VORONIN, in consequence of inexperience and incapability, with unfounded hastiness used arms and wounded in the shoulder a member of the family, subject to exile—Jokūbas BARONAS, born in 1917.

On the same date, cadet of the VSH*—MELYANTSEV, with arms in hands, entered the quarters of Petras KUBILIUS, subject to arrest, by his untactful behavior he evoked a panic in the quarters and caused KUBILIUS to hide in the adjoining room, besides, without a forewarning, he fired a shot in the direction of the arrestee, shot through the door, but did not hit KUBILIUS. It was established that MELYANTSEV, lacking operative experience, in the complicated circumstances adopted an erroneous decision and groundlessly used arms.

Cadet of the VSH*—LITVINOV during the effecting of the operation fired a shot into the street in front of the house of the object for no reason at all. There were no casualties.

In effecting the operation, excellently distinguished themselves, paying no attention to time and tiredness, the following comrades: director of the training detachment of VSH, Senior Lieutenant of State Security Forces,—comrade YEFREMEENKO; operative plenipotentiary of SPO, NKGB, LSSR, (Social Political Division, People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the Lithuanian SSR)—Sergeant of State Security Forces—SHVED; commander of RO, NKGB, LSSR (Intelligence Division of the People's Commissariat of State Security of the Lithuanian SSR)—Senior Lieutenant of State Security Forces—comrade RYNDIN; commander of Division II of SPO NKGB LSSR (Social Political Division of the People's Commissariat of State Security of the Lithuanian SSR)—Sergeant of State Security Forces comrade DZHIGALYUK; deputy district commander of KRO UNKGB (Counter-Intelligence Division of County NKGB) for Yaroslavl District—Junior Lieutenant of State Security Forces comrade MALTSEV; deputy commander of Division IV of SPO, NKGB, LSSR,—comrade BLOKHAS.

Kaunas Operative Staff:

(TODESAS)
(KARLIN)
(MILVIDAS)

19th June 1941.
City of Kaunas.

*Literally—"attendant" or student of the "V.Sh."—*Voyennaya Shkola*, Military School, comparable to Officer Candidates School or the West Point Academy.—Translator.

(b) Handwritten

Summary of the Number of the Detained and Exiled

Con-secutive No.	Names of Counties	Number of the uprooted		Of these		Total	Remarks
		families	persons	for arrest	exile		
1	Alytus	166	559	55	504	559	Families 416/persons 1260. One 822.
2	Biržai	237	530	178	352	530	
3	Vilnius.....	1238	2085	558	1527	2085	
4	Vilkaviškis.....	182	505	120	445	565	
5	Zarasai.....	124	500	144	356	500	
6	Kėdainiai.....	128	378	79	299	378	
7	Kaunas.....	62	203	39	164	203	
8	Kretinga.....	94	309	77	232	300	
9	Lazdijai.....	80	321	54	267	321	
10	Marijampolė.....	180	505	105	490	595	
11	Mažeikiai.....	90	313	68	245	313	
12	Panevėžys.....	221	603	77	526	603	
13	Raseiniai.....	251	699	96	603	699	
14	Rokiškis.....	225	811	160	651	811	
15	Trakai.....	236	686	177	509	686	
16	Telšiai.....	141	450	82	368	450	
17	Taurage.....	152	439	229	210	439	
18	Ukmergė.....	277	656	213	443	656	
19	Utena.....	239	706	213	1179	1451	
20	Šaukiai.....	488	1451	272	1179	1451	
21	Šakių.....	142	458	84	374	458	
22	Šilutė.....	133	486	102	384	486	
23	City of Kaunas.....	642	1849	407	1382	1849	
	Total a/c NKGB.....	5728	15712	3640	12063	18712	
24	Prostitutes.....	437	499	-----	499	499	
25	Criminal element.....	1274	1274	1274	-----	1274	
	Total a/c NKVD.....	1711	1773	1274	499	1773	
	Grand Total.....	7439	17485	4923	12562	17485	

(c)

City of RIGA—to comrade SEROV
—to comrade AVAKUMOV

THE ECHELONS PROCEEDING FROM LATVIA:

1. Krasnoyarsk District (Oblast), to station Kansk, Krasnoyarsk Rail Road.....	1400 peo.
2. Station Klyukvennaya, Krasnoyarsk R. R.....	1200 peo.
3. Station Glyadon, Krasnoyarsk R. R.....	850 peo.
4. Station Achinov, Krasnoyarsk R. R.....	900 peo.
5. Station Bogotov, Krasnoyarsk R. R.....	500 peo.
6. Station Yenisei, Krasnoyarsk R. R.....	2050 peo.

PROSTITUTES:

7. To station Osokarovka, Karagandinsk R. R.....	185 peo.
8. To station Karyak, Karagandinsk R. R.....	70 peo.
9. To station Karaganda, Karagandinsk R. R.....	65 peo.
10. Station Akvolinsk, Karagandinskaya R. R.....	130 peo.

SINGLE HEADS

11. Station Bobinino, Little Kiev R. R.....	5000 peo.
12. Station Solikamok, Permskaya R. R.—criminals.....	805 peo.
13. Station Kuksa, Severnaya (Northern) R. R.—criminals.....	1100 peo.
14. Station Novosibirsk, Tomskaya R. R.....	2000 peo.

FROM LITHUANIAN SSR TO ALTAI COUNTRY

15. To station Karasuk, Omskaya R. R.	230 peo.
16. To station Slovgorod, Omsk R. R.	710 peo.
17. To station Kulunda, Omsk R. R.	150 peo.
18. To station Kuniko, Omsk R. R.	100 peo.
19. To station Chistoovernaya, Omsk R. R.	100 peo.
20. To station Burega, Omsk R. R.	150 peo.
21. To station Biisk, Tomsk R. R.	3940 peo.
22. To station Barnaul, Tomsk R. R.	1970 peo.
23. To station Aliisk, Tomsk R. R.	645 peo.
24. To station Rubtsovka, Tomsk R. R.	402 peo.
25. To station Yesd-Zopalnyi, Tomsk R. R.	150 peo.
26. To station Zachalnovo, Tomsk R. R.	75 peo.
27. To station Valkovo, Tomsk R. R.	125 peo.
28. To station Pobodim, Tomsk R. R.	100 peo.
29. To station Pospelikha, Tomsk R. R.	200 peo.
30. To station Povalikha, Tomsk R. R.	145 peo.
31. To station Lipunovo, Tomsk R. R.	210 peo.
32. To station Lekashi, Tomsk R. R.	250 peo.
33. To station Kotlas, Gorkovskaya R. R.	3600 peo.

PROSTITUTES:

34. To station Makat, Orenburgskaya R. R.	364 peo.
35. To station Starobyelovsk, Moscow-Donbas R. R. heads—singles.	6302 peo.
36. To station Medvezhya Gora, Kirovskaya R. R., criminal.	1196 peo.

FROM ESTONIAN SSR:

37. To station Kotelnichi, Gorkovskaya R. R.	1600 peo.
38. To station Shakhunya, Gorkovskaya R. R.	300 peo.
39. To station Kirov, Gorkovskaya R. R.	500 peo.
40. To station Slobodskoye, Gorkovskaya R. R.	400 peo.
41. To station Philonki, Gorkovskaya R. R.	300 peo.
42. To station Vekanskaya, Gorkovskaya R. R.	300 peo.
43. To station Muromy, Gorkovskaya R. R.	100 peo.
44. To station Orichi, Gorkovskaya R. R.	100 peo.
45. To station Yurya, Gorkovskaya R. R.	100 peo.
46. To station Konarino, Gorkovskaya R. R.	100 peo.
47. To station Pinyur, Gorkovskaya R. R.	100 peo.
48. To station Luna (Luva?), Gorkovskaya R. R.	100 peo.
49. To station N-Sibirsk, Tomskaya R. R.	700 peo.
50. To station Chani, Tomsk R. R.	1000 peo.
51. To station Kargat, Tomsk R. R.	1000 peo.
52. To station Promnilomnaya	1000 peo.
53. To station Starobyelsk, Moscow-Donbas R. R. heads—singles.	1930 peo.
54. To station Bobinino, M.-Kiev R. R., heads singles.	1000 peo.
55. To station Solivansk, Permskaya R. R., criminals.	472 peo.

Conduct the formulation of the transportation R. R. papers in the appropriate directives to station masters.

Obligate Commanders of the echelons to report the progress of travel once daily to the division of transsettlement of the NKVD of the USSR.

CHERNYSHEV.

No. 30/5698/016.
13 June 1941.

Transmitted—KOTLYAROV.
Received—VOROBYOV.

13 June at 2:30.

Translator's Note: Allowance should be made for the misspelling of the illegible and unfamiliar place names in Arctic and Siberian Russia.

18. GLADKOV'S REPORT ON THE INITIAL ARMED SKIRMISHES

Strictly Secret.

TO ALL COMMANDERS OF COUNTY BRANCHES AND SUBDIVISIONS OF THE NKGB OF THE LITHUANIAN SSR, COMMANDERS OF THE FRONTIER DETACHMENTS 105, 106 AND 107.

Comr.-----
City of -----

A number of instances of banditry were fixed in the last few days on the territory of the Lithuanian SSR.

It was established that a portion of the hostile element, slated for the arrest and exile beyond the frontiers of the Lithuanian SSR, went into hiding, passed into outlaw status, and engaged in the formation of bandit groups during the period of the effecting of the operation of purging of the republic. Thus, for instance:

1. The Rokiškis county branch reports that one instance of banditry outbreak was noted within the county territory on 16th June.

2. According to the report of the Marijampolė county branch of the NKGB, an armed band of about 20 persons emerged in the area of Prienai town on 17th June. The band is commanded by a former officer of the Lithuanian army. According to available data, the band has 2 machine guns and other arms.

Instances of banditry outbreaks were also recorded in the territories of the counties of Siauliai and Utena.

Regardless of these serious signals, COMMANDERS OF THE COUNTY BRANCHES OF THE NKGB ESSENTIALLY FAILED TO ATTRIBUTE ANY SIGNIFICANCE TO THEM, DID NOT MAKE APPROPRIATE OPERATIONAL DEDUCTIONS, AND DID NOT EXPAND THE AGENCY NETWORK FOR THE EXPOSAL AND LIQUIDATION OF THE BANDIT GROUPS.

In consequence thereof, there were instances of killing and wounding of the operative personnel employed in the liquidation of the bandit groups. For instance:

On 17th June, comrade KUZMIN, Deputy Commander of the Utena county branch of the NKGB, organized two ambushes in the Narokai village for the liquidation of the bandit groups.

In consequence of the unorganized state and the exceptionally unserious approach to preparations for the operation, the two ambush forces opened cross-fire on each other at two o'clock at night, in consequence whereof militiaman Povilas BOREYKO was killed.

In Marijampolė county, during the liquidation of a bandit group composed of four RIMAS brothers, formerly active Voldemarists, the collaborators who were taking part in the operation opened absolutely unnecessary fire, in consequence whereof militiaman MURAVYOV was wounded.

An analogous fact occurred in the Rokiškis county.

The absence of agency work and the exceptionally unserious outlook regarding the facts of banditry outbreaks, are attested by the fact that the counties enumerated above, having initially reported in several phases banditry outbreaks which had taken place, UP TO THE PRESENT TIME FAILED TO ORGANIZE AGENCY-OPERATIONAL TASKS, WHICH WOULD SAFEGUARD THE LIQUIDATION OF THE BANDIT GROUPS, AND DID NOT EVEN IDENTIFY AND DID NOT REPORT THE COMPOSITION OF THE BANDIT GROUPS, MEMBERS OF FAMILIES OF THEIR PARTICIPANTS, THEIR ARMAMENT, ETC.

I PROPOSE:

1. Each instance of a banditry outbreak must be immediately traced and liquidated without a delay.

Measures undertaken for the exposure and liquidation of bandit groups must be immediately indicated and reported to me in detail. The work must not be interrupted until the complete liquidation of the band and its base. I place personally upon the commander and his deputy in UO of the NKGB (County Branch of the People's Commissariat of State Security) the leadership over this task.

2. The commanders of the Marijampolė, Rokiškis, Utena and Šiauliai county branches of the NKGB must on 23rd June specifically submit to me their detailed reports regarding the instances of banditry outbreaks which had taken place, the results of the undertaken operational measures, and their operational plans for the exposure and liquidation of the bandit groups.

3. In each instance of banditry outbreaks, relatives and persons close to the bandits must be immediately identified and taken into elaboration, for the exposure and liquidation of the bandit groups; recruitment (of agents-informers) must also be conducted.

4. To the same end, organize the passing into "outlaw" status of the verified agents made up of former National Guardsmen, kulaks, officers, etc., in the locale of appearance of the bandit groups; likewise organize escapes to the forests, on the pretext of hiding from persecution by the organs of the NKGB,—with the calculation of infiltrating such agents into the bandit groups, for the full exposure and liquidation of the latter. Each and every such combination must be effected only following its confirmation by me.

5. Having accurately identified the exact location of bandit groups, immediately report to me or my deputies, in order to secure practical assistance by the armed forces.

6. In the next few days, conduct the recruitment (of agents-informers) among circles close to the hostile elements who had gone into hiding from the repression.

7. Conduct the recruitment into agency network among village elders who, due to the nature of their duties, personally know all local inhabitants and may inform you of the occurrence of suspicious gatherings, the absence from home of this or that inhabitant, the appearance of suspect persons, the preparations for flights into outlaw status, etc.

8. In recruiting the agency network, lay the basic stress on infiltrating same among the kulaks, National Guardsmen and former officers.

Every 5 days, starting with 25th June, report to me the work accomplished by you in this direction. Indicate in your reports the characteristics of the agents recruited by you, the facts of banditry outbreaks, and the operational measures undertaken for their liquidation.

*People's Commissar of State Security of the LSSR
Senior Major of State Security Forces—*

/GLADKOV/

21st June 1941
City of Kaunas
No. 45

Authentic—

Deputy Operational Plenipotentiary of the Secretariat for Codification.

/SEMYOKHINA/ (signature) Semyokhina

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