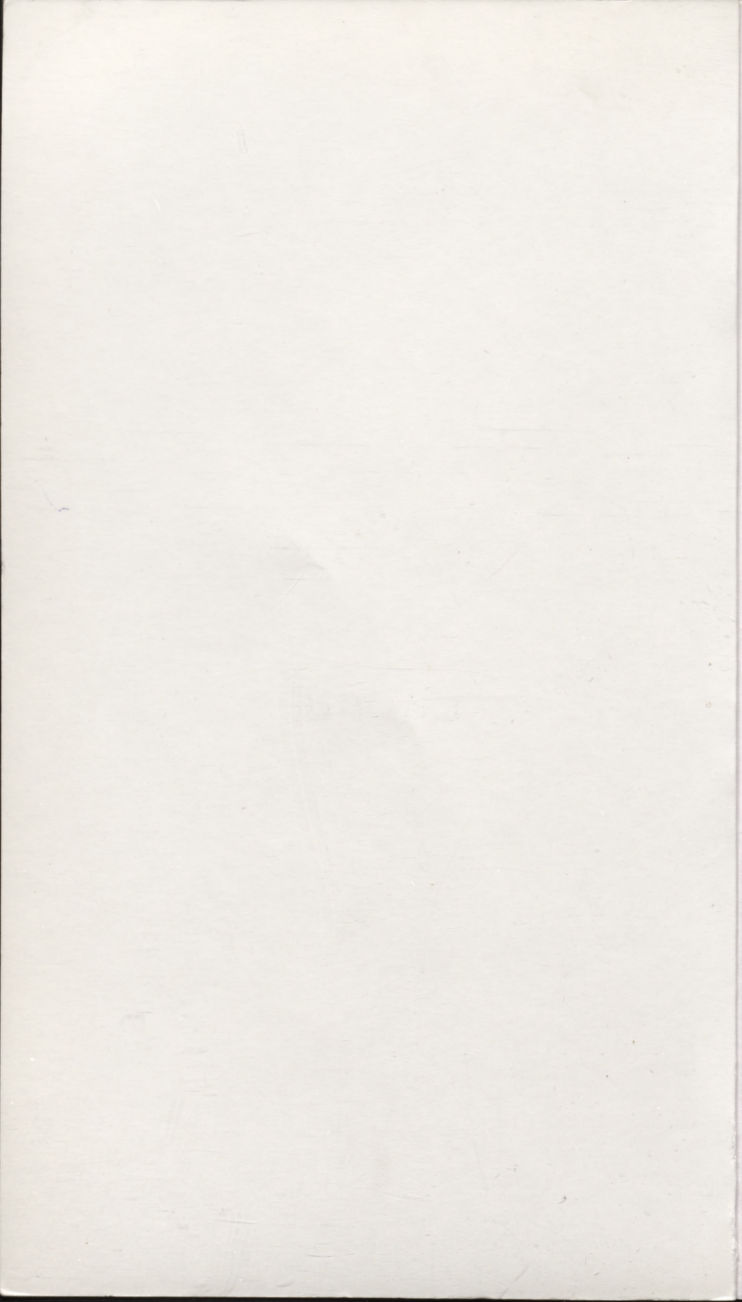


**The Occupation
and
Annexation
of
Latvia
1939-1940**

Documents and Materials



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UDK 9 947.48.081+947.43.082
Tb 170

The Occupation and Annexation of Latvia:
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I. Grava-Kreivins, I. Feldmanis, D. A. Loeber,
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Rīga (1995). - 362 pp.

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ISBN 985-906-1-8

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*It is acknowledged with gratitude that the funds
for the printing of the volume were provided by
donations from professor Dietrich André Loeber*

The collection contains documents and materials concerning the execution of the foreign policy of the USSR in 1939 and 1940, the reaction of the Latvian government to extreme circumstances, the occupation of Latvia in June and July 1940, the reaction of other countries to events in the Baltic states in 1939 and 1940.

The collection has been published under the auspices of the project "The Occupation and Annexation of the Republic of Latvia: 1939-1940", authorized and financed by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia in May 1994. It is a continuation of the previous book, **1939: The Year of Fateful Decisions and Latvia** (Rīga, 1994), and the Latvian-language collection **Latvijas okupācija un aneksija 1939-1940. Dokumenti un materiāli** (Rīga, 1995). This English language edition is not a literal translation of the Latvian language collection.

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commentary authors, 1995.
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Inesis Feldmanis, Aivars Stranga -
introduction, 1995.
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Translator: Kārlis Streips

ISBN 9984-9085-1-8

Latvijas Nacionālā
BIBLIOTEKA

95-11-580

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Introduction

From Peace Treaty to Occupation

On 11 August 1920, a peace treaty was signed in Riga between Latvia and Soviet Russia. In the second paragraph of the treaty, Russia recognized Latvia's independence and sovereignty and "...for time eternal renounce[d] any sovereign right possessed by Russia with respect to the Latvian people and land...". From Moscow's perspective, however, the peace treaty was nothing more than an expression of Russia's weakness at the time. Moscow never accepted the idea that the Baltic states should be lost "for time eternal".

In the years after 1920, Moscow's interest in the Baltic states took on three aspects. First, Russia had aims of territorial expansion, i.e. - the recovery of lands lost between 1918 and 1920. Second, Moscow saw a security issue - the desire to permit no situation in which the Baltic states would endanger Russian (Soviet) security. And third, Russia was possessed of an ideological commitment to the spread of global revolution. The Baltic states were seen both as an obstacle to this effort and as a potential staging ground for its execution. These three types of interest - territorially revisionist, security-oriented and ideologically concerned - were mutually connected but not identical.

In the 1920s, Moscow had very minimal opportunities to carry out its first, revisionist goal. Poland's relative strength obstructed any attempt in that direction. Poland's victory over the Red Army at Warsaw on 14-16 August 1920 ("the miracle at the Wisla") protected the peace treaty which had just been signed between the Baltic states and Russia, but it also determined the political map in Eastern and Central Europe throughout the 1920s and up to the late 1930s. Independent Poland was a geo-political guarantor of the independence of the Baltic states.

But the peace treaty which Russia and Poland signed at Riga on 18 March 1921 was Moscow's Versailles. Russia was deeply humiliated by the treaty, which wrenched long-held ethnographic territories from Russian control. It was in this circumstance that the first seeds of the catastrophic events which would eventually be visited upon Poland and

the Baltic states were planted. A characteristically controversial statement by the historian A. Taylor contains an element of truth: "The Treaty of Riga, not the Treaty of Versailles, made possible the second German war ... [1939]"¹. World War I resulted in greater territorial losses for Russia than it did for Germany. In other words, Russia's "Versailles" was a bitter pill to swallow indeed. Moscow never abandoned the hope of recovering that which had been lost, but Russia's prospects for unilaterally achieving this aim were quite minimal, even with respect to the limited territory of the Baltic states. On 28 September 1925 in Warsaw, the Russian (Soviet) foreign affairs commissar G. Chirerin asked the Polish foreign minister, A. Skshinski, whether Poland would attack the Soviet Union if the Red Army were to march into Latvia and Estonia². The question was a reflection more of Poland's strength, and the extent to which the geo-political situation was unfavorable for any Russian revisionism, than it was of any specific plan to occupy Latvia and Estonia. Russia (the USSR) was weak and largely isolated from the European political scene. Russia was neither loved nor feared. But the fact that Russia was weak and unthreatening did nothing to strengthen Baltic security. On the contrary, Baltic security was weakened by Russia's weakness.

Unable to carry out its territorial revisionism in the 1920s, the USSR nevertheless did much to provide for its own security interests in Eastern Europe, and this laid the groundwork for revisionist efforts in the future. The primary goal held by the Soviet Union was to block any establishment of a mutual security system among the Eastern European countries. Moscow's policies envisioned strategic cooperation with Germany (the Rapallo course), as a result of which Eastern Europe might be divided into spheres of influence. Russia also hoped to neutralize and isolate one Eastern European country from the other, to weaken French alliances in Eastern Europe and to diminish trust in the League of Nations as an organ of collective security³. The Soviet Union's main strategic achievement in this respect was that the countries of Eastern Europe did not establish any regional security system. This was, however, not so much a result of Moscow's own efforts as it was a result of disharmony and short-sightedness on

the part of the Eastern European countries themselves. It was also a result of the fact that Great Britain and France declined to provide any security guarantees in the region, especially in the Baltic states.

The fact that Soviet Russia was weak in the 1920s and presented no threat to Europe meant that in the fall of 1920, French foreign policy concern about the Bolshevik problem began to diminish considerably. This was significant, because France was the only major power which tried to establish alliances in Eastern Europe and which stood for the maintenance of the status quo in the region. Though it was in France that the term *cordon sanitaire* first appeared, the vivid image posited by the expression was far greater than its actual significance in French policy. Russia's weakness meant that the matter of containing Bolshevism received only very brief attention in the halls of French foreign policy before it was shunted aside by a much more urgent French security problem, i.e. - Germany⁴. As the Bolshevik threat receded, the role of the Baltic states in French foreign policy became peripheral at best (it should be noted that the Baltics would not have played a much greater role even if the threat had been more real, given that the Baltic states were weak and of insignificant importance in matters of power). England, in turn, paid lip service to collective security, but its actions were consistent with balance-of-power policies. The power vacuum in Eastern Europe was of no significance in British policy, and London had no security interest in the region. Austin Chamberlain's famous remark that no British grenadier would give his life for Danzig reflected a reality of the 1920s: British grenadiers had no cause over which to fall, because there was no single revisionist power in Europe strong enough to upset the balance of power on the Continent and force British grenadiers to die over Danzig. The tiny Baltic states were of no interest to London from the strategic perspective of the balance of power, and their security was in no way tied to British security. Great Britain had economic interests in the Baltic, but even in this sphere London's role was not of any particular significance. The Baltic states never managed to account for more than one percent (!) of British foreign trade.

But the absence of western interest in the region was not the only, or even the primary reason for the security

vacuum in Eastern Europe. The vacuum was caused by the fact that Eastern Europeans could not get along: quarrels in their midst prevented any type of unity. There was virtually nothing to unify the countries of the region, while there were a great many areas in which they were far apart: the region's countries had differing perceptions about external threats against them; regional solidarity and mutual cooperation were never seen as much more than a theatre involving the major powers - Germany and Russia - which were potential enemies of Eastern Europe; and any possible cooperation lacked an economic grounding, because the region's agrarian countries competed for access to western markets and had scant need for trade relations with one another. Moreover, the largest country in the region, Poland, could never become a center around which the region's smaller countries might group, because Poland was politically and economically weak, and its trade policies were marked by ill-disguised protectionism. Several of the region's countries viewed Poland with as much, if not more, suspicion and concern as they viewed Russia. Poland had territorial conflicts or unresolved issues with virtually all of its neighbor states, and this meant that any small-country alliance with Warsaw was impossible. True, Poland's victory over Russia in August 1920 did serve to protect Baltic independence, but it also eliminated any possibility that a Baltic Union with Polish participation could ever be established. Even if Poland had not occupied Vilnius in October 1920, which made the Polish-Lithuanian conflict unresolvable and irrational, it would have been difficult to imagine the small Baltic states and Finland allying themselves with a country whose territorial ambitions to the East made an eventual conflict with Russia virtually inevitable. By turning the Curzon line into the Riga peace treaty, Poland established itself as an apparent power in the region, thus making no small investment in guaranteeing that there would never be a system of mutual assistance among the new countries of Eastern Europe. This served the strategic and revisionist interests both of Russia and of Germany. Hoping to neutralize and isolate the countries along its borders, the Soviet Union began in 1925 to offer a series of non-aggression agreements to the various states. They were agreements of open neutrality, permitting aggression

against other countries and serving to block any establishment of a security system among the new countries.

Taking advantage of Lithuania's obsessive conflict with Poland, Moscow signed the first of these agreements with Vilnius on 28 September 1926. Lithuania did not consult with the other Baltic states before signing the agreement. Latvia's center-left government, led by the Social Democrats, followed in Lithuania's footsteps, and most of a similar non-aggression agreement with the Soviet Union was initialed on 9 March 1927. This occurred at a time when Britain's relations with the Soviet Union had deteriorated to some extent, but the Latvian government was well aware that this would not mean any support for Latvian security from England's side. Latvia further understood that it was not realistic to hope for any international security guarantees and that any alliance with Poland would be risky. These considerations were what prompted Latvia to seek a bilateral resolution of relations with the USSR. In the end, however, the agreement was not signed.

But despite the fact that Soviet accomplishments in this area were quite limited and that Lithuania was the only Eastern European country with which Moscow succeeded in signing an agreement, the new countries nevertheless could not come to any agreement on a common system of security. Moscow was not particularly to blame for this. The idea that potential victims must always have common interests against potential aggressors is often fallacious.

On 10 December 1928, the Soviet commissar for foreign affairs, M. Litvinov, warned the Balts not to come under any influence which might threaten Soviet security interests⁵. The warning was largely unnecessary. There was, in fact, no threat against Soviet security interests. No major country was attempting to pull the Baltic states into any anti-Soviet or, for that matter, any other type of bloc. The Baltic countries were of insufficient significance, and the Baltic region remained geostrategically vulnerable to Moscow's revisionist interests.

The Soviets had a unilateral and hegemonist approach to security issues. In an address to the 17th congress of the Soviet Communist Party (1934), Stalin emphasized

that Moscow was interested in nothing more than its own security and that the Soviet Union would take care of itself. The well-known British historian A. Taylor has suggested that making a *cordon sanitaire* of the new countries served not only to block Russia (the USSR) from Europe, but also to block Europe from Russia⁶. The cordon did serve to facilitate Soviet Russian security interests, but Moscow did not see it that way, especially with respect to the Baltic states. Russia always saw the Baltics as a potential threat, the logic being that the Baltic states were small and weak with no opportunity to become larger or stronger and that therefore the three countries could willingly or unwillingly fall victim to German or (according to the Soviet view) Polish aggression. Moscow's security interests would fully and irreversibly be served only if the possibility of such developments were eliminated altogether, and this could only be achieved through the occupation of the Baltic states. In other words, Moscow felt that the very existence of independent Baltic states was a potential source of threats against Russian interests, and this source could be eliminated only by radical means. The existence of the Baltic states could not be strategically reconciled with Soviet ideas about security, and this was a key factor in Moscow's revisionist tendencies. Revisionism was cast in the light of national security. Indeed, Soviet foreign policy in the 1920s and 1930s was typical of a perception historically and traditionally held by Russian leaders: the motives of security merged with the motives of annexation, or, in other words, occupation equals security.

The role of the Baltic states in Soviet efforts to spread world revolution was a serious consideration only in the very early 1920s, when the Baltic states were seen both as a possible obstacle to revolution and as a siting ground for communist propaganda in Europe. Even though Soviet communism with its healthy dose of Russian messianism was quite active globally, the goal of world revolution lost some of its earlier significance in the 1930s. It was replaced by the simpler idea of territorial revisionism. It was clear that communism had no future not only in old Europe, but also in socially underdeveloped Eastern Europe. Throughout the 1920s, the Soviet Union actively used its embassy and trade mission in Riga to stoke the fires of "revolution", but the results of these efforts were

insignificant. The prospects for communist successes in rural Latvia were wrecked by the country's radical program of agrarian reform, while communist hopes in Latvia's cities were blocked by the impressive successes of Latvia's leftist Social Democrats. In the 1930s, as Moscow's comintern became caught up in the paranoid battle against Trotskyism, Soviet efforts to spread communism in Latvia were reduced dramatically. This was because local communists, thought to be sympathizers of Trotsky, lost Moscow's trust, and the result was that the Soviet Union itself did much more to squash the communist movement in Latvia than did Latvia's own political police force. Moscow instead turned to the task of finding collaborators among the citizenry. In 1940 it turned out that in this, at least, the Soviets had been quite successful.

At least until 1931 or 1932, Moscow felt that its primary opponent in Eastern Europe was Poland, and Russia sought opportunities to join with Germany in carving the country up. As Japan began to emerge as a threat against Moscow's interests in the Far East, the Soviets began to view Polish-Japanese cooperation with increasing alarm. But the most threatening aspect of Poland's activities as far as Moscow was concerned was Warsaw's eventual influence in the Baltic states. Trying to gain Baltic trust, the Soviet Union signed exclusive non-aggression agreements with the Baltic countries in 1932. Formally these agreements were most favorable to Baltic interests and were radically different from those the Russians had proposed in the mid-1920s. The 1932 pacts recognized all existing bilateral obligations held by the Baltic states with respect to other countries, as well as their obligations to the League of Nations. The 1932 agreements also stated that domestic events in the Baltic republics would never be used as an excuse for aggression. A separate clause provided for abrogation of the agreements should either of the parties undertake aggression against a third party. These were the best agreements the Balts could possibly hope for. But it is true, of course, that agreements do little to protect threatened independence.

On 30 January 1933, Hitler came to power in Germany. This fateful event set the fate for all Europe, including Latvia. Without Hitler, there would not have been the

events of 23 August 1939 which led to Latvia's destruction. Hitler's rise to power and the worsening of Soviet relations with Japan - served to force Soviet foreign policy into sharply contradictory positions in the 1930s. The Kremlin wavered between the idea of establishing an anti-German alliance and the hope of establishing bilateral relations with Berlin. In Moscow's opinion there could be no obstacle to relations with Germany. Stalin was an absolute realist in foreign policy matters, understanding that ideological differences must not necessarily stand in the way of the ensurement of pragmatic national interests. From the perspective of communist ideology, moreover, the entire imperialist world was equally hostile to the "socialist citadel". There were no fundamental differences between Nazi Germany and democratic England, according to this understanding of the world. Also, the Soviet Union had to abandon its previous strategy of seeking to take advantage of differences between the world's capitalist countries to drive them apart. This was because Hitler rejected the idea of relations with Moscow, not because of Stalin's policies. On 26 June 1933 Moscow suspended the military cooperation with Germany which had been a vivid result of the Rapallo course. On 4 August, the German ambassador to the Soviet Union, H. von Dirksen, met with the chairman of the Soviet Union's Council of People's Commissars V. Molotov and was told that the future of Soviet-German relations would be entirely dependent on Germany's attitude. Moscow was leaving the door open for rapprochement, but Hitler slammed the door shut. A bitter discussion on 11 December 1933 between Soviet foreign affairs commissar Litvinov and the new German ambassador, R. Nadolny, served to indicate that Hitler had no further need for the Rapallo arrangement.

On 12 and 19 December, the CPSU politbureau adopted several decisions aimed at strengthening Soviet security through the establishment of an anti-German alliance. On 28 December 1933, the Soviets formally proposed a defensive alliance to include the Soviet Union, France, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland. The offer was cast as a Soviet attempt to enter the arena of collective security, but in fact there was nothing of collective security in the proposal, as it did not seek to include Germany in the alliance. Rather, the

gist of the Soviet proposal was to organize a regional pact against Germany. Litvinov clearly stated this goal when on 5 June 1934 he met in Geneva with the Polish foreign minister, J. Beck. The point, Litvinov said, was to isolate Germany⁷. This was not, however, likely to happen.

The Soviet idea of "collective security" was that Moscow should gain as much advantage as possible from cooperation with the bourgeois countries while at the same time undertaking no obligations with respect to the security of other states. Moscow's approach to security issues was identical to Germany's: it wanted security only for itself. The forced attempt to establish relations with capitalist countries did not mean that Moscow had accepted the status quo in Eastern Europe, nor that it had abandoned hopes of reaching rapprochement with Germany in the interests of Soviet geopolitical strategy.

Germany's unwillingness to continue the Rapallo agreement led Moscow to seek new avenues in its relations with Poland. Evidence of this was provided by the visit to Poland of Stalin's emissary K. Radek from 6 to 22 July. The process reached its apparent culmination on 14 December 1933, when Moscow proposed that the Soviet Union and Poland jointly guarantee the independence and territorial integrity of the Baltic countries. For Moscow and especially for Warsaw, the proposal was part of a game concerning Germany. Moscow wanted to continue Rapallo; Germany did not. By the end of 1933, Moscow's hopes concerning Rapallo were virtually non-existent, and the Soviets grew increasingly worried about "German intrigue" in Latvia and Estonia. This fact was reported to the Latvian Foreign Ministry on 14 December 1933 by the Latvian envoy to Moscow, A. Bilmanis⁸.

In the meantime, German-Polish rapprochement, which had been initiated on 2 May 1933 in a discussion between Hitler and Polish ambassador A. Visocki, was almost at hand. As long as the rapprochement was not certain, Warsaw kept a reserve option open, and in the fall of 1933 it began making some advances toward Russia. By December, however, Poland was no longer interested in Litvinov's offer. Rather than reject it directly and unequivocally, though, Warsaw jettisoned it indirectly. In response to Moscow's offer to provide joint security guarantees to the Baltic states, Poland counter-proposed

that Finland be included in the group of countries whose security would be guaranteed and that the various countries be asked whether they were interested in Polish-Soviet guarantees. The Polish proposal effectively served to bury any hope of a joint declaration, but this was not the true reason for its demise. Nor was the fact that Finland sharply rejected any idea of security guarantees, as did Latvia and Estonia, albeit in a milder way. The true background for these events was that Polish-German rapprochement was virtually complete by this time, and Poland no longer had any need for the Soviet Union.

The Polish-German non-aggression pact was sprung on a surprised Europe on 26 January 1934. The agreement, which eventually would have such dramatic consequences for European security, was an open neutrality agreement which did nothing to regulate border quarrels among the two countries and which permitted for aggression by the two signatory countries against third parties. The result of the pact was that there could be no multilateral security system in Europe which would be capable of containing Germany or which would involve Poland. Without Poland, a security system was not realistic, for one simple, age-old reason: geography. If on 26 January the idea of an Eastern Pact was still alive, the German-Polish announcement destroyed it completely. Poland felt that it no longer needed any multilateral pacts of mutual assistance and that it would settle its relations with Germany on a bilateral basis, one large power dealing with another.

The Polish-German non-aggression agreement was Moscow's worst nightmare, made all the worse by the possibility that a Polish-German-Japanese axis might develop in the future. The Polish-German agreement was also seen by Russia through the prism of its security interests in the Baltic states. Moscow felt that the pact would free both Germany and Poland to exercise their revisionist tendencies in the region. In 1934 and 1935, a chief Russian foreign policy goal was to scuttle relations between Poland and Germany and to draw Warsaw into an anti-German alliance. Unable to isolate Germany in the way Litvinov had explained to Beck in June 1934, the Soviets instead set the goal of establishing a regional alliance which would at least seem threatening and confining to Germany. On 4 March 1935, Litvinov sent a

letter to Moscow's representative in Paris, V. Potjomkin, saying that such a pact should at least include Poland, because its participation "would serve to frighten" Germany⁹.

Poland did not wish to frighten Germany, however, especially in the company of the Soviet Union. In the end, the whole grand idea of the Eastern Pact was reduced to insignificant bilateral assistance agreements signed in May 1935 between the Soviet Union and France and between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia.

The small Baltic countries (one of which, Lithuania, did not even share a border with the Soviet Union) were of little value in Moscow's new policies. The Baltic states neither could nor did they wish to isolate or frighten Germany. On 27 June 1934 Litvinov wrote Potjomkin (then ambassador to Rome) that the Soviet Union must assume that German influence would grow in Latvia in the wake of the authoritarian coup staged by Kārlis Ulmanis on 15 May 1934. But this did not create any greater interest in drawing Latvia (or Estonia and Lithuania) into the Eastern Pact. The pact could exist without them, Litvinov wrote, and Baltic opinions were of no particular consequence¹⁰. This position was entirely logical, given Moscow's view of its own security interests in the Baltic states and the way in which these interests might be exercised. Moscow never wanted to undertake unilateral security obligations vis a vis the Baltic countries. This was true for at least two reasons. First, while Moscow worried only about its own security and national interests, it was well aware that the tiny Baltic states would offer virtually nothing in terms of security enhancement and that true Baltic support for the Soviet Union was inconceivable. In late 1933 and early 1934 the USSR sought to strengthen its security interests while at the same time achieving at least partial revisionism through bilateral relations with Poland or Germany. On 29 May 1934, Litvinov addressed a disarmament conference in Geneva and announced that the Soviet Union had come up with an entirely new type of pact: the major countries would join together to guarantee the independence of small states located among or near the larger ones. The Soviet Union, Litvinov continued, had not managed to gain any support among the major powers to which it had offered such agreements,

but Moscow nevertheless felt that this was the wave of the future¹¹. Litvinov was thinking of offers made to Poland (14 December 1933) and Germany (28 March 1934) to jointly declare guarantees of Baltic independence. Both offers were rejected, but the process served to unveil Moscow's true interest: to avoid any unilateral obligations vis a vis the Baltics which might expose the Soviet Union to Germany or Poland, and to achieve joint (bilateral) agreements which would let Moscow resolve the Baltic matter at least in cooperation with one of the major powers. The Polish offer especially indicated that the Soviets understood "guarantees" of Baltic independence to mean Soviet freedom of action in Latvia and Estonia as soon as "threats" against their independence were uncovered. It was clear that any real or imagined negative domestic development in the two countries could be used as evidence of such a threat. The Soviet Union wanted to impose itself as the protector of the Baltic states but, in order to minimize the risks associated with this process, to do so in concert with Poland or Germany. The small Baltic countries were not of sufficient value to encourage Moscow to risk a unilateral adventure. The idea of the "new pacts" survived for a considerable period of time, outliving even its author Litvinov. As late as 1939 the Soviet Union was still refusing to undertake any unilateral obligations in the Baltic, choosing to resolve the "Baltic question" in a deal with Germany instead of taking action unilaterally.

After the Soviet Union signed mutual assistance agreements with France and Czechoslovakia in May 1935 (these were agreements which Moscow felt to be of sufficient "frightening significance" with respect to Germany), the Soviets felt relatively secure, and the role of the Baltic countries in Soviet thinking about security issues was diminished even further. Understanding that the Baltic countries could offer the Soviet Union no real form of support, Moscow did not wish to sign bilateral mutual assistance agreements with them. Evidence of this is provided by Latvia's failure in 1935 to achieve a mutual assistance agreement with the Soviet Union. Although in early 1934 the Latvian Foreign Ministry considered the Soviet Union to be "the most certain factor for the maintenance of peace in Eastern Europe"¹², Latvia had no desire to become involved in an Eastern Pact which did

not include Germany. At the same time, however, the Latvians also did not wish to openly state their opposition to the pact. While Latvia wavered, the various options of an Eastern Pact (a collective security pact involving Germany and Poland, an anti-German alliance, etc.) vanished into thin air, leaving only the Franco-Soviet and Czech-Soviet agreements of May 1935.

On 18 June 1935 a sea agreement was signed between Germany and Great Britain which opened a legal way for the German Navy to be reestablished in the Baltic region. Now Latvia felt lonely and abandoned. None of the major powers, including Russia, was proposing any offers. An additional cause for Latvian concern was that the agreement on naval matters led to a feeling that Germany was becoming a threat. In trying to recover that which had been lost during the previous year's period of indecisiveness, Latvia on 10 July 1935 offered the Soviet Union a bilateral agreement of mutual assistance. The response was unexpected for Latvia but entirely logical from Moscow's point of view: the Soviets flatly rejected the offer. Moscow had no need for a mutual assistance agreement with a country as small and weak as Latvia.

A second reason involved the fact that despite its official propaganda, the Soviet Union did not feel that Germany presented any threat of aggression through the Baltic countries. Moscow was fairly precise in understanding the directions which German aggression might take. Speaking with Latvian Foreign minister Munters in Geneva on 11 September 1935, Litvinov expressed the realistic view that German aggression in the Baltic region was not a near-term concern and that Central Europe (specifically Austria) would be endangered first¹³. This justified conclusion indicated that the Soviets did not have as much concern about their interests in the Baltic region as might have been thought by those who followed Moscow's public pronouncements on the issue. Meeting with the American publisher R. Howard on 1 March 1936, Stalin suggested that Germany might attack the Soviet Union through Latvia and that Latvia might offer its territory "on credit" for such an adventure¹⁴. This was nonsense which even Stalin himself did not really believe.

Visiting in Riga from 1 to 3 May 1936, the American ambassador to Moscow, W. Bullitt, precisely characterized

the Soviet position. Moscow, he said, did not truly believe that it was under threat of attack, and its true goal was to create tension between Germany and the rest of Europe. For all of these reasons the Soviet Union did not wish to undertake any unilateral obligations in the Baltic states, because this would leave Moscow dangerously exposed to Germany and also to Poland, but would do nothing to enhance Soviet security. This also meant that the Baltic countries were of very little interest to the Soviets in the context of a broader (Eastern Pact) context. Moscow did not wish to see any expansion of German or Polish influence in Latvia (especially after the German-Polish non-aggression agreement of 26 January 1934 which Moscow found most distasteful), but until 1938, the Soviets did not feel that such influence was on the rise. There were a few public warnings that Latvia should not let itself be influenced by Germany and Poland, but after the French and Czech agreements of 1935, Soviet interest in Latvia generally diminished. A visit by Munters to Moscow on June 1937 was of no serious purpose, and the pronouncement by Litvinov on 18 June 1937 that the two countries were ready to cooperate in the area of collective security was an empty phrase. In fact the idea of collective security had long disappeared, despite any efforts by Litvinov to pay lip service to it. Stalin and Molotov never abandoned the hope that the most advantageous alternative in terms of Soviet foreign policy would eventually come to pass: an agreement with Germany would be reached and the status quo in Eastern Europe would be eliminated. Molotov's speech to the Soviet Supreme Council on 28 January 1935 was clearly meant to encourage Germany toward rapprochement¹⁵, and even though Hitler ignored the call, as he had all others, Stalin still did not change his strategic hopes with respect to Berlin.

These hopes were aired very clearly in March 1936 when Germany occupied the Rheinland, thus destroying the Locarno pact. On 17 March, at a League of Nations session in London which had been summoned in response to the German action, Litvinov said that the Soviet Union was prepared to participate in any action which the League might wish to undertake against Germany, but Litvinov was almost immediately overruled by Molotov. The League

of Nations could, in fact, do nothing in the German matter, and in an interview with a French newspaper ("Tan") editor on 19 March, Molotov stressed that the Soviet Union hoped to improve relations with Germany¹⁶. Moscow did not want to be dragged into Western European matters, much in the same way that the western powers did not wish to become entangled in Eastern European affairs. Even the active collective security propagandist Litvinov said in an interview with the Moscow correspondent of *Le Temps* on 25 December 1937 that the Soviet Union might well turn in an isolationist direction, bide its time and consider various options, including an agreement with Germany¹⁷. Litvinov's warning was very important: England and France might be interested in the maintenance of the status quo in Europe, but the Soviet Union, certainly, was not.

The next year, however, was quite dramatic in terms of Moscow's international status. As England and France became more active in the policy of appeasing Hitler, none of Europe's major powers saw any need for cooperation with the Soviet Union. All three of Europe's large powers (England, France and Germany), as well as the self-supposed power, Poland, thought that the Soviet Union should not be admitted to Europe and that European affairs should be settled without Moscow's participation. The mutual aid agreement between France and the Soviet Union which had been signed on 2 May 1935 was now completely meaningless. This was an inevitable outcome, given the motives which the two countries had for signing it in the first place. Moscow had hoped to avert any French rapprochement with Germany and to use the agreement to threaten Berlin a bit. France had similar motives: believing in the potential of the agreement even less than the Soviets did, Paris nevertheless wanted to use it to block any rapprochement between Moscow and Berlin and to frighten Hitler. Even after the agreement was signed, however, neither France nor the Soviet Union abandoned hopes of reaching bilateral agreements with Germany, seeing the 2 May agreement as an offer of sorts to Hitler and as something of an insurance policy, should plans with respect to Germany go awry. France, which had already built the Maginot Line, had no intention of offering any concrete support to its various allies, including those with

which France had military aid agreements (Poland among them). As far as the Soviet Union was concerned, France did not wish to sign so much as a formal military convention, fearing that such a move would complicate relations with Germany.

Given all of this, it was no wonder that Moscow quickly grew disillusioned with its efforts to cooperate with the western democracies. Soviet support for the republicans in Spain, which Moscow initiated not because it had any particular sympathies to the cause of the republicans but rather because it wished to draw the European powers into the Spanish conflict, marked the beginning of a long period of deteriorating relations between the Soviet Union and England and France. Having been disappointed in the area of collective security and also having failed to reach agreement with Germany, Moscow began in the end of 1936 to give ever more serious consideration to the policies and advantages of isolationism. Moscow could not, however, imagine that its self-isolation would so neatly correspond with the wish of the European powers to isolate the Soviet Union against its own will. In 1938 this occurred vividly and humiliatingly. The more England and France engaged in the policy of appeasement, the more suspiciously Moscow viewed events in London and Paris, and the more the Soviets were inclined to return to the tried and true, ideologically pure conception of the Soviet state as a fortress under siege, isolated from the unyieldingly hostile environment of "capitalist attack". This philosophy drew no difference between totalitarian Germany and democratic Britain. Stalin had never believed in "collective security" and never used the phrase himself. It was no accident that the term was conspicuously absent in the Bible of the Soviet Communist Party, the short history of the party which was published in 1938.

Soviet isolationism was clearly illustrated in a tractate which Stalin published on 16 February 1938 under the title "Letter to Comrade Ivanov". In it, Stalin reflected the deeply seated paranoia of the Soviet leadership with respect to the perceived capitalist plot against the "citadel of socialism".

Also in 1938, Moscow began to view events in the Baltic states with increasing sobriety. Growing Polish-German cooperation, which continued till September 1938, led the

Soviets to believe that there were unified Polish-German policies in the Baltic countries. After Poland issued its ultimatum to Lithuania in March 1938 and forced Lithuania to establish diplomatic relations with Warsaw, the Soviets began to feel that Poland presented an even greater threat against Soviet interests in the Baltic region than did Germany. Moscow suspected that Poland wished to join the Baltic Entente and gain hegemony over the entire region¹⁸. Propaganda attacks against Latvia increased, with the Soviets dubbing Latvia a "German-Polish satellite", but in terms of practical policies, Moscow could do nothing to secure any influence in Latvia. The only specific step which the Soviets took (abrogation of the 1933 Soviet-Latvian trade agreement on 2 July 1938) was a demonstrative gesture intended to signal concern about growing German and Polish influence in the Baltic, but it was of no practical consequence. The year of 1938 clearly demonstrated that Moscow could not and dared not unilaterally resolve the Baltic matter by changing the status quo of Baltic independence. In order to achieve this, Moscow needed an agreement with Germany, as well as the destruction of the fairly powerful country of Poland. On 22 October 1938, writing about the balance of Latvian-Russian relations, the Latvian ambassador to Moscow, F. Kociņš, said that the balance was not satisfactory. The Soviet Union had abrogated the Latvian-Soviet trade agreement. Soviet airplanes had begun systematic overflights of Latvian territory. Beginning in March, NKVD agents had undertaken surveillance of the Latvian embassy, detaining individuals who visited the building. The Soviet Union was also arresting Latvian citizens and failing to extradite them to Latvia¹⁹. But these activities, especially the NKVD's demonstrative harassment of the Latvian embassy, were primarily a signal of Moscow's nervousness, restlessness and weakness. The Soviet Union could not and dared not undertake any serious action against the Baltic states and could do nothing more than helplessly watch the growing German influence in the region.

The Munich conference in the fall of 1938 marked the low point of Soviet international isolation. Moscow's suspicions of the "joint capitalist conspiracy" against the Soviet Union flowered during this period, especially after

the German-British declaration of 30 September 1938 and the German-French declaration of 6 December 1938, as well as the brief "Munich concert" performed by Germany, Italy, England and France. At the end of 1938, Moscow was helplessly and dispiritedly considering various scenarios under which the Baltic states could become entirely dependent on Germany and Poland. In more rational moments, however, the Soviets recognized that their condition was by no means hopeless. On the contrary: on 16 October 1938, meeting with the departing French ambassador to Moscow, Litvinov made clear his feeling that sooner or later England and France would have to approach the Soviet Union and "speak to us in different terms"²⁰. The democracies were slow in believing this, however. On October 26 the French ambassador in Moscow R. Coulondre met with Latvia's envoy to the Soviet Union, F. Kociņš, and engaged in an academic musing over the idea that it was always bad for Europe if Russia was too strong or too weak; now, the ambassador said, Russia was too weak, and that is why the European concert would be played without Moscow's participation²¹. Given its weakness and decay, France was ill-positioned to come to this conclusion. Litvinov's failure to attend the departure ceremony for the French ambassador at the end of October signalled the extent to which the Soviets were offended by the idea of a Moscow-free European concert.. On 10 February 1939, in a letter to the Soviet ambassador in Paris, Litvinov emphasized that the Soviet Union would no longer push offers of cooperation on any of the western countries. "We can do without this [cooperation]", Litvinov wrote. This was true, and only a few months passed before the western countries, especially France, began to approach Moscow. Events developed in such a way that London and Paris (as well as, later, Berlin) were forced to beat a path to Moscow's door.

It was not true, however, that Moscow was keeping the westerners in the dark with respect to its intentions. Meeting with the British ambassador to Moscow on 18 February 1939, Stalin's favorite (and Litvinov's competitor) Potjomkin significantly noted that Hitler's hostility toward the Soviet Union should not be overestimated. On 24 February, the new French ambassador to Moscow P. Nagiar was already saying that the Soviets might return

to the Rapallo policies, i.e. - agreement with Germany²². London and Paris did not believe in the idea that bolshevism and naziism could come to any agreement. Riga did not buy the idea either. But the cost of this disbelief proved to be very dear, especially for Latvia.

After the Munich conference, Latvian foreign policy began to be dominated by the idea that the Soviet Union was terribly weak and isolated. On 10 October 1938, the Latvian ambassador to Paris, Dr. O. Grosvalds, who usually took a very negative view of the Soviet Union, expressed his satisfaction at the isolation of the Soviet Union from Europe and the results of the Munich conference. Before long, Foreign Minister Munters joined in this assessment. Meeting with Chamberlain in London on 5 December 1938, Munters presented his views on the international state of Europe and Latvia's place therein. Munters was surprisingly optimistic, saying that Latvia did not feel threatened by Germany or by the Soviet Union. Germany's policy in the near term, Munters felt, would be aimed at retrieval of lost colonies in the Middle East and Asia Minor, and only after that would Germany turn against Danzig and Klaipeda. The Soviet Union, Munters added, was weak and "should be seen as standing outside of Europe". This conclusion drew Chamberlain's agreement. The two ministers joined in the hopeful prognosis that Germany would take no action against countries in which there were no dense populations of Germans and that there should be no disturbance of the peace in Northeastern Europe (i.e., the Baltic), especially if Lithuania followed the general European script on the status of Klaipeda (Memel). The weakened Soviet Union, the ministers agreed, could be ignored²³. Chamberlain and Munters were apparently the last men in Britain and Latvia respectively to give up their illusions about Germany and the Soviet Union.

The geo-political underpinning for Latvian security (in fact - the only underpinning for Latvian security) was the mutual balance of strength among the Soviet Union, Poland and Germany in the region. Hitler's endless tendencies of expansion in the region, the destructive western policy of appeasement, and the short-sightedness of the Polish government all let Hitler wreck the balance of power in the region and, thus, to destroy the geo-political basis for Latvia's security.

Latvia completely ignored the surprisingly frank warnings which Russian diplomats issued about Moscow's strategic aim of reaching agreement with Germany. Two of these warnings were of particular significance. On 20 October 1938, Latvia's representative to the League of Nations, J. Feldmanis, reported to Riga about a discussion with the Soviet representative, V. Sokolin, in which the Russian (not for the first time) not only said that the Soviet Union could restore the Rapallo policies but also expressed an even more significant consideration: that Germany's chief enemy was Great Britain, not the Soviet Union. This statement contained a broad range of subtexts: the possibility of a Soviet-German rapprochement aimed against England and Poland, Moscow's growing conviction that any agreement between Germany and England was unlikely, and the Kremlin's general view that any joint policy against Moscow was also unlikely.

But the most significant sign from the Soviet Union came from Moscow, when Latvian ambassador Kociņš reported on his talks of 8 December 1938 with Potjomkin. With surprising candor, Potjomkin had been warning ever since his 4 October talk with the French ambassador Coulondre that the Soviet Union hoped for good relations with Germany and that Poland was well on the way to being divided up for a fourth time²⁴. This was Potjomkin speaking. Latvia knew the man well, and knew, too, the extent to which his influence was growing at the expense of an increasingly hapless Litvinov. But nothing succeeded in shaking Munters' conviction that Germany and the Soviet Union would forever be hostile enemies and that the Soviet Union was irredeemably weak.

In Lithuania, which of the Baltic countries had always maintained the friendliest relations with the Soviet Union, Moscow's rating dropped in the wake of the Munich conference, too. The Soviet representative in Lithuania, N. Pozdniakov, wrote on 29 January 1939 that Lithuanians are increasingly disappointed in soviet foreign policy abilities²⁵.

The Soviet status in Europe improved greatly in March 1939 when, after the German occupation of Czechoslovakia, London and Paris finally woke up to the fact that Hitler's goal was to destroy the balance of powers in Europe and achieve continental and global hegemony. London

could not permit this, and, albeit extremely belatedly, England was forced to return to its traditional policies of trying to establish an anti-German alliance to control Berlin's actions. On 26 March 1939, the foreign commission of the British Cabinet decided to establish an eastern front against Germany which would involve Poland, Romania, the Balkan countries and Turkey. This was meant to be a unified and multi-lateral alliance in which British guarantees to the individual countries would be part of a mutual assistance system among the countries. London failed, however, to establish a unified eastern front. Britain issued guarantees to Poland, Romania, Greece and Turkey, but these remained at a bilateral level and did nothing to contain the aggressor²⁶. The Baltic countries had no role in Britain's intentions, because British analysis of the balance of power in Europe saw no value in the tiny Baltic states.

In the spring of 1939 Moscow's intentions became a critical issue, even though London did not become fully aware of this until the fateful events of 23 August. British policy could be successful only if Moscow were willing to maintain the status quo in Eastern Europe and if the countries of the region saw Germany as a greater threat than the Soviet Union. Neither of these hopes, however, was realistic. The Soviet Union did not wish to defend the countries of Eastern Europe which were, after all, potential subjects for Soviet revisionism; moreover, the countries of Eastern Europe had no great desire to be defended by the Soviet Union. Henry Kissinger has pointed to this dilemma, writing that a true security system in Eastern Europe was impossible, because it could not work militarily without the Soviet Union, and it could not work politically with the Soviet Union²⁷.

Moscow thus found itself in an ideal situation in which various alternatives were possible. Litvinov precisely expressed the Soviet position in a letter to the Soviet representative in Germany, A. Merekalov, on 4 April: England and France could no longer make do without Soviet assistance, because "the later they ask us for help, the dearer it will be for them"²⁸. The matter of the price which the West would have to pay for an alliance with the Soviet Union, or for Moscow's neutrality, became the dominant issue in the spring and summer of 1939. Moscow

was free to dictate its price, and the West had nothing to offer in response.

The Soviet Union during this period had at least three foreign policy options - more than any other country:

The first possibility was to remain self-isolated and aloof from European affairs. Litvinov's discussion on 1 April with the British ambassador Seeds seemed to indicate that this option had not been fully abandoned²⁹. It appears now, however, that by the spring of 1939, isolationism was no longer seen as a true alternative, and Litvinov's statement was probably an indication to Britain that it should hasten to yield to Soviet demands.

The second possibility was to establish an alliance with England and France, which might eventually mean war with Germany over the preservation of the status quo in Eastern Europe. But faced with the issue of whether it truly wished to fight on behalf of the status quo, the Kremlin found (as it could not help but find) that indeed it did not. The western democracies had not consulted with Stalin during the abrogation of the Locarno agreement, they had excluded Moscow from the European concert of the Munich period. The westerners either ignored Moscow or openly declared their revulsion against the embodiment of bolshevik ideology. Now, in the spring of 1939, the western countries were suddenly hoping that the Soviets would exhibit the type of idealism in defending the Eastern European status quo which the westerners themselves were unable to produce.

The third option was to reach an agreement with Germany on the backs of Poland, the Baltic states, Romania and Finland, thus peacefully regaining that which had been lost in 1917-1920. It is now difficult to imagine conditions under which Moscow might have rejected this opportunity. The Soviets had two major foreign policy goals: to avoid war and to change the Eastern European status quo in Moscow's favor. These goals were supplemented by Stalin's long-held and paranoid desire to set the capitalist countries against one another so that the Soviet Union could take advantage of a weakened post-war Europe afterward. But Stalin could achieve all of these aims only by exercising the third of Moscow's foreign policy options, i.e., rapprochement with Germany.

The Soviet approach to Latvia did not change in any significant way in the spring of 1939. Although Moscow's propaganda about German threats against the Baltic states grew in volume, the Soviet Union still was not prepared to risk any unilateral action. It is doubtful, moreover, whether Moscow truly felt as threatened as might be concluded from the official Soviet statements of the time. Moscow was, in fact, very cautious. Lithuania's capitulation in handing over Klaipeda (Memel) let the Soviets portray the Baltic states (as Litvinov did in a 16 April discussion with the British ambassador) as countries ready to submit to the aggressor, thus threatening the Soviet Union³⁰. These claims were not so much a reflection of Moscow's fears or, even more, its readiness to unilaterally secure its interests in the Baltic countries (Latvia and Estonia, to be specific, because as long as Poland existed, Lithuania had no border with the Soviet Union and was thus of little concern to Moscow). Rather, the statements indicated Moscow's desire to lay a foundation for its later demands to England and France that Latvia and Estonia should be among those countries receiving guarantees from the alliance. In the wake of the Klaipeda annexation on 28 March, Litvinov strongly warned Latvia and Estonia to avoid any bettering of relations with Germany, adding that the Soviet Union would be ready to "defend [Latvian and Estonian] independence" if the two countries proved unready or unable to do so themselves³¹. This was a direct and open threat. Writing to Stalin on 23 April, Litvinov however emphasized that the Baltic countries had been warned, but nothing more, and that the Soviet Union had undertaken no unilateral guarantees in the defense of Latvian and Estonian independence³². This was a very precise formulation. The Baltic countries were a subject of Soviet revisionism, but not sufficiently valuable to make Moscow risk a unilateral action which might lead to conflict with Germany. Moscow's readiness to provide for Latvian and Estonian "independence", a readiness of which Litvinov warned the ambassadors of the two countries on 7 April, might well not have been carried out if there had not been the agreement with Germany.

Moscow's evaluation of Berlin's growing influence in April 1939 was quite realistic. When the Polish ambassador

to the Soviet Union, W. Grzybowski, met with Litvinov on 22 April to speak of "several worrying signs" with respect to German influence in Latvia, Litvinov responded calmly. It would be a problem for the Soviet Union if one of the Baltic states were to renounce independence, he said, but "we have seen no troubling symptoms" to that effect³³.

Facing no threat from the Baltic states and wishing not to worsen relations with Germany, Moscow waited for an opportune moment to resolve the Baltic matter in an acceptable way: obtaining the Baltic states for itself, but not provoking Germany into war by doing so.

Latvia's international situation deteriorated rapidly in the spring of 1939. Germany's decision to resolve the "Polish problem" with military might, the Soviet Union's failure to defend Poland, Great Britain's inability to effectively assist Poland, and London's lack of interest in the Baltic countries - all these factors facilitated the development of conditions under which the Soviet Union or Germany might carry out its aggressive intentions in the Baltic region. No matter what policies Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania chose at this juncture, it was hard to see how they could maintain full sovereignty. To some extent, the fate of the three countries was already sealed.

Latvia, which earlier had maintained a course of neutrality, signed a non-aggression agreement with Germany on 7 June 1939. Though Riga had pursued the idea of such an agreement since 1934, seeing it as a significant element in the overall security of Eastern Europe, this time it was Berlin which initiated the contacts. Germany used its diplomatic efforts to turn Latvia's efforts to Berlin's advantage. Germany wanted to block Latvia and Estonia from accepting British, French and Russian guarantees and to devote full attention to the organization of a defense against possible Soviet intervention in the Baltic during the period when Germany's attentions would be occupied by war in Poland. The 7 June agreements (Estonia signed a pact with Germany on the same day) was an agreement of open neutrality, which permitted for aggression against third parties (Germany's attack on Poland) and which Germany signed as part and parcel of its policy of isolating Poland diplomatically.

Now Latvia had two non-aggression agreements: with the Soviet Union (1932) and with Germany. Neutrality

had seemingly been balanced in both directions. The two neutrality agreements were not identical (the Soviet one spoke to closed, but the German - to open neutrality), but their similarities and differences were not really important. The fact is that in the realities of 1939, small countries in Europe gained absolutely no security advantage from non-aggression agreements or any other obligations undertaken on paper. The Soviets paid no attention to the 1932 agreement in their dealings with Latvia; the conditions under which the Russians had signed the agreement were long gone. The 7 June agreement was important to Germany only until July of the same year, when the decision was taken to reach rapprochement with the Soviet Union, and Latvia was sacrificed on the altar of greater interests.

The important matter for Latvia in the summer of 1939 was the discussion among Britain, France and England about establishing a "grand alliance" which would provide guarantees to the Baltic republics. The three participants in these negotiations did not carry equal weight. The western policy of unilateral guarantees had in effect served to insulate the Soviet Union against the threat of German aggression. The Soviet Union lay east of Poland and Romania, which had received British and French guarantees. Chamberlain had played into Stalin's hands, and this gave Moscow the opportunity to play first fiddle in the trilateral negotiations and dictate terms to London and Paris. The ability of Britain and France to maneuver in foreign policy matters was, by contrast, fairly limited. The two countries had lost most of their influence. Britain and France could no longer force Germany to remain peaceful, nor could they be sure of a military victory against Germany. London and Paris also could not enlist the Soviet Union in an anti-German front under conditions acceptable to the western powers. The westerners were in an unenviable situation, one which involved a double defeat. They had not succeeded in frightening Hitler, and they also had not managed to enlist Stalin in their cause.

The Soviet Union, a revisionist and aggressive country, worked the trilateral negotiations in a way which would create favorable conditions for the much greater political game of reaching an understanding with Germany. Each time Britain and France yielded on some point in this area,

the Kremlin found new demands to make. Moscow consciously hampered both political and military negotiations. The western powers pursued a strategy of dragging out the negotiations and of negotiating with insufficient directness and openness (the hope was that the negotiations themselves would scare Hitler enough to keep him from launching a war). Moscow had little trouble in making the world believe that the Brits and, to a lesser extent, the French were to blame for the delay and, later, the collapse of the negotiations.

One of Moscow's interests in the negotiations was the subjugation of the Baltic countries, so the Soviet Union insisted that guarantees for Latvia, Estonia and Finland be an element of the trilateral agreement. London and Paris were forced to amend their policies in this area several times. On 1 July 1939, for example, they stepped back from the long-held and important position that the Soviet Union must not be allowed to "help" a country which had fallen victim to aggression unless the country itself asked for assistance. Britain and France agreed to language which provided that the trilateral guarantees could take effect automatically. Even given this capitulation, however, Moscow did not really want to reach agreement with England and France, so the Kremlin had no other recourse than to issue new demands and requirements.

The changing Soviet position was reflected in proposals made to the French and British representatives on 3 July. These spoke to the ideas of direct and indirect aggression and engendered a lengthy discussion of what exactly was meant by "indirect aggression". Even though it was rapidly becoming clear that the trilateral negotiations were deteriorating into farce and that it would not be possible to get Moscow involved in efforts to maintain the status quo and peace in Europe, Britain and France on 17 July confirmed that they would be prepared to offer guarantees to the Baltic countries both in the case of direct and in the case of indirect aggression. But the western countries did not agree to Moscow's proposed definition of indirect aggression, which would have permitted the signatories to the agreement (especially the Soviet Union) to interfere in the internal matters of the countries which were under guarantee, using such matters as changes in government

as a pretext. The Brits began to suspect that Moscow was looking for a way to use Britain and France as a convenient smokescreen for its aggressive plans in the Baltic states. In the summer of 1939, London was still not ready to declare that the Soviets had a right to occupy the Baltic states. Great Britain could not abandon all of its principles for the sake of an agreement with Stalin; seeking to block Hitler from expanded conquests did not necessarily mean giving Stalin the right to conquer instead³⁴.

Latvia (also Estonia and Finland) had strong objections to Moscow's version of trilateral guarantees. The Latvian government felt that the "guarantees" were a code for the Soviet Union's intention to occupy the Baltic states. Moscow would be the sole guarantor under the arrangement, and as such, it would have the sole right to determine when Latvia and Estonia were "threatened".

Latvia's thinking about the international situation and the country's foreign policy condition was as follows: Germany would begin a war against Poland, quickly overcoming any Polish resistance. England and France would not go to war with Germany over Poland. The Soviet Union would remain neutral and aloof from events in Europe. The Latvian foreign minister, Munters, believed that Moscow's trilateral negotiations were the thing that could threaten peace in Europe and expand the war beyond a localized German-Polish conflict. Munters felt that the negotiations should be scuttled and that Latvia could play a grandiose role in making the negotiations more difficult, if not bringing them to an end. Thus, Munters felt, Latvia could provide for peace in Europe (!). These ideas about Latvia's role in determining the fate of Europe were beyond the pale and were based on Munters' long-standing belief that the role of Latvia and Estonia in the geopolitical interests of the major powers (meaning the Soviet Union and Germany) was great enough that neither power would permit the other to obtain hegemony in the region. Somewhat later, on 15 September 1939, the Soviet representative in Estonia, K. Nikitin, characterized this belief cynically: "The Baltic states did not succeed in serving as a regulator among the two major powers and in inflating their importance to the point where they might determine the fate of the world. Now this bubble has been burst, and the Baltic states have been revealed for what they are: Lilliputians"³⁵.

Believing that irreparable antagonism existed between Germany and the Soviet Union, and overestimating the extent to which Germany was interested in Baltic independence, Latvia began in the summer of 1939 to draw closer to Berlin, believing that this would help defend it against the Soviet Union. In June and early July of 1939, Germany cultivated the idea that it could help protect the Baltic countries against Moscow. A whole range of high-ranking officials were dispatched to Latvia and Estonia, among them an adviser to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop, Dr. Peter Kleist, the head of the *Abwehr*, Admiral W. Canaris, and the chief of staff of the German army, General F. Halder. These visits played right into Moscow's hands. The Latvian ambassador to Warsaw, L. Ēķis, wrote on 21 June 1939 that Halder's visit "undoubtedly, given the current conditions, strengthens Moscow's argument that the Baltic countries themselves are unaware of when they should be protected against German attentions"³⁶. Moscow's reaction was not long in coming. On 8 July Molotov announced to the British ambassador and to a member of the British negotiating team that a new and stronger formulation of the principle of indirect aggression was needed, because German military officers were busily changing the Latvian and Estonian armies into anti-Soviet aggressors³⁷. Neither Munters nor his opposite number in Estonia, K. Selter, devoted sufficient attention to the fact that amid all the German visits there was one which was conspicuously absent. Despite invitations from both Latvia and Estonia to come to the signing ceremony of the non-aggression pacts on 7 July, Joachim von Ribbentrop did not come to Tallinn and Riga. On 5 July, speaking with the German ambassador to Latvia, U. von Kotze, Munters reiterated the invitation to von Ribbentrop, but there was no response from Berlin. In late July the Reich decided to strike a deal with Moscow.

Alongside the trilateral negotiations, Soviet and German diplomatic contacts began to increase in the spring and summer of 1939. These contacts resulted in the non-aggression pact which was signed on 23 August. But the agreement was, in fact, nothing more than Hitler's situational *ultima ratio*. Until the end of July, when talks between Berlin and Tokyo collapsed, there were several possible options for a division of roles among the two

revisionist and aggressive powers. Only after Hitler failed in reaching an agreement with Japan did he devote serious attention to the idea of a non-aggression pact with the USSR. Hitler saw no other way of winning the right to act freely in Poland. He hoped to find Moscow most forthcoming, because since the loss of the war in 1920, the Soviets had felt that the border with Poland was a humiliating but temporary condition, a confirmation of a brief period of Soviet weakness. Hitler was convinced that the Soviet Union was prepared for a conspiracy against Europe. Moscow had, in fact, given signs to that effect on numerous occasions.

After Germany overcame its reservations at the end of July 1939, negotiations on the conditions for a Soviet-German rapprochement progressed swiftly. On 26 July, an expert on Eastern European trade from the Foreign Ministry, K. Schnurre, met with two Soviet diplomats in Berlin, G. Astakhov and E. Babarin. On 2 August, Astakhov met with Ribbentrop, and a day later, the German ambassador to Moscow, W. von der Schulenburg, arrived for a visit with Molotov. The contours for a political agreement began to take shape during these and other discussions. On 2 August Ribbentrop clearly told Astakhov that if Moscow wished to reach an understanding with Berlin, then "there will be no problem between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea which the two countries will prove unable to resolve in a mutually satisfactory manner". Ribbentrop felt that there was room enough in the Baltic region for both powers and that an understanding could be reached with the Soviet Union on the fate of Poland. Where the Baltic matter was concerned, Germany quickly acceded to Moscow's demand that the Soviet Union's special interests in the region be recognized. Within one week (between 26 July and 3 August) Berlin concluded that if Germany hoped to win Russian favor and permission to act freely in Poland, then the price would be German concessions on the Baltic question. In the 26 July meeting between Schnurre, Astakhov and Babarin, the German emphasized that the integrity of the Baltic states and Finland must be protected, but by 3 August Schulenberg was telling Molotov that Germany would be prepared to observe Russia's vital interests in the Baltic region³⁸.

The German proposals were so interesting to the Soviet Union that Moscow offered a continuation of more concrete political negotiations in Moscow. The Germans agreed, because they, too, were ready for active progress. Berlin was concerned about the beginning of military negotiations among the three major powers. Reporting to Molotov on 12 August, Astakhov noted that the Germans very much wanted to avert any military union among Britain, France and the Soviet Union. The Russian ambassador felt that in order to achieve this, the Germans were prepared to take a step which six months earlier would have been unthinkable: "to renounce the Baltic states, Bessarabia, Eastern Poland (to say nothing of Ukraine); this is the minimum to which the Germans are ready to accede without lengthy negotiations, their purpose being to win our promise of non-interference in the conflict with Poland"³⁹. Between 15 and 19 August 1939, Molotov and Schulenburg met several times. The two sides crystallized their respective positions during these talks. In general terms, the Soviets and Germans agreed on the "territorial matters" (the Baltic region, Poland, Southeastern Europe) which Berlin and Moscow might "resolve jointly", and they discussed what external form the rapprochement between the two countries might take. Berlin acceded to Molotov's suggestion that a non-aggression pact with a secret protocol be signed. On 19 August, a very important concession was made by Moscow. During the afternoon negotiations (two sessions were held between Molotov and Schulenburg on this day), Molotov announced that the Soviet government was willing to receive Ribbentrop in Moscow on 26 or 27 August (the Germans had been insisting on this since 15 August). Molotov also gave Schulenburg a draft of the non-aggression agreement which the Soviets had worked out. The document included everything the Germans might have wished for: unlimited neutrality which permitted for a German attack on Poland, as well as an understanding of the obligations of non-aggression which guaranteed mutual trade even in the event of war and excluded any cooperation with third parties which would harm the interests of the other signatory. The Soviets exacted a high price for this most favorable proposal. They insisted that the non-aggression pact could take effect only if an additional protocol on foreign policy matters were signed at the same time⁴⁰.

The Germans were planning to attack Poland on 26 August, and Hitler was loath to postpone the action. For this reason he decided to become personally involved in the talks. On 20 August he sent a telegram to "Herr Stalin", saying that he (Hitler) supported the Soviet text for the non-aggression agreement and asking that Ribbentrop be received in Moscow a few days earlier, on 22 or 23 August. Stalin had no objection, as he did not wish to hamper Hitler's plans. Ribbentrop was given permission to arrive in Moscow on 23 August.

Meeting with the Kremlin's leaders, Ribbentrop acted on a simple principle: make any offer and accept any demand. Early in the negotiations, the Polish issue was resolved easily, but the Baltic question proved a harder nut to crack. Hitler had marked the dividing line between German and Russian interests along the Daugava river, which would have given Germany Lithuania and half of Latvia, while the Soviet Union would have received the other half of Latvia plus Estonia. Stalin demanded all of Latvia. Ribbentrop was not prepared for this demand. He ordered that an urgent telegram be sent to Berlin with a request that Hitler approve Moscow's demand.

When a positive reply had been received from Berlin, the road to signing the devious agreement was clear. The agreement was signed at 2:00 AM on 24 August. It was a non-aggression agreement which provided for unlimited obligations of neutrality. There was no clause to indicate that the agreement would lose effect should one or the other party attack a third country. Instead, the second paragraph of the agreement sanctioned aggression against third parties. Germany and the Soviet Union guaranteed each other a favorable attitude in the case of conflicts with third parties. This served to isolate the western powers.

The most important part of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, however, was the secret protocol on the division of spheres of interest in Eastern Europe. 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 USSR. Western Poland and Lithuania would be included in the German sphere of influence. One matter was left open: whether it would be in Soviet and German interests to

"maintain an independent Poland" and what should be the borders of this entity should it be allowed to exist.

The Molotov-Ribbentrop pact was an unlawful and cynical deal, struck on the backs of a number of countries. In every respect, it was an amoral act. By signing the agreement, Moscow cleared the path for German aggression in Poland, which means that the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact was, in fact, an agreement of war. The war was supposed to lead to a division of Eastern Europe into spheres of influence, which means that the agreement was also one of separation. There was more than just a declaration of spheres of interest, however, as the independence of a number of countries was to be liquidated. Thus it was an agreement of destruction which sealed the fate of Poland and the Baltic states. As an agreement of war, division and destruction, the Molotov-Ribbentrop agreement has no equal in 19th and 20th century European history.

Hitler's maniacal yearnings for global hegemony and his preparations for war were what led to the 23 August agreement which less than a year later led to the destruction of the Baltic states. Stalin's forces occupied and annexed the Baltic states. They were enabled in this by Hitler's pursuit of war. Had Hitler remained in his borders, Stalin would have been in the same position in 1939 that faced him in 1938: frustrated isolation, forgotten by the rest of the world. Hitler lifted Stalin up, giving him the Baltic states, part of Poland, and Finland in return for Moscow's neutrality in the war which Hitler intended to pursue and without which he could not exist. Hitler's Germany was primarily at fault for the destruction of the Baltic states.

The Soviet-German pact sharply tilted the balance of power on the continent in Germany's favor, and it was one of the most fundamental elements in the international situation of the day. Though Britain and France did not leave Poland entirely to the fates (on 25 August London signed a mutual assistance agreement with Warsaw), which was one thing Hitler had hoped to achieve with the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, the German dictator did gain a unique opportunity to wage World War II under circumstances favorable to the Reich. Hitler did not need to fear a war on two fronts at once. The Soviet

Union, in turn, became a country which could observe from the sidelines and then, with no great risk to itself, participate in the distribution of booty during and after the war. After the Germans attacked Poland, Moscow's way to the West was open. At first, news of the 23 August agreement was received calmly in Riga. Indeed, had there not been growing rumors of a secret protocol, Munters could not have reacted in any other way. A non-aggression agreement between Germany and the USSR perfectly fit in with Munters' conception of events in Europe. Latvia itself had two non-aggression agreements: with the USSR and with Germany. True, these agreements were not "covered" (to use Munters' phrase) by international guarantees, and the list of possible guarantors was becoming shorter and shorter. In a 6 July meeting with the British ambassador to Latvia, C. Orde, Munters left the impression that he would like to see Soviet and German guarantees to the Latvian-Soviet and Latvian-German non-aggression pacts⁴¹. This was an old idea which Munters had first begun to promote on 20 June 1936, when he met with the German ambassador to London (Joachim von Ribbentrop) to urge Germany to sign non-aggression agreements with the Baltic countries⁴², and then again in a meeting with Chamberlain in London in May of 1937. The idea was nothing more than an unrealistic formality in 1937, and this was even more true in 1939. But as long as the formula was seen as an accurate reflection of events, the 23 August Soviet-German agreement could be seen as something of a "cover". All three countries - Germany, the USSR and Latvia - were now bound together in a non-aggression system. The Soviet Union had agreed on 5 February 1932 not to attack Latvia and thus not to endanger Germany's interests; Germany had vowed on 7 June 1939 not to attack Latvia and thus not to endanger the Soviet Union's interests; and the USSR and Germany on 23 August undertook not to attack each other. As long as all the parties stuck to these agreements, Latvia's independence was guaranteed, at least in the thinking of Foreign minister Munters, whose formal manner of thinking was ready to accept the entire premise. Of course, the formality of the premise was destroyed by the secret protocol attached to the German-Soviet agreement.

The 23 August agreement let Moscow fulfill two goals: to stay outside war (while at the same time facilitating Stalin's traditional strategy of provoking war between the "imperialists" - Germany and the western democracies), and to carry out territorial revisionism in Eastern Europe.

Had Moscow's only goal been to avoid war, a non-aggression agreement with Germany would have been enough; the secret protocol would not have been needed. But, of course, the two countries were not prepared to limit themselves to a simple absence of hostilities. Accepting the accreditation papers of the new Soviet ambassador to Germany, A. Shkvtartsev, on 3 September 1939, Hitler stated that the war would result in a liquidation of the territorial situation which had been created by Versailles and that Germany and the Soviet Union would restore borders to where they had been in 1914⁴³.

Stalin's ideas were identical. In a discussion with the British ambassador to Moscow Cripps on 1 July 1940, Stalin said candidly that for the Soviet Union and Germany, the purpose of the 23 August agreement was their common wish to liquidate the British and French-supported status quo in Europe. Should Churchill wish to protect the status quo, Stalin said, the USSR would simply not be able to permit it⁴⁴.

Stalin felt that Germany was much weaker than the western democracies. The purpose of his economic, strategic and propagandistic support for Germany between 1939 and 1940 was to reduce the West's abilities to reinstate the status quo in Europe after what Stalin believed to be an inevitable defeat of Hitler. When Ribbentrop visited Moscow for a second time on 27 September 1939, Stalin told him that should Germany run into difficulties, the Soviet people would come to her aid, not permitting Germany to be "strangled"⁴⁵. Moscow considered the 23 August agreement to be first and foremost a weapon against Great Britain and Poland and their support for the status quo in Eastern Europe. The content of the agreement was aimed at territorial revisionism.

On 1 September 1939, Hitler attacked Poland, and on 3 September, Great Britain belatedly declared war against Germany. This was a major historical turning point. The

understanding that Hitler must at all costs be prevented from conquering Europe was deeply rooted in the English population, and this understanding was expressed in the declaration of war against Berlin.

On 17 September 1939, the Soviet Union attacked Poland. During Ribbentrop's visit later in the month (27 to 29 September), he and Stalin reviewed the content of the 23 August agreement. Stalin recognized the "traditional yearning of the Poles to restore independence" and renounced Soviet claims to the Lublin region of Poland, as well as the northern Warsaw region. Regions of Poland which were populated entirely by ethnic Poles were turned over to Germany so that it could be about the business of crushing Polish resistance. Stalin, in return, received Lithuania.

England and France now found themselves in an unenviable situation. War with Germany and the Soviet-German agreement meant that when the Soviets invaded Poland, the western democracies reacted quite mildly. The Soviet ambassador to London, I. Maiski, predicted in his journal on 17 September 1939 that the British would not wage war against Moscow and would not even suspend diplomatic relations. England would do everything, Maiski wrote, to avoid making its situation even worse than it already was and to avoid greater cooperation between Germany and the Soviet Union. This proved to be the case. On 19 September the British government issued a communique which recognized the ongoing *de jure* existence of the Polish state and confirmed the British intention to carry out all obligations to its ally. But London neither declared war against the Soviet Union, nor did it break off relations⁴⁶. London simply could not afford to bring Moscow and Berlin even closer.

The British response to the Baltic states coming under the Soviet sphere of influence was markedly disinterested. England and France had no strategic interest in the Baltic region, and they had given no security guarantees to the Baltic countries. Already engaged in war with Germany, London and Paris believed that Soviet dominance over the Baltic states was a much lesser evil than the possibility that Germany might occupy the region and thus enhance its overall potential.

Moscow's deliberations on the Baltic issue in September 1939 have not been fully revealed to history. The Soviet ambassadors in Riga and Tallinn, at any rate, advocated radical steps. On 6 September the ambassador in Latvia, I. Zotov, reported to Moscow that Latvia's "working people" wanted Latvia to become the 12th republic of the USSR. This can be seen as a recommendation that Latvia be annexed immediately. The ambassador in Estonia, K. Nikitin, indirectly recommended on 15 September that border regions of Estonia which contained significant populations of Russians be annexed⁴⁷. It appears, however, that the Baltic ambassadors did not know about the secret protocol to the 23 August agreement. Typically for Stalinist-era operations in the Foreign ministry, the ambassadors were nothing more than petty executors of decisions taken elsewhere. Moscow certainly did not encourage any independent thinking or initiative from its ambassadors, and if the Kremlin's overlords felt that an ambassador was showing too much independence (however much independence was possible in the terror-filled climate of the 1930s), it immediately clamped down on the respective offender. Certainly Soviet diplomats of the era knew what could happen to those who stepped out of line. A typical example of this process concerned the Soviet representative in Romania, R. Kukolev. On a telegram which Kukolev sent to Moscow on 20 September, Molotov, who felt that the representative was showing signs of independent behavior, wrote that "our representative should stop fussing" and that he should limit himself to receiving information and transmitting it to Moscow⁴⁸.

It now seems that in September 1939, even before the Ribbentrop visit during which the Baltic matter was discussed extensively, Moscow had decided to carry out the annexation of the Baltic states gradually and with as much appearance of legality as possible. Stalin's territorial revisionism was essentially nothing more than Russian imperialism; but Stalin was a bolshevik at heart, and bolshevik ideology held that territorial revisionism should occur only after the "working people" had engaged in "free elections" to confirm their wish to join the Soviet Union. Stalinist Moscow devoted considerable attention to matters of style, and the Kremlin did not wish to be seen as a bald aggressor.

Matters might have taken a slightly different course if the Baltic states had exhibited resistance to Soviet military adventures as early as September 1939, but it seems likely that after crushing such resistance, Moscow would still have avoided open occupation in favor of a collaborationist puppet government which would legitimize the Kremlin's rule. But the frightening events of September - growing rumors of the secret protocol to the 23 August agreement, the destruction of Poland and its dramatic and palpable echoes in the Baltic states, and the attempts of the anti-democratic Baltic regimes to stay in power - all led to domestic conditions in the three countries which bordered on panic and left them weakened, unwilling and unable to oppose Moscow.

With Poland's destruction almost finished, Stalin reported to Schulenburg on 25 September that Moscow was prepared to begin resolving the Baltic question. Meeting with Ribbentrop late on the night of 27 September, Stalin reported that the Baltic states were frightened and that there would be no true opposition to Moscow's efforts. Estonia had already agreed to a "mutual aid" agreement with the USSR, and Stalin stated that if Latvia should exhibit any opposition to a similar pact, the Red Army would deal with the problem in short order. Because of economic interests in the Baltic states, and because there was a considerable population of Baltic Germans in the three countries, Germany asked that the Baltic matter be resolved gradually, i.e. - that the Soviet Union refrain from an outright occupation and sovietization of the three countries. Stalin agreed to enter the Baltic states gradually, but added that in time they would become Soviet republics⁴⁹.

In September and October of 1939, the Soviet Union forced Estonia (on 28 September), Latvia (5 October) and Lithuania (10 October) to accept "mutual assistance" pacts, as well as Soviet military bases (in Estonia and Latvia) and garrisons (in Lithuania). The Baltic states in effect became Soviet protectorates. Recognizing that the Baltic countries were now under Soviet authority, Berlin hurried to save the Baltic Germans from Soviet domination. On 28 September 1939, the Soviet Union and Germany signed a confidential protocol on the emigration of Baltic Germans, thus ensuring the ability of Latvian Germans

to leave the country. The final documentary pre-requisite for the exodus was put in place on 30 October, when Germany and Latvia signed an agreement on the subject. This was the juridical basis for Baltic German emigration, which was completed by mid-December. The group of people who streamed out of Latvia was one which had over the years made an incalculable cultural investment in the country's development.

The Ulmanis government formally declared its support for Baltic German emigration, but the regime was nevertheless forced to deal with the fact that the transfer of Baltic Germans to the Reich created considerable fears among the Latvian population. The thought that the German exodus might be a sign of impending sovietization in Latvia gained wide circulation. The government chose a policy of pacification, and its public statements denied that the German emigration had anything to do with the Soviet Union's future plans. The truth in the matter was a bitter one, so the Latvians were instead fed German-inspired propaganda. In a speech on 6 October, Hitler said that the return of foreign Germans to the motherland had to do with nothing more than a resolution of minority issues in Europe. The Latvian government, trying to deny that Baltic German emigration was a sign that the Baltic states had been sold out to Russia, devoted considerable effort to praising the "mutual assistance" agreement with the Soviets which had been signed on 5 October.

The Latvian government executed the 5 October agreement scrupulously, often exceeding all good sense in praising the pact and its authors in Moscow. This was particularly true when the Soviet Union began its aggression against Finland. On 27 November 1939, the official newspaper of the Ulmanis regime, *Brīvā Zeme*, published an article on the situation in Finland which was authored under a *nom de plume* by Foreign minister Munters. The article stated that Finland should recognize the security interests and demands of the Soviet Union. When the Soviets attacked Finland, General M. Hartmanis, who was in charge of supervising Latvian compliance with the 5 October agreement, reported to the Soviet military attache in Latvia, Col. K. Vasiljev, that Latvia would let the Soviet Union use airfields in Latvia (including Riga) to launch bombing raids on Finland⁵⁰. Latvia's efforts to pla-

cate Moscow paled, however, in comparison to what the once decidedly pro-German Estonian military was doing. On 11 October 1939, the auditor general of the Estonian government, K. Soopaa, noted in his journal that Estonia's war minister, N. Reek, had drunk a formal toast with the leaders of the Soviet military delegation to agree that henceforth Reek and the Soviets would address each other with the informal rather than formal form of address (this distinction does not exist in English, but is identical to the difference between "Du" and "Sie" in German). Afterward Reek demonstratively used the informal form of address in speaking with his new Russian friends. Visiting Tallinn in January 1940, the Finnish professor L. Ketunen left with the impression that the Estonian military was hoping to keep its status even if Estonia became a Soviet protectorate. The practice of the pre-World War I Russian Empire facilitated such hopes⁵¹.

Latvia's condition after the signing of its agreement with the Soviet Union seemed to be the best among the three Baltic republics. Lithuania's attentions were more than occupied with recovering Vilnius, opposing the Polish underground movement which was causing considerable headaches in Lithuania's relations with Germany and the USSR, and dealing with growing domestic political tension. Preparing for May Day demonstrations in 1940, the Lithuanian government signalled that it would be prepared to use force to quell any unrest⁵². Estonia was disturbed politically and mentally by the Soviet attack against Finland, feeling that the aggression might lead to military complications for Estonia, as well. Latvia had no such problems with the Soviet Union, and the Latvian government spent the early part of 1940 dealing with various tiresome but generally routine matters. The regime felt, for example, that the number of Soviet troops specified in the 5 October agreement (25,000) would include all types of personnel, but the Soviet Union insisted that naval personnel should not be counted toward the agreed limit. Latvian efforts to include naval personnel in the agreement's provisions were fruitless. Latvia further insisted that service personnel associated with the Soviet armed forces (technicians, construction workers, etc.) should be counted toward the agreed troop number, but Moscow

refused to include them in the counting. Latvia was forced to yield to ever greater demands from the Kremlin, and a veritable army of "technicians" slowly flooded into the country. The agreement did not provide that arriving troops could bring family members with them, but such people arrived in great number, despite Latvian protests. These and other questions caused tensions between Latvia and the Soviet Union, but the regime in Riga refused to see these as political matters. On the eve of the cataclysmic events of the summer of 1940, the Ulmanis regime insisted on seeing relations with Moscow as completely satisfactory within the framework of the 5 October agreement.

Once Latvia was forced to accept Soviet military bases, the Ulmanis regime had to deal with growing domestic opposition. Even before 1939, the regime had worked out a plan to quell any anti-Ulmanis uprising. On 14 October, General K. Berķis ordered the development of a new plan, one which would provide for the army's participation in overcoming unrest. Early in June of 1940, the Riga military commander, Col. V. Malceniņš, had developed a plan to suppress any uprising. The plan spoke to dividing Riga into five regions and to devoting particular attention to protecting Ulmanis' residence at the Riga Castle⁵³. The regime's worries were exacerbated by the mood among Latvia's ethnic minorities. The nationalistic Ulmanis slogan "Latvia for the Latvians" had naturally served to stoke dissatisfaction among other residents, thus weakening the country and making it vulnerable to Soviet threats. Writing to Munters on 1 May 1939, the Latvian ambassador to Poland, L. Ēķis, who was no democrat and who did not agree with any policy of complete tolerance toward minorities, nevertheless counseled against any policy which would "irritate" the national minorities (Ēķis was thinking of educational matters, trade concessions, liquidation of minority-owned businesses, etc.). "Minorities should feel more comfortable in our country," Ēķis wrote, "than they might feel in their vast fatherlands". Then, the ambassador added, "the minorities will be truly loyal to us". But Ēķis could not leave this sensible advice alone. He added a remark which was fully characteristic of the Ulmanis regime: persecution of minorities could be continued later, "when the existence of our state and the

independence of the people will not be at risk, as it is now"⁵⁴. The Ulmanis regime ignored this recommendations, and thus it was no wonder that when the Soviet military arrived in Latvia in June 1940, many minority residents of Latvia greeted it with some considerable joy. In the spring of 1940, Ulmanis did come to his senses in understanding that minority dissatisfaction might play into Moscow's hands. Ulmanis summoned the director of the political police, J. Fridrihsons, and asked him to report on the mood among Latvia's Russians. Ulmanis concluded that the number of Russian schools in Latvia should be expanded, even though it was his government which had closed many such institutions. It was also true that after the signing of the 5 October pact, relations between Ulmanis and the Latvian war minister, General J. Balodis, deteriorated. Ulmanis feared that Balodis, who was felt to be pro-Russian, would conspire against him in Moscow, and so Balodis was never allowed to travel to the Soviet Union, even though the Kremlin had invited him to Moscow in October 1939. The conflict between Ulmanis and Balodis ended with the general's firing in April 1940. The bottom line is that the Ulmanis dictatorship left Latvia much weaker and much more divided on the eve of the Soviet occupation than it would have been under conditions of democracy.

In the fall of 1939, fulfilling Germany's requests and wishing to avoid being considered a naked aggressor, the Soviet Union began to carry out a gradual program of destroying Baltic independence. This program did not foresee the immediate "sovietization" of the Baltic republics. After the signing of the Soviet-Estonian "mutual aid" agreement, the Soviet embassy in Tallinn began to agitate among Estonia's leftists with the idea that Estonia might be sovietized quickly. An order to stop such activities quickly arrived from Moscow. On 23 October 1939, Molotov ordered ambassador Nikitin to avoid any activities which would "facilitate the desire for Estonian sovietization"⁵⁵. It is no wonder that after such an order from Molotov, the Soviet embassy in Lithuania noted in a report filed on 30 March 1940 that it had no idea of the "condition of proletariat organizations"⁵⁶. Of course, this may well have been an exaggeration, but the Soviet embassies in the Baltic region began to seek

collaborators in the citizenry, ignoring the leftist underground, which Moscow did not trust. Externally, however, the Soviet Union tried to create the impression that its only purpose in the Baltic republics was to see that the provisions of the "mutual aid" pacts were carried out.

It is difficult to say how long the Baltic countries might have remained in the role of Soviet protectorates if Germany had not invaded France in 1940. Germany's military successes apparently surprised Stalin, and he began increasingly to worry about possible German activities to the East once it had taken care of its western campaigns. Taking advantage of Germany's distraction, Stalin decided to bring an end to the gradual infiltration of the Baltic countries which he had promised to Ribbentrop. On 16 May *Izvestija* carried a significant piece in which it was opined that under conditions of global war, small countries had scant hope of survival.

Moscow decided to deal with Lithuania first, using both real and imagined incidents involving Red Army troops in Lithuania as an excuse. On 4 February 1940, a Soviet lieutenant named G. Butajev disappeared. This was nothing unusual in Soviet military garrisons, and earlier disappearances of personnel had not been used by the Kremlin as an excuse for any complaint. The Lithuanian police hunted down Butajev, finding him in New Vilnius on 12 May. As the police moved in to arrest Butajev, the lieutenant fatally shot himself. On 14 May, the Lithuanian ambassador to Moscow, L. Natkevičius, informed the Soviet foreign ministry of what had happened, and the Russians seemed satisfied with the report.

Over the next 10 days there was no sign that a catastrophe was about to occur. But on 24 May, the Soviet representative in Lithuania, N. Pozdnižakov, noted with some surprise a "peculiar desire among the Lithuanians" to direct Pozdniakov's attention to growing anti-Soviet sentiment in Latvia⁵⁷. If the Lithuanians hoped to deflect attention from themselves with this gambit, they were certainly being naive. Moscow had already scripted further events in Lithuania.

On 25 May, the Soviet Union initiated three weeks of what can only be described as byzantine tormenting of Lithuania. Molotov summoned the Lithuanian ambassa-

dor to the Foreign ministry and accused Lithuania of kidnapping Red Army soldiers Nosov and Shmavgovnets with the full knowledge of the Lithuanian government. Molotov's accusations came completely out of the blue and engendered considerable panic in Lithuania. On 27 May the deputy commissar of the Soviet defense ministry, A. Loktionov, arrived in Lithuania to inspect Soviet garrisons there and led to even greater worries by listing someone named Pisarev among those who had been "kidnapped". The Lithuanians established an investigatory commission under the leadership of a regional procurator named I. Brazinskis. But the Russians flatly rejected any cooperation with the commission. On 30 May, TASS published a threatening communique which elaborated on Molotov's accusations. As the crisis deepened, Lithuanian President A. Smetona ordered his foreign minister, J. Urbšys, to cable a communique to Lithuania's diplomatic facilities in Berlin, Rome, Paris, Washington and Stockholm, providing that should a "catastrophe" occur, the Lithuanian ambassador to Rome, S. Lozoraitis, would become the leader of Lithuania's diplomatic representation abroad⁵⁸. The order did not, however, speak to the establishment of a government-in-exile to continue the juridical existence of the state.

Moscow's tactics were simple but effective. The Kremlin was well aware of the fact that there had never been any great harmony among the three Baltic countries, and there was no reason to believe that solidarity might suddenly appear under conditions of crisis. In accusing Lithuania, the Soviet Union carefully left Estonia and especially Latvia alone. This resulted in both countries believing that the worsening of Soviet-Lithuanian relations would have no impact on Latvia and Estonia. On 28 May 1940, however, *Pravda* burst the Estonian bubble, complaining that Tallinn had excessive sympathies toward Britain and excessive antipathies toward Germany. As the Molotov attack had surprised Lithuania, so did the *Pravda* broadside shock Estonia. The next two weeks, however, were quiet, and no further accusations against Estonia were made.

Latvia faced no Soviet accusations and, in fact, the Latvian war minister, General K. Berķis, visited Moscow at the height of the Soviet-Lithuanian confrontation.

Berķis was treated with great hospitality by his Soviet hosts, and he returned to Riga with complete peace of mind. There was no clear understanding in Lithuania, let alone Latvia and Estonia, of what Moscow was trying to accomplish. The regimes in Tallinn and Riga felt that events in Lithuania, no matter how severe, would not affect Estonia and Latvia.

Moscow's treatment of Lithuania was tortuous. After Molotov's announcement of 25 May and the following attack by TASS, the Kremlin relaxed. Meeting with Natkevičius on 4 June, Molotov adopted a friendlier tone. On the same day, the Soviet defense commissar S. Timoshenko, went so far as to describe the lost lieutenant Butajev as a "simple hooligan". Meanwhile, the Soviet representative in Lithuania, V. Semjonov, reported to Moscow on 3 June that a pro-German government might take power in Lithuania. Semjonov recommended that the Red Army enter Vilnius and Kaunas at once⁵⁹. Semjonov's report reflected the deep-seated Soviet mistrust of Germany and its policies which did not disappear even after the agreements of 23 August and 28 September 1939. Only the outright occupation of the Baltic states could lay to rest the Kremlin's doubts about Baltic flirtations with Germany and disloyalty to the Soviet Union.

On the evening of 6 June 1940, Lithuanian Prime Minister A. Merkys went to Moscow. Latvian ambassador L. Sēja was among those to accompany Merkys to his train and reported afterward that he believed the prime minister to be in a calm state of mind⁶⁰. In his first talks with Merkys on 7 June, Molotov reiterated the Soviet accusations of kidnapping, but during the second discussion, on 9 June, the foreign minister abruptly abandoned the accusations, focusing instead on supposed "anti-Soviet" policies in the Baltic Entente. Lithuania, Molotov said, had already established a military union with Latvia and Estonia. The third session of talks took place on 11 June, and Merkys was joined by Foreign minister J. Urbšys, who had arrived in Moscow the previous day. Urbšys flatly denied any anti-Soviet leanings of the Baltic Entente or any military alliance with Latvia and Estonia, adding that the Baltic Entente was more a sentimental than a practical organization. On 12 June Merkys returned to Kaunas (via Riga), while Urbšys remained in Moscow.

As the Soviet-Lithuanian conflict developed, Moscow showed no signs of dissatisfaction with Latvia and Estonia. On 7 June Molotov announced to Merkys that the Soviet Union had no problems in Latvia of the type which it had experienced in Lithuania (meaning the "kidnapping" of the Red Army troops). On 12 June, A. Loktionov arrived in Riga. Meeting with Munters and Social Affairs minister A. Bērziņš, Loktionov left the impression that Moscow would settle its affairs with Kaunas peacefully and that Latvia, of course, would not be affected by the events. On 14 June, meeting with the new Hungarian ambassador to Latvia Louis Kuhl de Boreshat, Munters reported that the Lithuanians could only blame themselves for their country's problems with Moscow and that Lithuania's struggles had nothing to do with Latvia⁶¹.

Late in the night of 14 June 1940, Molotov delivered an ultimatum to Urbšys. The Soviet government demanded that Lithuania establish a new government, one which would prove able to "honestly execute" the mutual aid agreement of 10 October 1939 and which would permit a new contingent of Red Army troops (between 9 and 12 divisions) to enter Lithuania. The term for the ultimatum was set at 10:00 AM on 15 June. The Soviets did not even wait for the term to expire. At around 4:00 AM on 15 June, the Soviet military attacked Lithuanian border posts at Ūtoje and Eišiški. Border guard A. Barauskas was killed, and his colleague Aleksanavičius was taken prisoner.

Meeting overnight, the Lithuanian Cabinet of Ministers considered a proposal to accept the ultimatum under protest, but in the end, the ultimatum was accepted with no opposition whatever. It is true, however, that a specific form of opposition was President Smetona's decision to go into exile, thus robbing the Soviets of their opportunity to use the president for their own purposes.

The Latvian government was not surprised by the Soviet move into Lithuania. The commander of the security police testified to the Soviet KGB after the occupation that the Latvian secret police had been monitoring phone conversations between Riga and Moscow ever since the 5 October mutual aid agreement and that in June 1940, tapping into a conversation between the TASS correspondent in Latvia, V. Jemeljanov, and Moscow, the police had learned that the Red Army would enter

Lithuania on 15 June. The Latvian government did not report this fact to the population, nor did it take any emergency steps. No member of the Latvian cabinet went abroad to continue the political and diplomatic battle for Latvian independence. On 17 May the government had approved very limited "emergency authority" (see document No. 64) which did not provide for the establishment of a government-in-exile, which the government never signed officially, and which Munters did not even bother to transmit to the Latvian ambassador in London, K. Zariņš. Even in June 1940, when Latvia was occupied, Zariņš received no information about the authority which he had provisionally been given on 17 May.

As the sun rose on the morning of 15 June, Soviet troops also attacked Latvian border posts, killing three border guards and one civilian. On 16 June in Moscow, Molotov delivered an ultimatum to the Latvian ambassador, F. Kociņš. The Soviet Union demanded the resignation of the Latvian government and the admittance of two corps of Red Army troops to Latvia. On the evening of 16 June the Latvian Cabinet of Ministers accepted the ultimatum and resigned. The government rejected military opposition to the Red Army, feeling that it would lead to unnecessary bloodshed but would not save the Latvian state. The government did not so much as express a diplomatic protest to Moscow. Latvia might have followed the Danish precedent, where following the German invasion of Denmark, the foreign minister P. Munch sent a note to the German ambassador in Copenhagen, plainly stating the fact of the occupation and objecting to it. The Latvian government did nothing of the sort. On 17 June the Soviet armed forces occupied Latvia.

The incorporation of the Republic of Latvia into the Soviet Union between 17 June and 5 August 1940 occurred in several phases, each fundamentally different from the others. The first step was the establishment of a new government, a step which Moscow naturally did not entrust to Latvian politicians. On 18 June, the deputy chairman of the Soviet Council of People's Commissars, A. Vyshinskii (better known as a chief prosecutor during Stalin's repressions), arrived in Riga with an already agreed list of people to serve in the Latvian Cabinet of

Ministers. Only a few vacancies remained to be filled. To lend an aura of lawfulness to his work, Vyshinskii's first step was an official visit to President Ulmanis in the Riga Castle. By 18 June, Ulmanis was completely isolated from events in the country, but he nevertheless expressed his own views about the new government. Ulmanis felt that the Soviet representative would have no problems in finding cabinet members, because the tradition of leftist social democracy in Latvia had fairly deep roots. The Soviets, however, had no intention of binding themselves to the Latvian Social Democratic Party, or even to the Latvian Communist Party, which had endured an official ban throughout the life of the independent Latvian republic, even though Moscow did need to present a facade of democracy.

Vyshinskii finished the task of establishing a government by 20 June. Reporting to the Soviet foreign minister, Vyshinskii reported that "today at 11:00 AM, comrade Derevjanski and I visited Ulmanis, who reported that he had no objections to our proposals concerning the new Cabinet of Ministers or any proposed changes to it". On the same afternoon, the government formally announced the establishment of a new Cabinet of Ministers under the leadership of Prof. Augusts Kirhenšteins. The cabinet was made up of individuals widely known in society: writers, journalists, lawyers, etc. The new ministers all had one thing in common, however: each had spent a longer or shorter period of time living in Soviet Russia.

During his official address at the first meeting of the new cabinet on 21 June, Kirhenšteins told Ulmanis: "During this difficult period you have facilitated good relations with foreign countries, especially with our great neighbor, the Soviet Union. We promise to work on Latvia's behalf, to continue, perhaps with different methods, the work which you, Mr. President, and the previous government had undertaken"⁶². The occasion marked Ulmanis' first and last meeting with the new government, as well as his last public appearance. Until he was deported to the Soviet Union, the president was allowed nothing more than to sign already accepted decisions, in order to preserve the illusion of lawfulness.

On 21 June the government adopted an amnesty law which freed from prison members of the illegal Latvian

Communist Party, as well as activists from the Latvian Workers Party and the Farmers Socialist Party who had been imprisoned for anti-state activities. In order to hail this decision and to emphasize the "democratic" nature of the new government, the Soviet embassy ordered a mass demonstration in the streets of Riga. The procession was directed so that demonstrators eventually ended up in front of the Soviet embassy. Kirhenšteins appeared on the balcony of the embassy to address the people. Some witnesses to the era have reported that Stalin felt this to be a premature and overly active step.

Eventually the demonstration moved to the Cabinet of Minister building. There, the new interior minister, Vilis Lācis, read a cabinet declaration which stated that:

- the old government had proved unable to carry out the provisions of the 5 October 1939 agreement with the Soviet Union;

- the new government would raise the spiritual and material well-being of the people and provide for the rights and freedoms of the people;

- the new government would establish close ties between Latvia and the Soviet Union;

- the people were joyous in greeting the Red Army, which would protect Latvian independence and security;

- the government would see to it that the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia be observed in all further work.

The demonstration also marked the re-appearance of the Latvian Communist Party (LCP). The party's demands in no significant way departed from the government's plans, except that the LCP adopted as its own the mandatory Soviet slogans about confiscating the property of "enemies of the state and people". But there was no document to call for the nationalization of private property or the collectivization of agriculture. There was no formal talk of incorporating Latvia into the Soviet Union. Over the next 10 days, the Cabinet of Ministers and the LCP worked separately. Vyshinskii made no particular effort to merge the two operations, although he controlled both. Vyshinskii's reserved attitude toward the LCP may perhaps be explained by the doubts which Moscow had about the numerically small underground organization,

as well as by the fact that the leaders of the LCP, nearly all of whom had arrived in Latvia illegally in the late 1930s, were deeply unpopular among the people of Latvia. For its part, the leadership of the LCP declared that it would be politically unacceptable to participate in a government which, however formally, reported to President Ulmanis.

Contemporary historians have found no documents to indicate that the western governments viewed events in Latvia with any type of dissatisfaction. It is, however, known that on 26 June, Kirhenšteins went to the Foreign Ministry to "accept the foreign diplomats accredited in the Republic of Latvia. The meetings lasted from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Each member of the diplomatic corps spent 10 minutes with the prime minister"⁶³.

The next step in the Soviet Union's undisturbed program of incorporating Latvia was the organization new parliamentary elections. Simultaneously, the Soviet leadership changed its attitude toward the LCP and its role in Latvian domestic life. The Soviet Union needed people who could freely and appropriately adopt the Latvian Constitution to changing events. Moscow succeeded in avoiding any western censure of its activities. Germany offered no protest, and the western democracies were still stunned by the military defeat of France.

The first step taken by the LCP was to announce that despite the fact that Ulmanis was still president, the party would deign to take over several posts in the Latvian government: A. Tabaks would become state comptroller, J. Vanags - agriculture minister, K. Karlsons - finance minister, N. Priede - deputy finance minister. The most important decision of the party, however, concerned the upcoming parliamentary elections. The party decided that because there were rightist elements in the Social Democratic Party, a new party of workers, farmers and the intelligentsia should be established. A platform for the "bloc of the working people" should be written (Ž. Spure was detailed to head the effort). A campaign in the newspapers should be undertaken⁶⁴. The Cabinet of Ministers adopted a decision on the elections on 4 July, and the president declared the elections a day later. The following events took place at record speed. The population was given no more than 10 days to nominate, register and elect its representatives. It was broadly emphasized that

the elections would be carried out under the provisions of the 1922 Constitution, but nothing of the sort occurred. Two representatives of the Communist International arrived from Moscow to guarantee that the bloc of workers and farmers would win the elections and declare Soviet authority in Latvia.

On the recommendation of the LCP, the attorney of the former Social Democratic Party, A. Buševics, was chosen to head the elections commission, while LCP member A. Deglavs was appointed elections commission secretary. Regional elections commissions were all headed by communists.

From the very first, all necessary steps were taken to block all parties except the "working people's bloc" from submitting candidate lists. The declaration of the bloc was signed by J. Kalnbērziņš, Ž. Spure, O. Auguste and A. Jablonskis for the LCP central committee; by P. Kurlis, E. Berkļavs, P. Sadovskis and P. Bāliņš for the central committee of the Latvian Working Youth Union; and by E. Niedre and A. Nurža of the central committee of the Red Assistance Organization. The declaration listed as supporters of the bloc 25 labor unions, the Union of War Invalids, leftist elements in the military, agricultural and educational sectors, and various organizations of the intelligentsia.

Some members of the intelligentsia put faith in the government's statements that the parliamentary elections would be based on the 1922 Constitution. On 6 July, lawyer A. Ķeniņš, General J. Balodis, former prime ministers V. Zāmuels and H. Celmiņš, poet K. Skalbe, prof. K. Čakste, and former Democratic Centre leader J. Breikšs established a Democratic Bloc, calling their platform "the call of democratic Latvians". The elections commission also received the platform of "non-partisan fishermen, farmers, artisans, laborers and middle-class electors" in the Kurzeme voting region. Lists containing a single candidate were also received. The government hastily revised the elections law. The social affairs minister, P. Blaus, issued an order based on the press law of 1937 to "ban all printers from accepting any printing work associated with the parliamentary elections" and to bar printers from turning materials over to their customers without the approval of the Ministry of Social Affairs. The elections commission

demanded proof that the platform of the Kurzeme region bloc had been disseminated throughout Latvia and made other demands which could not practically be met in the very brief time which was allowed (the elections law was declared on 5 July, the government stopped accepting candidate lists on 10 July). The LCP, however, was still not satisfied, complaining that the elections commission should not have even bothered to review other lists. The secretary of the commission, A. Deglavs, was fired from his post and ejected from the LCP on 9 July, while A. Buševics received a reprimand but was not fired, because as a former leader of the Social Democratic Party he was popular in Latvia. The Moscow emissaries, however, did point out that "the Central Elections Commission has no right to ask anything of the LCP central committee".

The LCP assigned people to monitor voting stations to keep track of what people were putting in the ballot boxes and how they were voting. The protocols of the elections indicate that representatives of the Red Army were also present at many of the precincts. Members of the Comintern had been issued certificates which allowed them to inspect any precinct. The elections commissions were also ordered to report to the state's political governance system about everything that had to do with the campaign and election. This stringent system of supervision did not avert several incidents in the precincts. Some voters crossed out the entire candidate list, while others scratched out the names of individual candidates. All such deviations were duly noted, and in June of the next year, most of the free thinkers were rewarded with deportation to Siberia. The actual results of the election were of no particular importance. A generalized statement after the voting simply said that the workers' bloc had won.

At a meeting after the elections on 18 June, a representative of the LCP, J. Putniņš, for the first time publicly demanded that Latvia be accepted into the Soviet Union. The period independence was over. On 20 July 1940, Ulmanis signed a law stating that when the new parliament took office on the next day, the office of the presidency would be taken over by Prime Minister Kirhenšteins. The political leadership of the Republic of Latvia was thus replaced completely.

The last step in the annexation of the country was an announcement read by Deputy Ž. Spure (secretary of the LCP central committee) at the opening session of Parliament: "To fulfill the will of the working people of all Latvia, Parliament from this time henceforth declares the establishment of the authority of peoples' soviets throughout the territory of Latvia. Latvia is hereby declared to be the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic". Interior Minister Lācis read a declaration about joining the USSR. There was no deputy in the hall to remind Parliament that Latvian law required a popular referendum on any change in the country's status of statehood.

Latvia's incorporation was completed when the Supreme Council of the USSR decided on 5 August 1940 to accept the Latvian SSR into the USSR. An historical review of the events of Latvia's occupation and annexation is well served by consideration of their juridical aspects:

I. Occupation

Two types of occupation are distinguished in international law: "occupatio bellica" and "occupatio pacifica". By entering Latvia with troops in 1940 the Soviet Union committed an "occupatio pacifica" inasmuch the Soviet Union and Latvia were not at war with each other. The occupant claimed and exercised military power in Latvia and, in important respects, also political authority. While an occupation regime limits a country's sovereignty, it does not liquidate or eliminate it. The occupant is not free to act as he wishes. The obligations and rights of an occupying power are fixed in the Hague Convention⁶⁵. The occupation of Latvia began on 17 June 1940 in the form of an armed intervention⁶⁶. It is characterized by three important elements:

1. The Soviet Union clearly stated the goals of her occupation in the ultimatum which was presented to Latvia on 16 June 1940: a new government must be established "to ensure the honest execution of the Latvian - Soviet agreement of mutual assistance" of 5 October 1939. The demand that a new government be formed is intervention, a typical case of interference in the domestic affairs of another state.

There was no demand on Latvia to surrender her sovereignty or to change the character of her statehood. On the contrary: nine months earlier both countries had expressly pledged that the execution of the 5 October 1939 agreement "must in no way affect the sovereign rights of the contracting parties, in particular their political structure, their economic and social system" (Art. 5). In fact, however, the goals of the occupation of Latvia were much broader than was stated in the ultimatum.

2. The occupation was the result of an agreement in the sense that the Latvian government accepted the Soviet ultimatum of 16 June 1940. This compliance raises the question of whether the government had authority to take such far-reaching steps. The answer to this question lies in an evaluation of the Latvian government coup of May 1934, including the issue of the extent to which the Latvian Constitution remained in force in the wake of the coup up to 1940. It can be argued that the Ulmanis regime was itself illegitimate and that therefore its decision to accept the Soviet ultimatum was also illegitimate and lacked legal effect.

3. The agreement on the occupation was reached as a result of threats made by the Soviet Union. A threat to use force is prohibited under international law. The question may be asked whether the principle was generally recognized already in 1940. In finding an answer general and regional international law has to be distinguished. Even if the worldwide recognition of the principle is doubted, it is clear that a threat to use force was unlawful under regional international law. Here the term includes the norms which govern the relations between the Soviet Union and Latvia. The most relevant ones are:

- The "Moscow Protocol" of 9 February 1929 on the entry into force of the Treaty of Paris of 1928 (commonly known as the Briand-Kellogg Treaty) for the Renunciation of War (Article 1);
- The Treaty of Non-Aggression between the Soviet Union and Latvia of 5 February 1932 (Article 1);
- The London Convention for the Definition of Aggression of 4 July 1933 (Articles 1-3).

Unlawful threats of force lead to legal consequences: either the agreement on the occupation of Latvia has never entered into effect, or the victim of occupation is entitled

to invoke the threat of force as a ground for invalidating the agreement⁶⁷. Latvia has to this date made no such declaration.

For purposes of comparison, one might point to the previously cited Danish precedent. The occupation of Denmark in 1940 took place also on the basis of an agreement, but Denmark submitted a note to Germany protesting the violation of Danish neutrality⁶⁸. The Latvian government, by contrast, implored Molotov not to publish the ultimatum, because this "might leave a bad impression" about relations between the two states. This shows that the Ulmanis regime failed in its primary task: to do everything possible to hamper the legitimization of the occupation.

It is also important to note that the occupation of Latvia was directly connected to the 23 August 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop pact on the delimitation of Soviet and German spheres of influence in Eastern Europe. By occupying the Baltic states, the Soviet Union made use of the free hand Germany had given her in this region. Half a century later, both the Soviet Union and Germany have admitted that the Secret protocol of the Molotov - Ribbentrop pact was contrary to international law and void from the moment it was signed.

II. Annexation

Annexation is the unilateral seizure of foreign territory. As a consequence, the victim-state loses its sovereignty over the annexed territory. The Soviet Union annexed Latvia in August 1940. The annexation lasted 50 years. In Latvia's case, the annexation had three characteristics:

1. Annexation was contrary to general international law as recognized in the late 1930-ies. Without a treaty or conquest in war, annexation conferred no title over the seized territory.

The annexation of Latvia took place under conditions of an illegal occupation. This in itself rendered the annexation illegal. Moreover, the annexation of Latvia was in violation of agreements signed by the Soviet Union and Latvia between 1929 and 1932 (referred to above on p.56). Furthermore, the annexation did not conform to the agreement reached on 16 June 1940 with respect to the Soviet occupation. The agreement did not provide for changes in

the political structure of Latvia, but the annexation resulted in precisely that. This was also in violation of the 5 October 1939 mutual assistance agreement establishing Soviet military bases in Latvia. The treaty expressly prohibited changes in the political, economic and social system (as mentioned above on p.55).

The violation of general international law as well as the non-compliance with treaty law makes the annexation of Latvia a wrongful act under international law. In the absence of a valid act of annexation, Latvia legally continued to be "occupied".

2. The annexation was carried out in conflict with Latvia's internal law. The parliamentary election of July 1940 was held in disregard of established principles of Latvian election law. The decision by the newly elected parliament on 21 July 1940 to join the Soviet Union was in violation of the Latvian Constitution (Art.77) which requires a referendum in such case. It was the will of a foreign power which the parliament had expressed.

3. Latvia has declared the decision to join the Soviet Union null and void from its inception. This was done in a Declaration adopted by the Latvian Supreme Council on 4 May 1990.

III. Liquidation of the Consequences of Occupation and Annexation

The restoration of independence of the Republic of Latvia meant the end of Soviet occupation and annexation, but the consequences of these unlawful acts have not been liquidated. The restitution of Latvia's territorial integrity, for example, has not yet been completed. There are also no signs that the signatories to the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact (or, more accurately, their successor states) have any intention of compensating Latvia for the losses caused by the pact. As long as these problems remain unresolved, justice is not fully restored. The discussion of how to overcome the legacy of 50 tragic years in Latvia's history is bound to continue.

The destruction of the Latvian state - its occupation and subsequent incorporation into the Soviet Union - has been documented in several collections.

Because of an absence of source materials, no collection of documents pertaining to Soviet policies in the Baltic states and to the events of 1939 and 1940 has been published. The first work to include documentary evidence of Latvia's occupation was published by the Latvian ambassador to the United States, Dr. A. Bilmanis, under the title **Latvian-Russian Relations**⁶⁹. The collection included the major interwar agreements between Latvia and Russia (the USSR) which Moscow violated in June 1940: the peace treaty of 11 August 1920, the non-aggression pact of 5 February 1932, and the convention on the definition of aggression of 3 July 1933. The Bilmanis work also included the first publication of Munters' notes about his negotiations in Moscow on 2 and 3 October 1939.

These notes were re-published in 1955 by Prof. E. Dunsdorfs⁷⁰. Also in the 1950s, Dr. M. Valters, who served as Latvia's ambassador to Belgium between 1938 and 1940, published the text of the emergency powers resolution adopted on 17 May 1940, along with an extensive commentary on the text. Valters also published his correspondence with Ulmanis and Munters in 1939 and early 1940⁷¹. This is still an important source of information about Latvian domestic and foreign policy on the eve of the occupation.

Official proclamations by the Latvian government, speeches by Ulmanis, and other documents concerning the period immediately before and after the occupation have been collected by J. Daģis⁷².

In 1954, a committee of the United States House of Representatives, headed by Rep. C. Karsten, published a collection of materials assembled during the committee's investigation of the forced incorporation of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union. The report was re-issued in 1972⁷³. Along with Bilmanis' 1944 collection, this was one of very few English-language documents which contained information about Soviet aggression against the Baltic countries. Of course, the absence of materials from Latvian and Russian archives sharply limited the abilities of authors attempting to document the destruction of Baltic independence.

In 1983, an author of Estonian origin, R. Taagepera, published 20 documents about the elections of 14 and 15 July 1940 in Estonia⁷⁴. The most valuable aspect of this collection is the serious commentary which enables readers

to understand the complex documents of 1940. Taagepera focused on a question which is not easily answered in the absence of archival materials from Moscow: the extent to which the Red Army and other Soviet emissaries were involved in the planning and conduct of elections in what formally was still an independent Estonian state. Taagepera has expressed the belief that the Estonian Central Elections Commission decision on 9 July 1940 to block all candidate lists except that of the Estonian Workers' Bloc was taken on the orders of A. Zhdanov, and although there is no documentary evidence to prove this claim, Taagepera's assertion that Soviet orders may well have been expressed orally, without written documentation, is believable. Taagepera has succeeded in revealing some aspects of the army's involvement in the election: the posting of Soviet guards at precinct buildings, use of Soviet military transport to ferry voters to and from voting places, and the "offer" of transportation to those who wished to boycott the balloting.

A collection of essays published in New York in 1994, **The Baltic Path to Independence**, contains what is currently the most extensive bibliography available of publications and collections of documents which concern the occupation of the Baltic states⁷⁵.

The first notable collection of documents published in Soviet Latvia appeared in 1963⁷⁶. The purpose of the collection was political: to prove that "the proletariat of Latvia, led by the Communist Party and supported by the Soviet Union, ousted the fascist dictatorship of Ulmanis". Nevertheless, the collection contained a vast range of original documents and sources of information. Leaving aside the politically tendentious introduction and commentary of the collection, the book is still an invaluable source of information for researchers. Other collections published in the 1970s and 1980s were increasingly poor in terms of source material, though increasingly voluminous in terms of ideological commentaries and introductions.

Between 1972 and 1975 a collection of memoirs titled **We Shall Build a New World** was published⁷⁷. The carefully selected recollections failed to achieve their purpose of suggesting that Latvians themselves created the Latvian SSR. On the eve of the occupation, the Latvian

Communist Party and the Latvian Socialist Workers and Farmers Party were weak and insufficiently organized to carry out the "socialist revolution". This collection leaves no doubt that the Soviet army arrived in Latvia without any assistance with the local underground.

In 1987, a collection called **Restoration of Soviet power in Latvia and the Entry of the Latvian SSR into the USSR** was published⁷⁸. The collection concerns events in 1917-1919. To a great extent the work is a mere shadow of the 1963 collection, a reflection of the simplistic belief of the LCP leadership of the day that a collection of this type might subvert the truth about the 23 August 1939 Soviet-German agreement and the occupation of Latvia.

In 1988, a collection of documents under the title **Documents Speak: How the Latvian Bourgeoisie Came to Power**⁷⁹. The book included the text of the 1920 Latvian-Russian peace treaty.

In 1991, an important piece of documentation concerning the first month of the Soviet occupation was published⁸⁰. The book contained the protocols of Latvian Cabinet of Ministers sessions under the leadership of A. Kirhenšteins. The collection is accompanied by extensive commentary.

A book published in 1994, **Kārlis Ulmanis in Exile and Prison**⁸¹, documents the last years of the president's life after his deportation and arrest. The book contains the protocols of the search of Ulmanis' home and of his interrogation, as well as the president's memoirs of interwar Latvia. The materials were prepared under a set of circumstances which mandate that many of them be checked for accuracy. Overall, however, the collection is a valuable if rather sparse source of information about the Baltic policies of Europe's major powers in the late 1930s. The documents reflect Ulmanis' understanding of the situation which Latvia faced after the Soviet Union forced it to sign the mutual assistance agreement in the fall of 1939.

Particular interest was engendered by a collection of materials published in Estonia in 1991, **From the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact to the Base Agreement**⁸². The purpose of the book was to document the history of the non-aggression agreement and to reveal its fateful

influence on events in the Baltic republics. Documents contained in the collection confirm that it was the inclusion of the Baltic countries in the Soviet sphere of interest which permitted Moscow to force mutual aid agreements upon the three states and to impose an alien and hostile military force in the Baltic region. These were the first steps toward the full occupation of the Baltic.

Collections of documents have also been published in Germany and Lithuania which contain many German diplomatic documents. These are an invaluable source of information about Eastern Europe on the eve of World War II and in the early days of the war. The documents also contain precise information about the major thrust of German and Soviet policy in the Baltic states⁸³.

A collection of documents published in 1993 in Lithuania, **The Occupation and Annexation of Lithuania, 1939-1940**⁸⁴, contains 194 documents, drawn largely from the Lithuanian State Archive. Most of the documents are published for the first time in this work, but the collection suffers from the absence of sufficient commentary.

Among the works cited above, the book (referenced in Footnote 7) by Dietrich A. Loeber, a prominent specialist in the area of the rights of Baltic Germans, deserves special recognition. The 332 documents contained in the book reveal a complete picture of the illegitimate cooperation of the Soviet Union and Germany and its consequences in the Baltic states. The emigration of Baltic Germans from Latvia and Estonia is particularly well-documented.

Among the various collections which were published in Russia and the USSR in the 1980s and early 1990s, four are of particular significance.

The first, a 1981 Soviet Foreign Ministry publication called **Documents and Materials Concerning the Eve of World War II**⁸⁵, is marred by a highly tendentious selection of documents. The authors of this work have attempted (not always successfully) to avoid any documents which would cast light on Soviet aggression in Eastern Europe. The authors have been particularly careful to hide Moscow's conscious involvement in the events which led to World War II. The collection does not even contain the 23 August 1939 agreement, let alone its secret protocol.

The second collection **Year of Crisis**⁸⁶, covers the period between September 1938 and the beginning of September 1939. The extensive introduction (authored by V. Sīpols) and commentary, as well as the selection of documents, reflect the thinking of the Soviet Union's government in the late 1980s. Soviet foreign policy in the late 1930s is generally viewed positively, in the belief that Moscow was battling for peace and collective security in Europe and the world. Several specific elements of Soviet foreign policy, however, are criticized as "stalinist deviations" from the true path of leninism. The authors of the collection strive to minimize the number of such "deviations". The collection is noteworthy in that it contains the secret protocol of the 1939 agreement, but the assessment of this document is done in traditional Soviet style: the protocol is seen not as an expression of the Soviet Union's territorial revisionism and aggression, but rather as a victory by the Soviet Union in persuading Germany to abandon its claims to several regions in Eastern Europe. It is clear that the authors of the collection hope to persuade readers that the secret protocol was a good thing. The history of the 1939 agreement is also cast in traditional Soviet terms: it was late in the evening of 21 August, the authors imply, that Moscow was finally to take a decision to sign the agreement. Britain, France and Poland were to blame for this. Despite these problems, however, the collection contains a number of documents from Soviet archives which had been unavailable prior to their publication here. These are a valuable source of information for researchers.

The third and fourth collections are more interesting in terms of source materials. If **Year of Crisis** contains a number of documents which had been published earlier, the Soviet Foreign Ministry's book **Reports of Our Representatives...**⁸⁷ is noteworthy not only because it contains previously unknown documents, but also because it deals specifically with the Baltic countries in the critical period of August 1939 to July 1940. The theme of the book is similar to that of **Year of Crisis**: England and France forced the Soviet Union into an untenable situation in which it had no choice but to sign the 23 August agreement in order to block German expansion in the Baltic region and to protect the Baltic states from German occupation.

The Soviet agreements with the Baltic states in September and October 1939 were meant to protect the Baltic countries from German aggression. And the elections of July 1940 were lawful and reflective of the free aspirations of the Baltic peoples for popularly supported government. Given this overall tenor, it is not significant that the authors of the work admit to some shortcomings in the form (but not content) of Soviet foreign policy of the day. But the collection is nevertheless a valuable collection of information, because it reflects Soviet thinking of Baltic domestic and foreign policy as it was understood in the Foreign Policy Commissariat in Moscow and at its diplomatic posts in the Baltic states. The collection also sheds light on the way in which the Soviet Union carried out its foreign policy intentions in the Baltic.

In 1992, the 22nd volume of the ongoing series **Soviet Foreign Policy Documents** was finally published (the previous volume had been printed in 1977). Volume 22 was published in two sections and covers all of 1939⁸⁸. This is the most extensive collection to date of Soviet foreign policy documents in 1939. There are 905 documents in the collection, 818 of which are published for the first time. Among them are the extremely important protocols of Stalin's talks with Ribbentrop between 27 and 29 September 1939. Unlike Year of Crisis, this collection does not have a didactic introduction setting out the ideas of the editors. But the extensive commentary which accompanies the documents makes it clear that this collection is an ideological continuation of the previous two. This is clearly evident in a discussion of several key events in 1939. Soviet aggression against Finland, for example, is odiously explained as a response to Finnish attacks on the Soviet armed forces in the Mainila region on 26 November 1939⁸⁹. But the clear tendentiousness of the collection's commentary does not dim its overall value as a rich source of original documentation.

This collection, **The Occupation and Annexation of Latvia: 1939-1940**, covers the period between the summer of 1939 (Moscow's trilateral negotiations and the first Soviet-German contacts, which eventually led to the 23 August agreement) and August of 1940, when the

Latvian state was destroyed and occupied, when Soviet power was established in the country and Latvia was incorporated into the Soviet Union.

Most of the documents in this collection have been gleaned from two Latvian archives: the Latvian State Historical Archive and the Latvian State Archive. Documents have also been obtained from the Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation and the Political Archive of the German Foreign Ministry. Most of the documents are published here for the first time. At the end of each document there is reference material concerning the specific archival location (archive, description, fond number, archive group, file unit and page). If the document has been previously published, information concerning the previous publication is also included.

The collection is divided into five parts. Documents are ordered chronologically. The editors have assigned titles to some of the documents and groups of documents. Abbreviations and omitted material are signified by the sign [...]. Omissions have been made only with respect to materials and details which are not of importance to the theme of this collection.

In publishing some of the documents, the editors have also published notations on the edges of documents if they are of importance. Routine notations, however, have been omitted. Grammatical and linguistic errors have been corrected without notation, provided that the content of the respective document is not altered. If corrections would encumber the text, the notation [sic.] is included. Omitted words or segments of words are restored with the use of brackets. German and Russian words which have no direct translation have been provided in parentheses.

The editors of this collection have taken a complex approach to the selection of documents. The documents contained here reflect the implementation of Soviet foreign policy in the Baltic states in 1939 and 1940; the response of the Latvian government to extraordinary circumstances; domestic conditions in Latvia on the eve of the occupation; the work of various political groupings and the mood of the population in the critical days of June and July 1940; and the reaction of other countries to events in the Baltic states.

The documents have been selected and commented by Dr. hist. I. Grava-Kreituse, Dr. hab. hist. I. Feldmanis, J. Goldmanis, and Dr. hab. hist. A. Stranga. The authors of the introduction are Grava-Kreituse, Dr. hab. iur. D.A. Loeber, Feldmanis and Stranga.

The editors of the collection would like to express their thanks for support extended to their work by the Latvian State Historical Archive and the Latvian State Archive, as well as the Latvian National Library, the Misiņš Library, the State Archival Library, and also Dr. hab. hist. M. Duhanov, Dr. hab. hist. O. Niedre, Dr. hist. M. Virsis and Dr. hist. Dz. Paeglīte for their assistance in this project.

¹ Taylor, A.T.P. *The Course of German History*, New York, 1962, p. 219.

² Документы внешней политики, т.8. (1 января - 31 декабря 1925.), Москва (1963), с. 553.

³ Ahmann, R. "Localization of Conflicts" or "Indivisibility of Peace": The German and the Soviet Approaches toward Collective Security and East Central Europe 1925-1939. In *The Quest for Stability: Problems of West European Security 1918-1957*, London (1993), pp. 208-209.

⁴ Hovi, K. "Security before Disarmament or Hegemony? The Frenchy Alliance Policy 1917-1927". In *The Quest ...*, op. cit., p. 119.

⁵ Litvinov, M. *Внешняя политика СССР. Реči i заявљенija 1927-1935*. Moscow (1935), p. 20.

⁶ Taylor, A.T.P. *The Origins of the Second World War*. Penguin Books (1973), p. 37.

⁷ Документы и материалы по истории советско - польских отношений, т. VI, Москва (1969), с. 199.

⁸ LVVA.-2630.f.-1.apr.-5.l., p. 76.

⁹ Документы внешней политики СССР, т.18, Москва (1973), с. 553.

¹⁰ Документы внешней политики СССР, т.18, Москва (1971), с. 414-415.

¹¹ Литвинов М. *Внешняя политика СССР...*, Москва (1935), с. 314.

¹² This was stated in a report on the country's foreign policy status offered by the general secretary of the Latvian Foreign Ministry V. Munters on 28 February 1934. LVVA.-2575.f.-15.apr.-92.l., p. 44.

¹³ LVVA.-2630.f.-1.apr.-9.l.-p. 21.

¹⁴ *Внешняя политика СССР, сборник документов, т. IV (1935 - июнь 1941)*, Москва (1946), с. 100.

- ¹⁵ Документы внешней политики СССР, т.18, Москва (1971), с. 42-43.
- ¹⁶ Внешняя политика СССР, сборник документов, т. IV (1935 - июнь 1941), Москва (1946), с. 115.
- ¹⁷ Haslam J. *The Soviet Union and the Struggle for collective Security in Europe. 1933. - 1939.* London, 1984, *op. cit.*, pp. 153-154.
- ¹⁸ *This suspicion was clearly evident in a letter sent by the deputy foreign affairs commissar of the Soviet Union, V. Potjomkin, on 26 March 1938, to the Soviet ambassadors in Lithuania, Estonia and Warsaw, in which the high official asked that the envoys carefully monitor Polish policies in the Baltic.* Документы внешней политики СССР, т.21, Москва (1977), с. 155.
- ¹⁹ LVVA.-2574.f.-2.apr.-7081.l., p. 287.
- ²⁰ Год кризиса.: 1938 - 1939. Т. 1 - 2. - Москва: Политиздат, 1990, с. 67.
- ²¹ LVVA.-2575.f.-8.apr.-75.l., p. 361.
- ²² Документы внешней политики, 1939 год, т.2, Москва, 1982, с. 522.
- ²³ LVVA.-2574.f.-4.apr.-7669.l., pp. 235-236.
- ²⁴ LVVA.-2575.f.-8.apr.-75.l., p. 127.
- ²⁵ Документы внешней политики, 1939 год, Книга первая, с. 84.
- ²⁶ Watt, D.C. *How War Came: The Immediate Origins of the Second World War, 1938-1939.* London (1989), p. 223.
- ²⁷ Kissinger, H. *Diplomacy.* New York: Simon and Schuster (1994), p. 336.
- ²⁸ Документы внешней политики, 1939 год, Книга первая, с. 252-253.
- ²⁹ Год кризиса..., Т. 1, с. 355.
- ³⁰ Год кризиса..., Т. 1, с. 384.
- ³¹ Документы внешней политики, 1939 год, Книга первая, с. 260.
- ³² *Ibid.*, p. 309. Litvinov's 23 April letter indicates that the Soviet Union did not want to create a "bloc under Soviet leadership", as Watt has asserted (in *How War Came*, p. 223). An attempt to create a bloc would mean exposing the Soviet Union to German aggression, as well as the undertaking of obligations in the Baltic countries which Moscow did not want.
- ³³ Год кризиса..., Т. 1, с. 395.
- ³⁴ Kissinger, H. *op cit.*, p. 348.
- ³⁵ Полпреды сообщают ...: Сборник документов об отношениях СССР с Латвией, Литвой и Эстонией. Август 1939 г. - август 1940 г. - Москва: Международные отношения, 1990, с. 38.
- ³⁶ LVVA.-2574.f.-3.apr.-3238.l., p. 144.
- ³⁷ Документы внешней политики, 1939 год, Книга вторая, Москва, 1992, с. 505.
- ³⁸ *Akten zur deutschen auswaertigen Politik (hereafter - ADAP), 1918-1945. Serie D.-Bd. VI- Baden-Baden (1956), p. 882, 893.*
- ³⁹ Год кризиса..., Т. 2, с. 185.
- ⁴⁰ ADAP.-Serie D.-Bd. VII-p. 126.
- ⁴¹ DBPF III series, Vol. VI, London (1953), p. 301.

- ⁴² LVVA.-2575.f.-15.apr.-92.l., p. 140.
- ⁴³ Документы внешней политики, 1939 год, Книга вторая, с. 15.
- ⁴⁴ Bruegel, I.W. (ed.). *Stalin und Hitler. Pakt gegen Europa. Vienna (1973), Dok. 282.*
- ⁴⁵ Документы внешней политики, 1939 год, Книга вторая, с. 605, 610.
- ⁴⁶ Batowski, H. "17 September 1939: Before and After", in *East European Quarterly*, XXVIII, No. 4, Winter 1993, p. 530.
- ⁴⁷ Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 26, 465.
- ⁴⁸ Документы внешней политики, 1939 год, Книга вторая, с. 111.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 606-610.
- ⁵⁰ Волкогон Д. "Драма решений 1939 года", в *Новой и новейшей истории*, N. 4, 1989, с. 21.
- ⁵¹ Laasi, E. "Finland's Winter War and Estonian Neutrality", in *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Fall 1993, Vol., XXIV, No. 3, pp. 272-274.
- ⁵² Crowe, D.M. "The Baltic States and the Great Powers Foreign Relations, 1938-1940." Boulder: Westview Press (1993), pp. 147-148.
- ⁵³ This information is contained in testimony given by the commander of the secret Latvian political police, J. Fridrihsons, to Soviet KGB investigators on 14 December 1940. See the archives of the former Latvian SSR KGB, Case No. 1817/2243, Arch. No. 43894, Vol. 4, p. 47-48, 69.
- ⁵⁴ LVVA.-2574.f.-4.apr.-7679.l., p. 8.
- ⁵⁵ Документы внешней политики, 1939 год, Книга вторая, с. 618.
- ⁵⁶ Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 276.
- ⁵⁷ Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 330.
- ⁵⁸ Truska L. and Kancevicius V. *Lietuva Stalino ir Hitlerio Sanderio Verpetuose. Vilnius: Mintis (1990), p. 114.*
- ⁵⁹ Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 341.
- ⁶⁰ LVVA.-2574.f.-3.apr.-3291.l., p. 65.
- ⁶¹ Crowe, *op. cit.*, p. 159.
- ⁶² LVA.-270.f.-1.apr.-2.l., p. 91.
- ⁶³ *Jaunākās Ziņas*, 26 June 1940.
- ⁶⁴ LVVA.-101.f.-1.apr.-7.l., p. 10.
- ⁶⁵ *Hague Convention of 1907 Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land with Annex of Regulations, Art. 42-56.*
- ⁶⁶ It is possible to argue that the occupation of Latvia actually began on 5 October 1939 with the signing of an agreement on Soviet military bases, but at that time the Soviet Union had political authority only on its bases and not in Latvia as a whole.
- ⁶⁷ *Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties of 1969, Art. 42 and 45. The Convention represents a condensation of generally recognized principles of treaty law. The USSR joined the Convention in 1986, Latvia in 1993.*
- ⁶⁸ *Denmark's Note of 9 April 1940. Danish and German texts. Bilag til beretning til Folketinget afgivet af den af tinget under*

8. januar 1948 nedsatte kommission i henhold til grundlovens § 45. Bd. IV. Aktstykker. Kobenhavn (1948), Document 12, p. 21. The publication is generally referenced as *Den parlamentariske kommissions betænkning*.
- ⁶⁹ *Latvian-Russian Relations. Bilmanis' activities in the United States after the occupation of Latvia were documented in a collection devoted to his memory: Res Baltica. A Collection of Essays in Honor of the Memory of Dr. Alfrēd Bilmanis (1887-1948)*, ed. by Adolf Sprudz and Armins Rūsis. A.W. Sijthoff-Leyden (1968). Documents compiled by Dr. Alfrēd Bilmanis, Washington (1944).
- ⁷⁰ Dunsdorfs, E. *Senie stāsti*. Melbourne (1955), pp. 234-239.
- ⁷¹ Valters, M. *15. maija apvērsums un ārkārtējās pilnvaras ar pilnvaru tekstu*. Stockholm (1951). Also *Mana sarakste ar Kārli Ulmani un Vilhelmu Munteru Latvijas tragiskajos gados*. Stockholm (1957).
- ⁷² Daģis, J. *Prezidents Kārlis Ulmanis - latviešu tautas apvienotājs*, 3 volumēs. Lincoln (1986), republished by the University of Latvia at Riga (1990-1991).
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- ⁷⁴ Taagepera, R. "De-Choosing of Elections: July 1940 in Estonia", in *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Vol. XIV, No. 3, Fall 1983, pp. 215-246.
- ⁷⁵ Sprudz, A. (ed.). *The Baltic Path to Independence. An International Reader of Selected Articles*. Buffalo: William S. Hein and Co., Inc. (1994).
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- ⁷⁹ Drizulis, A. (ed.). *Dokumenti stāsta: Latvijas buržuāzijas nākšana pie varas*. Rīga: Zinātne (1988).
- ⁸⁰ Šneidere, I. and Žvinklis, A. (ed.). *Latvijas Republikas Ministru kabineta sēžu protokoli: 1940. gada 16. jūnijs - 19. jūlijs*. Rīga: Zinātne (1991).
- ⁸¹ Ronis, I. and Žvinklis, A. (ed.). *Kārlis Ulmanis trimdā un cietumā: Dokumenti un materiāli.*, Rīga: Publishing House of the Latvian Historical Institute (1994).
- ⁸² От пакта Молотова - Риббентропа до договора о баззах: Документы и материалы. - Таллинн: Периодика, 1990.

- ⁸³ See, for example, *Akten zur deutschen auswaertigen Politik 1918-1945. Serie D: 1937-1945. Bd. 7-9. - Baden-Baden, 1956-1962. Also Loeber, D.A. (ed.). Diktierte Option: Die Umsiedlung der Deutsch-Balten aus Estland und Lettland, 1939-1941. Neumuenster: Karl Wachholtz Verlag (1972). Also СССР - Германия. 1939 - 1941: Документы и материалы о советско - германских отношениях с сентября 1939 г. по июнь 1941 г. т. 1 - 2, Вильнюс, Мокслас, 1989.*
- ⁸⁴ *Breslaukiene, L. (ed.). Lietuvos okupacija ir aneksija: 1939-1940: Dokumentu rinkinys. Vilnius: Mintis (1993).*
- ⁸⁵ *Документы и материалы кануна второй мировой войны: 1937 - 1939.: Т.1 - 2.: Москва: Политиздат, 1981.*
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- ⁸⁷ *Полпреды сообщают ...: Сборник документов об отношениях СССР с Латвией, Литвой и Эстонией. Август 1939 г. - август 1940 г. Москва: Международные отношения, 1990.*
- ⁸⁸ *Документы внешней политики, т.22. Книга первая. 1 января - 31 августа 1939; Книга вторая. 1 сентября - 31 декабря 1939. - Москва: Международные отношения, 1992.*
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Chapter I

Latvia and the 1939 Non-Aggression Pact Between the USSR and Germany

No. 1
Excerpts from the Peace Treaty
Between Latvia and Soviet Russia

Riga, 11 August 1920

Latvia, on the one side, and Russia, on the other side, seriously seeking to end the state of war between them, undertook to begin peace talks with the purpose of reaching a permanent, honorable and just state of peace and to give final resolution to all matters resulting from Latvia's previous status as a territory of Russia. For this purpose the two sides have appointed as their representatives:

For the government of the Democratic Republic of Latvia:

Jānis Vesmanis¹, son of Jānis
Pēteris Bergis², son of Remberts
Ansis Buševics³, son of Kristaps
Eduards Kalniņš⁴, son of Andrejs
Kārlis Pauļuks⁵, son of Jēkabs

For the government of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic:

Adolf Joffe⁶, son of Abraham
Jakov Hanecki⁷, son of Stanislav

These representatives, having gathered in Moscow and presented their documents of authority, and same having been recognized as properly and fully in order, agreed to the following terms:

Paragraph I

The state of war between the two sides shall conclude on the date when this agreement takes effect⁸.

Paragraph II

In concert with the announced principle of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic that all peoples have the right to free self-determination, not excluding therefrom the right to secede from the country in which they reside, and in recognition of the certainly expressed will of the Latvian people to establish a separate state, Russia without objection recognizes the independence, existence and sovereignty of the Latvian state and willingly and for time eternal renounces all sovereign rights which Russia has possessed with respect to the Latvian people and territory both with respect to the

existing judicial order of the state and with respect to any and all international agreements which with respect to the aforementioned purpose are hereby declared null and void for all time henceforth. The people and territory of Latvia have no obligations with respect to Russia in connection with their previous state as a territory of Russia.

[..]

Valdības Vēstnesis, 14 september 1920.

- ¹ *Jānis Vesmanis (1878-1942). Leader of the Latvian delegation to peace talks with Soviet Russia from June to August 1920. He replaced A. Zēbergs, who had led the delegation from April to June.*
- ² *Pēteris Bergis (1882 - ?). Member of the Latvian delegation.*
- ³ *Ansis Buševičs (1878 - 1942). Social Democrat, member of the Latvian delegation in July and August 1920.*
- ⁴ *Eduards Kalniņš (1876 - 1964). Colonel, later general, member of the Latvian delegation.*
- ⁵ *Kārlis Pauļuks (1870 - 1945). Member of the Latvian Constitutional convention, member of the Latvian delegation.*
- ⁶ *Adolf Joffe (1883 - 1927), Soviet Russian diplomat, leader of the Soviet Russian delegation.*
- ⁷ *Jakov Hanecki (Firstenberg) (1879 - 1937), Soviet Russian diplomat, member of the Soviet Russian delegation.*
- ⁸ *The Latvian Constitutional convention ratified the agreement on 2 September 1920. Soviet Russia ratified it on 9 September. The exchange of ratification documents took place in Moscow on 4 October 1920.*

No. 2

Excerpts from the Non-Aggression Agreement Between Latvia and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

5 February 1932

The President of the Republic of Latvia and the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,

based on the Peace Treaty concluded on 11 August 1920 between Latvia and the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic which is in force throughout the territory of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic and which irreversibly and eternally shall serve as the basis for relations between the Honorable signatories to this agreement;

in the conviction that the interests of both Honorable signatories to this agreement shall be served by the adoption of certain understandings which shall develop and strengthen friendly relations between their two countries; fully intending to mutually and eternally recognize each other's sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity and inviolability;

seeking to facilitate the strengthening of the general peace;

declaring that among the obligations which the Honorable signatories to this agreement have undertaken prior to this time there are none which hinder the peaceful development of their mutual relations or which are in contradiction to this agreement;

seeking to strengthen and complement their relations under the auspices of the general pact on the renouncement of war of 27 August 1928, which pact shall remain in effect between the Honorable signatories to this agreement irrespective of the taking effect or normal abrogation of the extant agreement

agreed to sign this agreement and for this purpose to appoint as their representatives

For the President of the Republic of Latvia:

Margērs Skujenieks¹, prime minister and acting foreign minister;

for the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic:

Boris Spiridonovich Stomonakov, member of the collegium of the People's commissariat for foreign affairs; and

Aleksei Ivanovic Sviderski, authorized representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,

who, having mutually presented their authority and same having been declared to be properly and fully established, agreed to the following terms:

Paragraph 1

The Honorable signatories to this agreement agree mutually to refrain from any attack one against the other, as well as to refrain from any act of violence aimed against the territorial integrity and inviolability or the political independence of the other signatory, irrespective of whether such attack or act of violence should occur independently or together with other countries, and irrespec-

tive of whether a state of war has or has not been declared.

[..]

Paragraph 6

This agreement shall take effect upon the exchange of documents of ratification² and shall remain in effect for a period of three years after its having taken effect. The Honorable signatories to this agreement shall have the right to abrogate this agreement, giving notice of six months prior the expiration of this time, or without any advance notice should the other signatory attack a third country. If neither of the signatories has abrogated the agreement, it shall automatically remain in force for an additional two years and shall be declared to automatically remain in force for each succeeding period of two years if neither of the signatories has abrogated the agreement according to the system which is set out in this paragraph³.

In confirming his, the cited representatives have signed this agreement and affixed their seals thereto.

Signed in Riga in two copies in Latvian and in Russian on 5 February 1932.

(Signed) *Margers Skujenieks*

(Signed) *B. Stomonakov*

(Signed) *A. Sviderski*

Valdības Vēstnesis, 5 July 1932.

¹ *Margers Skujenieks* (1886 - 1941), Latvian prime minister (1926-1928 and 1931-1933), deputy prime minister (1934-1938).

² The Latvian Parliament ratified the agreement on 21 June 1932, while the Central Executive Committee of the USSR ratified it on 11 July 1932. The agreement took effect on 28 July 1932, when documents of ratification were exchanged in Moscow.

³ On 4 April 1934 the USSR and Latvia agreed to extend the agreement for 10 years.

No. 3

**Excerpt from a Report from the Latvian
Ambassador to Germany, E. Krieviņš, to Foreign
Minister V. Munters¹**

Confidential
Berlin, 27 April 1939

Honorable Minister:

Yesterday I had breakfast with the direct of the press division of the Ministry of Propaganda, Prof. Dr. Boemer.

He is a long-standing associate of Ribbentrop² and Goebbels³. In order to characterize the mood among the leadership here, permit me to cite the most important elements of what he told me.

[..] He said that neither England nor Germany wishes to go to war. War would mean either a quick German victory or the destruction of Europe. The Germans will fight to the end, in despair and without mercy. There is a possibility that Germany will reach understanding and agreement with Russia, where eine duenne Oberschicht⁴ is in control. ... He asked whether I had recently read any serious attacks against Russia in the German press⁵. [..]

E. Krieviņš

LVVA, 2574.f., 4. apr., 7467.l., pp. 142-145. Original.

¹ The report makes it clear that Krieviņš was one of the first Latvian diplomats to observe "new directions" in Soviet-German relations.

² The German foreign minister.

³ The German minister for propaganda.

⁴ A small segment of the highest level.

⁵ In October 1938 the foreign affairs commissar of the USSR, M. Litvinov, and the German ambassador to Moscow, W. von der Schulenburg, agreed that henceforth both sides would refrain from any attacks in the press or on the radio against the leaders of the other country.

No. 4.

Excerpt from a Report from the Latvian Ambassador to the United States of America, A. Bīlmanis, to Foreign Minister V. Munters

Confidential

Washington, 3 June 1939

Honorable Minister:

An editorial in the Washington Post on 2 June speaks to a hidden Russian game¹. Suspicions are arising that by making unreasonable demands, Molotov² is making the signing of an agreement impossible. Could it be that Moscow is laying the path for an understanding with Germany? A similar view is held in the foreign ministry here. I would direct your attention, honorable minister, to an editorial in the Washington Evening Star on 1 June. The author of the editorial claims to know that Moscow

"considers Finland, Latvia and Lithuania to be an integral portion of the Russian defensive area". He writes that including the USSR in the anti-Hitler group is so important that Stalin hopes to win concessions from Chamberlain³ and Deladier⁴ with respect to the Baltic countries⁵. This might also occur because an agreement between the USSR and Germany is feared. [...]

Dr. Alfrēds Bīlmanis
Ambassador to Washington

LVVA, 2574.f., 4. apr., 7489.l., pp. 218-219. Copy.

¹ The reference is to the Soviet position in talks with England and France about the establishment of an association. The talks began in the spring of 1939. In Moscow's eyes, the importance of the talks gradually decreased as the Soviet Union began to reach greater understanding with Germany.

² The foreign affairs commissar of the USSR.

³ The prime minister of Great Britain.

⁴ The prime minister of France.

⁵ In its negotiations with Britain and France, the USSR ceaselessly demanded that guarantees issued by the three countries also be applied to the Baltic countries. The guarantees could then serve as a reason for the Soviet Union's planned annexation of the Baltic countries.

No. 5

Excerpt from a Report from the Latvian Ambassador to England, K. Zariņš, to Foreign Minister V. Munters

Confidential
9 June 1939

Honorable Minister:

British and society and the British press have never previously devoted so much attention to the Baltic states as they are doing now. If all of what has been said and written about us is taken together, then I must say that the overall effect has been good for these countries. Earlier, when the Baltic states were discussed, even diplomatic correspondents had no clear understanding of what the term "Baltic states" really means - Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland? Now, however, it is clear that the discussion concerns Latvia, Finland and Estonia.

A few weeks ago, society and the political establishment were not clear whether our negative approach toward guar-

antees, especially from Moscow¹, is or is not justified. Now, however, even the most heated defenders of Moscow's policies admit that the Baltic approach is the correct one if the countries hope to maintain their neutrality and sovereignty. This does not mean, however, that the Brits have lost interest in involving Russia in a "triple" alliance. [...]

I do not wish to get ahead of events, because the agreement of alliance with Russia has not yet been signed, but the mood in London indicates that there is no doubt that the Brits will not accede to Russian demands with respect to us. Several officials have expressed this view to me. Director Collier² only today was saying to my colleague from Finland³ that "the Baltic states may be certain that his Majesty's government shall not accede to the Russian position and shall not allow the Baltic states to become protectorates of Russia". In sum, we have full reason to believe that we have achieved a moral victory and that Molotov's speech to the parliament in Moscow⁴ has failed in England. [...]

I have no information about whether the Quai d'Orsay⁵ fully agrees with the British position with respect to the Baltic states, but within the Foreign Office I have heard that the British and French views coincide in this matter. [...]

K. Zariņš
Ambassador

LVVA, 2574.f., 4.apr., 7490.l., pp. 30-35. Original.

¹ Leading politicians in Latvia (as well as in Estonia and Finland) believed that the proposed guarantees were a smokescreen for serious threats against the independence of the country. They felt that the USSR was one of the chief enemies of the Baltic states.

² L. Collier, director of the Northern Department of the British foreign ministry.

³ G. Grippenbergh, the Finnish ambassador to England

⁴ The reference is to a speech made by the Soviet foreign affairs commissar, V. Molotov, at a session of the Supreme Council on 31 May 1939. In it he criticized proposals made by England and France on 27 May with respect to the establishment of an alliance between the three major powers. Molotov complained that the proposals made no reference to ways in which London and Paris might help the Baltic states. This was not true. The British and French proposal spoke to trilateral assistance for the three countries, should they request it.

⁵ The French foreign ministry.

No. 6

**Excerpt from a Report from the Latvian
Ambassador to Germany, E. Krieviņš, to Foreign
Minister V. Munters**

Confidential
Berlin, 14 June 1939

Honorable Minister:

I am honored to append to this report brief notes from discussions I have had in recent weeks with ambassadors and emissaries here. If much of what I have reported has lost its immediacy, then the sum of these reports nevertheless provides a certain illustration of the views and moods which prevail here. These are of considerable variance and even contradiction.

I ask you, honored minister, to accept at this time my highest considerations of respect.

E. Krieviņš

Appendix

Discussions with ambassadors and emissaries

22.V.39. British Ambassador Henderson

1) The Germans do not feel strong enough economically or military to go to war.

2) The Baltic states are of considerable importance in the British-Russian negotiations¹, because the Russians wish to "include" them at all cost.

3) The Russians are playing a two-faced game. They wish to foster discord between Germany and England, France and Poland, but at the same time they wish to remain aloof from events and in the end become the chief beneficiaries.

4) Any aggression on the part of the Germans would lead to a British response, irrespective of whether the aggression were waged against Danzig, Poland in general, or any other country.

5) The beginning of the war would essentially involve an air war, a blockade in the North, and a naval battle in the Mediterranean.

6) Hitler's evil spirit, Ribbentrop², has delusions of grandeur. [...]

13.VI. Lithuanian Ambassador Skirpa

[...] 3) The British, French and Russian alliance is not a promising one for the Baltic states, because it will cer-

tainly grant the Russians some kind of right to enter our territory³.

4) It is entirely possible that Germany may reach accommodation with Russia⁴. This is evidenced by the fact that the recently discussed plan to establish a special ministry to deal with matters concerning the Ukraine have been abandoned here. [...] The Germans have withdrawn the idea in order to avoid antagonizing the Russians. Support for the Ukrainian movement is continuing, but quietly. This is a sign that Germany has not burned all of its bridges with respect to Moscow. [...]

LVVA, 2574.f., 4. apr., 7468.l., pp. 329-338. Copy.

¹ The reference is to negotiations among England, France and the USSR which took place in the spring and summer of 1939.

² German Foreign Minister J. von Ribbentrop.

³ In its negotiations with Britain and France, the USSR ceaselessly demanded that guarantees issued by the three countries also be applied to the Baltic countries. The Latvian foreign policy leadership rejected this position, believing that the guarantees would be nothing more than an excuse for the Soviet Union to execute its planned takeover of the Baltic states.

⁴ Baltic leaders feared any agreement between the USSR and Germany which might damage the status quo in Eastern Europe. This is why Baltic diplomats evidenced increasing interest in the spring of 1939 with respect to possible rapprochement between Berlin and Moscow.

No. 7

Excerpt from a Report from Latvian Ambassador K. Zariņš to Foreign Minister V. Munters

Extremely confidential

16 June 1939

Honorable Minister:

[...] I asked Collier about reports that the ambassador¹ and Strong² had a 2-1/2 hour conversation at the Kremlin with Molotov, and asked about the result of this conversation. Collier told me that the ambassador and Strong made it perfectly clear to Molotov, what h.M.'s government's views are concerning the anticipated tripartite alliance. They also emphasized Britain's views with respect to the Baltic states (h.M.'s government is sticking to its view-

point of 26 May³). Molotov did not respond to this statement directly but promised to discuss it with his colleagues. Collier also emphasized that the Brits fully understand our position and that they would not abandon us to the Russians. He also fully understood that the Russians might interpret the principle of indirect menace in a way which is favorable to their interests. The director added that he had given the same explanation on the previous day to the Finnish ambassador Gripenberg. [...]

Respectfully,
K. Zariņš
Ambassador

LVVA, 2574.f., 4.apr., 7490.l., pp. 57-60. Original.

¹ V. Seeds, British ambassador to the USSR.

² V. Strong, director of the Central European division of the British Foreign Office. Along with Seeds, he represented London in the tripartite political negotiations in Moscow which began in June 1939 and continued through mid-August.

³ British and French proposals submitted to Moscow on 27 May 1939 accepted the idea of a mutual assistance agreement among the three major powers under conditions in which each signatory would undertake to provide mutual assistance not only in the case of direct aggression against one of the signatories, but also if one of the signatories came into conflict with a European country which undertook aggression against a guaranteed or neutral country. This second type of assistance would have been extended only if the neutral country (which might possibly have been Latvia or another of the Baltic states) which was facing aggression requested it.

No. 8

Excerpt from a Report from the Acting Director of the Latvian Embassy in France, K. Berends, to Foreign Minister V. Munters

Confidential
Paris, 11 July 1939

Honored Minister:

[...] Views concerning the Baltic states have changed over the last week. It seems that the French press now has a better understanding of the Baltic condition. Several newspapers reported that Soviet Russia does not wish to protect its own borders but instead wishes to become

the protector of the Baltic states. The newspapers wrote that the two-faced nature of Soviet policies is becoming evident, which leads to the question of whether there is any point in Britain and France continuing the negotiations¹, because true assistance from Soviet Russia cannot be expected...

[..] The French press has also widely reported on your interview² with the correspondent from the Times. The most extensive report was in Figaro. In its 9 June editorial, Le Temps reports that the interview greatly helped to create an understanding of the Baltic position and that the best option would be to simply sign a non-aggression pact among the three major powers which are interested in the matter. A similar approach on the British-French-Russian negotiations has been taken by other French newspapers as well.

The local press has spoken glowingly about Chamberlain's speech yesterday³, writing that it was concrete and appropriate.

I would note that clippings from newspapers with respect to your discussion with the Times and with respect to the Baltic states and their relationship to the negotiations in Moscow have been sent to the Press department.

Please accept my highest considerations of respect.

K. Berends
Acting head of the Embassy

LVVA, 2574.f., 4. apr., 7444.l., pp. 85-87. Original.

¹ The reference is to the direct trilateral negotiations in Moscow.

² In an interview with the Times on 7 July 1939, Munters analyzed the reasons why Latvia held a negative view of guarantees from the three major powers (Britain, France and the USSR) and noted that Latvia believed stringent neutrality to be the only course available to it. For this reason, Latvia would resist any effort to force trilateral guarantees upon it.

³ On 10 July 1939, British Prime Minister N. Chamberlain delivered an official report on the political negotiations in Moscow which served to calm Baltic fears. Chamberlain emphasized that the British government would seek to respect the neutrality and independence of Finland, Estonia and Latvia.

No. 9

**An Excerpt from a Report from the Latvian
Ambassador to England, K. Zariņš, to Foreign
Minister V. Munters**

Secret
12 July 1939

Honored Minister:

It is evident that the Brits are starting to lose faith in their negotiations with Moscow. One of the British department directors told me today that agreement could certainly be reached with Moscow but that the Brits could not give Moscow *carte blanche* with respect to the Baltic states.

I asked how the Russians had reacted to the latest British proposals (that the three major powers should sign only a defensive alliance based on the example of the Russian-French agreement¹ with no further discussions). The director responded that this would not be an ideal resolution to the issue, but his Majesty's government would be satisfied even with this much. He added, however, that the Kremlin has not yet responded to this proposal, either. [...]

Respectfully yours,
K. Zariņš
Ambassador to London

LVVA, 2584.f., 4. apr., 7490.l., p. 119-121. Original.

¹ *The reference is to a mutual assistance agreement signed between Russia and France on 2 May 1935.*

No. 10

**Excerpt from a Report from the Latvian
Ambassador to England, K. Zariņš, to Foreign
Minister V. Munters**

Secret
14 July 1939

Honored Minister:

I had two interesting conversations about the current political situation. One was a scheduled talk with Sir Lancelot Oliphant¹, while the other was an unexpected discussion with Parliamentary Undersecretary Butler². [...]

From my discussion with Butler, I got the impression that his Majesty's government under no circumstances

wishes to yield to the Russian demand that it be allowed to define the principles of Baltic security. Later, speaking about the same topic, Sir Lancelot emphasized even more forcefully that his Majesty's government feels that Russia cannot be given the unilateral right to take decisions concerning the security of its Northwestern border. Sir Lancelot repeatedly expressed his satisfaction at the direct and correct explanation of our condition³. He said that this made it much easier for Britain to develop instructions for the negotiations in Moscow. Sir Lancelot said that he always reports to Lord Halifax⁴ on everything which we discuss and that he would do so on this occasion, as well. [..]

I told Sir Lancelot about Zotov's⁵ expression, "We force nothing upon anyone, nor do we ask anything of anyone". Sir Lancelot responded that this is, indeed, a notable tendency in Moscow, and this tactic is one reason why the negotiations are moving ahead very slowly. He also provided a more detailed description of Molotov, but said nothing which we do not know already. Both the Brits and the French, however, have the sense that the Russians are not seeking to sabotage the negotiations and that Moscow wishes to accomplish something. I responded to this by saying: "And in response to this Russian good will, you are probably ready to yield". He responded: "Where possible, yes, but with respect to the Russian demands about the Baltic states - no. If we had wanted to yield," my partner in conversation continued, "we would have long since done so, but we came across your declaration, which we felt to be sensible and which we wish to respect."

The discussion also turned to the British proposal of 26 May⁶. I said that it would have been acceptable to us and that the Baltic states would have raised no objection had the three powers adopted it. I imagine that eventually Germany would have given us the same guarantee, and then our neutrality would be as secure as Belgium's. Such a resolution would also be acceptable to our society. Our position is not dictated by intransigence, we have never attempted to exaggerate anything. In our explanations we seek only to explain our position that we will defend the independence of our country at all costs and that our first enemy will be the first country to cross our

borders. I expressed myself in a similar fashion to Butler.
[..]

Respectfully yours,
K. Zariņš
Ambassador to London

LVVA, 2574.f., 4. apr., 7490.l., pp. 120-124. Original.

¹ L. Oliphant, deputy foreign secretary.

² R. Butler, deputy foreign secretary.

³ The reference is to an interview granted by Latvian Foreign Minister V. Munters to the British newspaper, the Times (7 July 1939) in which he explained Latvia's position with respect to guarantees by the three major powers (England, France and the USSR).

⁴ The British foreign secretary.

⁵ I. Zotov, the Soviet ambassador to Latvia.

⁶ See Document No. 7.

No. 11

A Report from the Latvian Ambassador to Germany, E. Krieviņš, to the Director of the Political Department of the Latvian Foreign Ministry, A. Stegmanis

Confidential

Berlin, 20 July 1939

Honored Director:

To supplement my telegram of yesterday, with which I responded to your request concerning Wohlthat¹, may I remind you that I have long since reported on efforts between the Germans and the Russians to seek rapprochement. As I have told you previously, all Berlin is speaking of these efforts. Information is arriving from Vienna, the Rheinland, and from Eastern Prussia. Three months ago I filed a report about my conversation with Professor Boemer of the Ministry of Propaganda, which dealt precisely with this matter. But the fact that the discussion of these various conversations are much too intense leads me to believe that we should have a fairly reserved attitude toward them and that we cannot give them full credence. It is easily discernible from where these conversations are coming and what their purpose might be. The many Germans who have been in Moscow in recent months! First it was the "well-known confidant and col-

league of Hitler's, Baron von Schnurrer", a man who actually was no other than the Foreign Ministry consultant Schnurre²! Then there were the generals Fritzsch and Sirovy, followed by von Papen³, and now, it is said, Wohlthat. With respect to the latter individual, I can say that he is currently in London, where he is participating in a convention on matters concerning the whale. Wohlthat has long been an expert on whaling matters. He is expected to return to Berlin tomorrow or next day.

Based on discussions which I have had with colleagues and with various German gentlemen, I can authentically report only one thing with respect to the efforts of Russia and Germany to seek rapprochement. Leaving aside various rumors which have circulated here, I can report that both sides would be most satisfied if closer contacts were renewed in the economic field and if trade deals were raised to a somewhat higher level. Negotiations are reportedly being conducted (and not without some success) at the normal diplomatic level, with the participation of various groups of interested Germans. Moreover, the two sides are reportedly discussing the crediting of goods. Whether this is occurring at the level which has been reported in the press, this is not known. This information is coming from the Russian embassy here, as well as from German economic circles. From the French embassy here, I have heard that Paris would by no means be surprised if on the day after the signing of the triple-alliance agreement the Russians were also to sign an agreement with the Germans.

There has also been a Fuehlungsnahme⁴ between Berlin and Moscow in the political field. Negotiations are reportedly continuing at this time, and they are being carried out by individuals specifically chosen for this task. The French and Brits are said to be informed of these negotiations. It is too early to predict the result of these talks.

Russia's behavior in this respect can be explained by nothing more than the fact that the Russians trust no one - the French and British as little as the Germans.

I had written all of the above when I called director Wiehl⁵ to check the accuracy of my information. Wiehl immediately issued an invitation for me to visit him. What I heard from him supplements the above-stated informa-

tion only in terms of detail. He told me that negotiations concerning the broadening of the two countries' exchange of goods have been continuing for many months at, as I said, the diplomatic level. In Moscow, Schulenburg⁶ and Hilger⁷ have been negotiating with the Russians, while here in Berlin Wiehl and Schnurre have been consulting with Astakhov⁸ and trade representative Davidov. The trade level in the last year reached its low point (approximately 60 million marks in one direction and the same amount to the other), and now both sides are seeking ways and resources with which to raise the level. Wiehl told me that if this did not succeed in the normal process of the exchange of goods, then the Germans are basically prepared to return to the policy of issuing credits for goods. Specific numbers have been discussed, but the sums which are cited in the press are guesses and nothing more. There has been no concrete discussion of the possibility of dispatching a special delegation. The only sensational fact to all of this is that the trade talks are continuing and the desirability of better economic ties has been recognized by both sides, despite the various anti-Comintern pacts⁹ on the one side and the negotiations between the Russians and the British and French¹⁰ negotiations on the other side.

On this instance, please accept, honored director, my confirmation of truly deep respect.

E. Krieviņš

LVVA, 2574.f., 4.apr., 7468.l., pp. 167-170. Original.

¹ H. Wohlthat, Ambassador for special assignments in Germany's economic development leadership.

² K. Schnurre, an expert at the German Foreign Ministry dealing with Eastern European economic matters.

³ F. von Papen, German politician and diplomat, German chancellor (from 1 June to 2 December 1932), vice-chancellor in Hitler's government from 30 January 1933 to June 1934; later German ambassador to Austria and Turkey.

⁴ Establishment of contacts.

⁵ E. Wiehl, director of the economic-political department of the German Foreign Ministry.

⁶ W. von der Schulenburg, German ambassador to the USSR.

⁷ G. Hilger, counsellor to the German embassy in Moscow.

⁸ G. Astakhov, acting representative of the Soviet Union in Germany.

⁹ On 25 November 1936, Germany and Japan reached agreement on a common defense against the destructive activity of the Comintern. Italy joined this agreement one year later. The pact did not, however, lead to any truly effective anti-Soviet policy instrument.

¹⁰ The Soviet negotiations with Britain and France began in the spring of 1939.

No. 12

Excerpt from a Report from the Latvian Ambassador to England, K. Zariņš, to Acting Foreign Minister A. Bērziņš

Secret

24 July 1939

Honored Minister:

The Kremlin negotiations¹ have not yet yielded any result. Naturally, various guesses and rumors have surrounded these negotiations.

The actual situation in London today is as follows. His Majesty's government is strongly adhering to the prime minister's statement of 10 July² to the effect that Britain seeks to respect the neutrality and independence of Finland, Estonia and Latvia. According to our own observations, the premier is not seeking to force the agreement. Lord Halifax³ is a bit more hot-blooded in this respect, but with respect to the Baltic states, no new formulas are being sought or developed; instead, as tends to be the case in negotiations, London and Paris would consider any suggestions should such be presented. [...]

As I have reported to you previously, then I have declared to the Foreign Office on several occasions that we will defend our country and that our first enemy will be the first country to attack us. My Finnish colleague Gripenberg has said the same, and I can only assume that Schmidt⁴ has done likewise.

The Foreign Office has concluded from this that if England were to agree to the Russian formula⁵, we would be forced into a closer relationship with Germany. Neither Britain nor France wishes to see this happen, and it

is known that Russia, too, would not be particularly delighted about this. [...]

Respectfully yours,
K. Zariņš
Ambassador to London

LVVA, 2574.f., 4. apr., 7490.l., pp. 133-135. Original.

¹ The reference is to the direct British, French and Soviet political negotiations in Moscow.

² On 10 July 1939, Prime Minister Chamberlain issued an official report concerning the Moscow negotiations.

³ The British foreign minister.

⁴ A. Schmidt, the Estonian ambassador to England.

⁵ The reference is to the "indirect aggression" formula which Moscow presented at the trilateral negotiations on 9 July 1939. The formula was artificial and rather unrealistic. If it had been adopted, then the major powers, especially the USSR, would have gained the opportunity to interfere in the domestic affairs of the countries under guarantee (including the Baltic states), using such matters as changes in government as an excuse to do so.

No. 13

Excerpt from a Report from the Latvian Ambassador to Germany, E. Krieviņš, to Foreign Minister V. Munters

Confidential
Berlin, 9 August 1939

Honored Minister:

[...] There is a conviction among the society and people of Germany [...] that the moment is approaching at which Germany will deal with Poland. Moreover, we are still frequently hearing the thought that Poland will be Germany's only enemy. Even within German military circles I have heard expressions of doubt concerning Britain's *Einsatzbereitschaft* with respect to Poland¹. The Germans have even greater doubts with respect to the possibility of Russia. I have heard that for ideological reasons alone, Germany would not go to war with the Russians. Russia, in turn, would not permit a repeat of the events of 1914², when the most ferocious battles took place on Russian territory. The Russians will now no longer wish to play the role of "provocator", thus focusing German

forces against them. For this reason, prevailing opinion holds, the Russians will wait and appear on the stage at the last possible moment.

Along with what I have reported thus far, I can also say that there are still persistent rumors about German-Russian rapprochement. These rumors are coming from individuals who are close to Hess³ and speak to Hitler's plans to reach agreement with Russia at the expense of Poland and the Baltic countries, leading to a restitution of Russia's 1914 borders...

These rumors concerning rapprochement with Russia are even broader: on 29 July Papen arrived in Berlin from his "place of relaxation" in Crimea, accompanied by a number of Russian gentlemen whom he could not smuggle in to Berchtesgarden⁴. This is the reason why Hitler and Ribbentrop suddenly arrived in Berlin on that day.

When I spoke to Weizsaecker⁵ of these matters during a visit last Friday, he categorically denied any political negotiations. He said he does not understand from where the rumors are coming. A few days ago his sons had visited him from various regions in Germany, and both had unanimously stated that "now you surely have an agreement with Russia in your pocket!" [..]

Speaking further, Weizsaecker told me that there are no negotiations with Poland. The Germans are avoiding anything which might exacerbate tensions between Germany and Poland, yet at the same time, the situation not only in Danzig⁶, but in Poland as a whole, with respect to the persecution of the German minority, is no longer tolerable. Weizsaecker said he believes the situation to be most serious. [..]

E. Krieviņš

LVVA, 2574.f., 4. apr., 7468.l., pp. 121-123. Original.

¹ In this case the expression means Britain's preparedness to go to war in defense of Poland. On 31 March 1939, British Prime Minister Chamberlain officially announced that should there be aggression against Poland, Britain would be prepared to extend assistance. What at that time were unilateral guarantees soon developed into bilateral relations, as was stated in a joint British-Polish communique on 6 April (when Polish Foreign Minister J. Beck was in London).

² The reference is to the beginning of World War I.

³ R. Hess, Hitler's deputy in Nazi party matters.

⁴ Hitler's residence was located in Berchtesgarden.

⁵ E. von Weizsaecker, the secretary of state of the German Foreign Ministry

⁶ After World War I, Danzig received the status of a "free city", which let it maintain the characteristics of a German city.

No. 14

Excerpt from a Letter from the Acting Representative of the USSR to Germany, G. Astakhov, to the foreign affairs commissar of the USSR, V. Molotov

12 August 1939

Honored Vjacheslav Mihalovich:

Having received your telegraphed instructions¹, I visited Schnurre² today and told him that you are interested in several specific matters (cultural contacts, the press, "refreshing" of the agreement³, and Poland) which he, Ribbentrop⁴ and Weizsaecker⁵ had selected, and also that you believe it necessary to discuss these matters in Moscow⁶, in a "gradual fashion", not beginning with the most complicated issues. [...]

Now we must wait for the German reaction to us. Events are developing rapidly, and the Germans are apparently not ready to spend time on such intermediate matters as the press, closer cultural contacts, etc. Rather, they want to being negotiations on matters of a territorial and political nature, in order that they might free their hands with respect to an increasingly likely conflict in Poland. They are also apparently worried by our negotiations with British and French military officials⁷, and they are freely expressing all manner of argument and promise to avert any military agreement. For this reason, I believe that they are prepared to issue declarations and gestures which six months ago may have seemed fully impossible. Their readiness to yield the Baltic, Bessarabia and Eastern Poland (to say nothing of the Ukraine) is the minimum to which the Germans are prepared to accede without great discussion at this time, provided that they receive our promise of non-interference in Poland. I did not, of course, offer any indication of the extent to which we might be interested in these issues, but I we wish to

receive any type of promise from the Germans (on what terms?), then it seems that we would be well advised to make them aware of this fact before the Nueremberg congress⁸, so that our proposal might be reflected in Hitler's speech which will, after all, be of programmatic importance.

Astakhov

Soviet representative in Germany

Год кризиса: 1938 - 1939, Т. 2, Москва, 1990, с. 185 - 186.

¹ *The reference is to a telegram with Molotov sent to Astakhov on 11 August 1939. It confirmed Russia's interest in continuing political negotiations with Germany in a direct fashion. Molotov suggested that the negotiations might begin in Moscow.*

² *An expert at the German Foreign Ministry dealing with Eastern European economic matters.*

³ *The reference is to an agreement between the USSR and Germany (Berlin) concerning non-aggression and neutrality which was signed on 24 April 1926. Formally, this agreement was still in effect in 1939 (after having been extended in 1931).*

⁴ *The German foreign minister.*

⁵ *The state secretary of the German Foreign Ministry.*

⁶ *For the Soviet leadership, the recommendation of Moscow as the site for negotiations was not only a matter of prestige, but also a test of Germany's readiness to finish the negotiations which had been undertaken*

⁷ *Military negotiations among the USSR, England and France began on 12 August 1939.*

⁸ *Many historians believe that Hitler would not have dared to wage war against Poland without the agreement and support of the USSR. For this reason, he had several contingency plans to deal with the issue, including the possible summoning of a Nazi peace congress at Nueremberg.*

No. 15

**Excerpt from a Memorandum Submitted
by the German Ambassador to Moscow,
W. von der Schulenburg, to the Foreign Affairs
Comissar of the USSR, V. Molotov**

15 August 1939

1. Contradictions between National Socialist Germany and the USSR over the last several years were

the only reason for the fact that German and the USSR found themselves in opposing and hostile positions. Developments over the most recent period evidently indicate that different views of the world do not exclude the possibility that the two countries might develop sensible relations and renew positive mutual cooperation. Thus they might eternally abolish foreign policy contradictions and open the way for a new future for both countries.

2. There are no true contradictions in the interests of Germany and the Soviet Union. The "lebensraum" of Germany borders on that of the USSR, but in terms of their natural needs, the two do not compete with one another. This means that from the very start, there is no reason for any aggressive tendencies by one country vis a vis the other. Germany has no aggressive intent with respect to the USSR. The German government believes that between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea, there are no matters which cannot be resolved in a manner which is mutually satisfactory to both sides. This includes matters involving the Baltic Sea, the Baltic States, Poland, the Southeast, etc. Moreover, political cooperation between the two countries can only be beneficial. This is also true to the German and Soviet economies, which complement each other in all respects.

3. There can be doubt that at the current time, German-Soviet policies are at a point of historical departure. Political decisions which should be adopted in the nearest term in Berlin and Moscow will have decisive importance in the development of relations between the German people and the Soviet people for many generations to come. These decisions will determine whether the two people will ever again have to cross swords with no particular reason, or whether they will be able to achieve friendly relations once again. In the past, the two countries always lived well during periods when they treated each other well. They lived poorly when they were hostile one to the other. [...]

No. 16

From a Report from the German Ambassador to
Moscow, F. von der Schulenburg, to the State
Secretary of the German Foreign Minister,
E. von Weizsaecker

16 August 1939

Cianno
Schulenburg
Weizsaecker

Honored State Secretary:

With respect to my discussions yesterday with Herr Molotov, I would like to immediately direct your attention to the following matters:

[..] Despite all efforts, we nevertheless failed to reach a precise definition of Herr Molotov's wishes with respect to the Baltic countries. It seems that he did mention joint guarantees for the Baltic states as one of the points in Herr Rosso's¹ statement², but he has not specifically requested that we issue such guarantees. I believe that the idea of such joint guarantees is in contradiction to the Soviet government's attitude in British and French negotiations³.

This all seems to indicate that we have achieved the desired result in our negotiations here.

With a sincere greeting to you, State Secretary, I am ever faithfully yours,

Graf von Schulenburg
Heil, Hitler!

SSSR-Germanija 1939. Dokumenti i materiali o sovetško-germanskih odnošanjah s aprila po oktjabr 1939. - Vilnius (1989), pp. 37-38.

¹ A. Rosso, the Italian ambassador to the USSR.

² In a discussion with Schulenburg on 15 August 1939, Molotov sought to ascertain the truth of information which the Soviet government had received from its representative to Rome in late June with his discussions with the Italian foreign minister, G. Cianno. In these, Cianno announced that Germany was working out a plan to fundamentally improve Soviet-German relations. The plan, according to the Italian foreign minister, spoke to Germany's preparedness to press Tokyo to improve its own relations with the USSR, as well as to the possibility that Germany and the USSR might sign a non-aggression

agreement, jointly guarantee the Baltic countries, etc. Schulenburg responded by saying that Cianno's statement was based on information from the Italian ambassador to Moscow, A. Rosso, with whom Cianno had a discussion concerning the possible improvement of relations between Russia and Germany. The German ambassador emphasized, however, that this information was only partially true.

³ Schulenburg's speculation was entirely accurate. The direct political negotiations among the USSR, Britain and France clearly showed that Moscow wanted only such "guarantees" as would let it occupy the Baltic states at an advantageous moment.

No. 17

Excerpt from a Telegram from German Foreign Minister J. von Ribbentrop to the German Ambassador to Moscow, F. von der Schulenburg

Berlin, 16 August 1939, 16:15

Received at Moscow on 17 August 1939, 01:00

Urgent

Personal to the Ambassador

Please make contact with Herr Molotov and report to him that in addition to yesterday's report to Herr Stalin, you must also give him the following instruction, received yesterday from Berlin, which relates to the questions posed by Herr Molotov. After making this statement, please report to Herr Molotov the following:

1) Matters which have been raised by Herr Molotov correspond to Germany's wishes. Respectively, Germany is prepared to conclude a non-aggression agreement with the Soviet Union, one which would not, should the Soviet government so desire, be amendable for a period of 25 years. Further, Germany is prepared to issue joint guarantees of the security of the Baltic states¹. Finally, Germany is prepared (and this fully corresponds to Germany's position) to try to use its influence to improve and solidify Russian-Japanese relations. [...]

Ribbentrop

SSSR-Germanija, op. cit., p. 39.

¹ The appearance of the matter of joint German and Soviet guarantees for the Baltic states was largely accidental. See Doc. 16.

No. 18

**Excerpt from a Report from
the Latvian Ambassador to Poland, L. Ēķis,
to Foreign Minister V. Munters**

Confidential

Warsaw, 23 August 1939

Honored Minister:

After the "bomb" of the night before last (the German-Russian announcement of a non-aggression agreement), the reaction in Poland is still fairly unclear and chaotic. Over the last 24 hours I have twice spoken with the foreign ministry, and I have met and exchanged impressions with the ambassadors from Great Britain, Soviet Russia, Greece, Lithuania, Finland and Bulgarian. In addition, I have spoken with several representatives of the press, as well as Poles in the private sector. If I were to attempt a full recounting of all that I heard from these individuals, my report would be checkered indeed. I will seek to bring some modicum of order to this material. The overall situation might be characterized as follows:

1. **Poland.** The German-Russian political agreement was a surprise here, though the official claim states otherwise. The German-Russian "bomb" will have no direct influence on the activities and positions of the decisive institutions in Poland. The first twelve hours had a destructive effect, and nervousness yesterday and on the night from 21 to 22 August was great, indeed. The British and French ambassadors visited Beck¹ in the middle of the night. The mood today is calmer, and the official statement that these new developments change nothing in Poland's diplomatic and military situation is sufficiently justified. Poland has never counted on active support from Russia, and it will not count on such support even in the worst case scenario - i.e., a near-term exacerbation of the tension to a level of conflict or war with Germany. The Poles think that despite everything, Russian neutrality is still guaranteed. [...]

4. **The situation and role of the Baltic states,** according to the discussions which I have had over the last 24 hours, have not worsened. The Poles emphasize that we should keep our eyes and ears open, because the news which was reported in virtually all of the Polish press yesterday

with respect to Germany's proposals to Moscow to divide the Baltic states along the Daugava river in keeping with the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty should be considered seriously (actually, this is a Polish invention²). The Poles say that the Germans certainly approached the Russians with such a proposal, their aim being to scuttled the British-Russian negotiations in which the Baltic states were the chief sticking point. The Poles add that to the credit of the Russians, they have rejected the proposals. The Poles have permitted this report with the calculation that it will discredit the territorial distribution plans which exist in the minds of Ribbentrop and Himmler. The Poles say that we must face up to the facts and anticipate further German actions, because discrediting these actions will make it impossible for the Germans to execute them. In response to this statement, I said that I have trouble in believing this version of events, but if I did believe it, then the logical conclusion would be that Poland will be divided up, too. This led to a revelation of sorts from the very high-standing director³: "Why am I at all surprised at the German proposal, when the Germans have come to Poland three times with the proposal to take Lithuania, Liepāja and Rīga as a corridor" (*over a glass of cognac* ⁴). I remarked that it would have been nicer of the director, had he revealed this information to me at the time when it was of immediate importance.

The Soviet ambassador⁵ said that the idea of dividing up the Baltic countries was absolutely absurd - the greatest foolishness which he had ever read in the Polish newspapers. He feels that the Poles have lost their good sense upon receiving news of the German-Russian non-aggression pact. Because something had to be published overnight, he said, the Poles tried to shift blame from the sick head to the healthy one.

Whatever is the truth in these various opinions, I believe that in one respect the Poles are right: we must keep our eyes and ears as widely open as is humanly possible right now. I furthermore feel that we cannot exclude the possibility that the Brits and Russians might engage in some further "trading" of our existence in response to their will that the effect of the German agreement with Russia might be negated as quickly as possible. The British ambassador⁶ was a bit skeptical about whether the Brits would feel it possible to continue negotiations under these

most ridiculous circumstances and with such ludicrous partners as the Germans and Russians.

Respectfully yours,

L. Ēķis

Ambassador to Poland

LVVA, 2574.f., 3. apr., 3238.l., pp. 93 and 97-98. Original.

¹ *J. Beck, the Polish foreign minister.*

² *The parenthetical material is a notation made by V. Munters on the margins of Ēķis' report.*

³ *The reference is to T. Kobylanski, the director of the Eastern Department of the Polish Foreign Ministry.*

⁴ *This, too, is a notation by Munters.*

⁵ *N. Saronov, the Soviet Union's representative in Poland.*

⁶ *H. Kennard, the British ambassador to Poland.*

No. 19

The Secret Supplementary Protocol to the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Agreement of 23 August 1939

23 August 1939

Secret Supplementary Protocol¹

In connection with the signing of the non-aggression agreement between Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the authorized representatives of both countries, having signed this pact, met in confidential negotiations to consider the matter of designating the spheres of interest of both parties in Eastern Europe. The result of these negotiations is as follows:

1. In the event of territorial and political reordering in the territory of the Baltic states (Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), the northern border of Lithuania shall be considered to be the boundary between the German and Soviet spheres of interest. Lithuania's interests with respect to the Vilnius region are recognized by both parties.

2. In the event of territorial and political reordering in the territory of Poland, the boundary between the German and Soviet spheres of interest shall be deemed to approximately follow the Narev, Visla and Sana rivers².

The matters of whether the existence of an independent Polish state serves the interests of both parties, and

what should be the borders of such an independent state, shall be determined in the context of further political developments.

In any event, the two governments shall resolve this matter in the spirit of friendly cooperation.

3. In the Southeast of Europe, the Soviet side emphasizes the interests of the USSR in Bessarabia. The German side confirms its lack of any political interest whatsoever in this region.

4. Both parties agree to maintain complete secrecy with respect to this agreement³.

Moscow, 23 August 1939

For the German government:

J. von Ribbentrop

Authorized by the government of the USSR:

V. Molotov

Akten zur deutschen auswaertigen Politik 1918-1945. - Serie D. - Bd. VII. - Baden-Baden, 1956, pp. 206-207. Copy.

¹ The USSR tried for more than 50 years to deny that this protocol ever existed.

² On 28 August 1939, the Soviet foreign affairs commissar, V. Molotov, and the German ambassador to Moscow, W. von der Schulenburg, signed a "supplementary agreement" in Moscow which more precisely defined the text of the latter words in this paragraph. The more precise definition read: "...to follow the Pisa, Narev, Visla and Sana rivers".

³ The fact that the German-Soviet non-aggression agreement was actually oriented toward the engendering of war was most clearly evidenced by this secret protocol, which spoke to "territorial and political reordering".

No. 20

Excerpt from a Report from the Latvian Ambassador to France, O. Grosvalds, to Foreign Minister V. Munters

Confidential
25 August 1939

Honored Minister:

[..] 3. An overall evaluation of the German-Russian agreement¹

The German-Russian negotiations² were conducted in the greatest of secrecy, so much so that no one in France

had any idea of the talks. There were general predictions and hypotheses that the Russians were "perhaps" engaging in some type of machinations with the Germans behind France's back, but there was nothing of a precise nature. I would like to observe at this point that in several conversations with General Secretary Leger³ and others I warned of the devious nature of the Russians. Their cynical and absolutely immoral tactics have now been revealed to the French, and everyone's eyes have now been opened.

It is evident that the agreement was more necessary to Germany than to Russia, and Germany hopes to use it as a powerful tactical weapon. It is said that Hitler mainly wished to obtain some element of victory and prestige with which to boast at the upcoming Nueremberg congress⁴. Uncontrolled rumor also has it that Berlin has begun to doubt the trustworthiness of its ally, Italy⁵, and that it needed to seek an "open road" to the East instead. This is said to have been a particular demand in Germany's military circles. Be that as it may, but we must now take into account the major historical event which always seemed to us to be a worst-case possibility but which now has been carried out in continuation of Bismarck's⁶ policy of engaging the Russians and cooperating with them at the expense of other nations. To achieve this, there were considerable sacrifices on the part of both sides. Hitler has proved unfaithful to his entire ideology, and it may well prove that he will have a hard time defending this before his party, or at least one segment thereof. He will be forced to reject the anti-Comintern pact, too. Stalin, for his part, has carried out a personal wish for which he has methodically prepared by slaughtering all of his potential opponents at home. Because his actions are unquestionably in conflict with the interests of the Jews, it is now quite clear why Litvinov⁷ had to go. Given the radical change in the ideological conceptions of both countries, one might now ask what influence this event will have on Japan, Spain, Hungary, Turkey and other interested countries. The agreement frees Russia from military obligations from which it had always shied away, it weakens Poland's situation, and it gives Germany free hands to its East. Broad political circles here are convinced that secret conventions were appended to the agreement. It would be of great

importance to know whether this is true and, if so, how far the secret agreements reach. Of course, we will not be able to know this for some time. There is much discussion in the French press about plans to divide Poland and the Baltic states between Germany and Russia. This leads me to consider the way in which Latvia should view this agreement.

It might be said that both positive and negative elements can be seen here. The positive elements are few, and the negative elements are many. 1) The establishment of peace between Russia and Germany can lead one to believe that now finally there will be no more talk about "guarantees" and "direct and indirect aggression" and that the independence of the Baltic states will more or less be ensured⁶. But these ideas are probably illusory, because in the event of a German-Polish war, the entire issue would again be open for discussion. 2) The plans to divide Poland and the Baltic states which are referenced above may well re-appear in German-Russian cooperation if they have not been stated in writing at this point. In these last few days, I have been plagued by thoughts about Lenin's sealed wagon and the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty⁹. [...]

O. Grosvalds

Ambassador to France

LVVA, 2574.f., 4. apr., 7444.l., pp. 100-102. Copy.

¹ The reference is to the German-Soviet non-aggression pact of 23 August.

² The German and Soviet negotiations on the pre-requisites for a rapprochement between the two countries began in the spring of 1939. The decisive phase of the talks occurred at the end of July, when Germany yielded to many Soviet demands, especially with respect to the matter of the Baltic states.

³ M. Leger, the general secretary of the French Foreign Ministry.

⁴ This is not a precise interpretation of the facts. Hitler had prepared a route for retreat should he fail to reach a non-aggression agreement with the USSR. He was planning, for example, to summon a Nazi "peace" congress to Nueremberg in that event.

⁵ On 22 May 1939, Germany and Italy signed a cooperation agreement which has become known as the "Steel pact". Despite this, the Italian dictator Mussolini failed to support Berlin's efforts to engender war in Europe. He felt that Italy would be prepared for war no earlier than in 1943.

- ⁶ Otto von Bismarck, the German chancellor from 1871 to 1890.
- ⁷ On 3 March 1939, the Jewish Litvinov was replaced by the Russian Molotov in the office of foreign affairs commissar. Many historians believe that the changeover was a result of Stalin's efforts to reach an understanding with Germany.
- ⁸ Negotiations among England, France and the USSR on the topic of establishing a military and political union, which took place in the spring and summer of 1939, incessantly dealt with the topic of guarantees for Latvia, Estonia and other countries. Moscow was interested in guarantees which would give the USSR the opportunity occupy the Baltic states at an opportune time.
- ⁹ Grosvalds' reference is to a broadly disseminated theory about Lenin's "cooperation" with Germany. In the spring of 1917, when the revolution had begun in Russia, the German government permitted Lenin, who had been living in Switzerland, to ride through Germany in a sealed railroad car. On 3 March 1918, four months after the Bolshevik revolution, Lenin's government signed the Brest peace treaty, which was advantageous to Germany.

No. 21

A Report from the Latvian Ambassador to Germany, E. Krieviņš, to Foreign Minister V. Munters

Confidential

Berlin, 25 August 1939

Honored Minister:

Yesterday I spoke with a colleague who asked me whether I had considered the possibility that upon his arrival in Moscow, Ribbentrop might have been a hostage of his hosts, even if the details of the pact¹ had already been agreed. He asked whether I fully discount the idea that the Russians and Germans might also have spoken about us. "We will sign an agreement with you, but surely you would have no objection a small protocol about the two Baltic sheep and the spiteful ram (Finland). In our negotiations with the Brits and the French² we have always emphasized our interest in this corner of the world which is so close to us. It is our "Lebensraum", the mouth through which we breathe. If you do not free our hands in that region, we will not be able to agree with you on the major issues. It is important to you that the supply of goods to you from our country

might freely pass through the harbors of these countries. For this reason, these three countries must stop the sovereignty game and make peace with the fate of Slovakia³. We will become the protectors of these three states. You Germans can later do the same with Lithuania". What could Ribbentrop do, if he was so addressed? Of course he would agree. The Germans could close their eyes to Russian pressure against the Baltic states. This would not be in contradiction with the German non-aggression pacts with Latvia and Estonia⁴.

All of the above are the thoughts of my colleague.

This scenario was presented to me as absolute certainty today, and by two parties: All of Europe, between the western border of Germany and the Ural mountains has been divided up between the partners to the Moscow agreement. There is room for only two major nations there - the Germans and the Russians. The current confusion, in which new boundaries appear every few hours with all manner of formalities - passports, visas, customs controls, new currencies, etc. - must be brought to an end.

My colleagues predict that we can expect pressure from Moscow.

Please accept, honored minister, my confirmations of the deepest respect.

E. Krieviņš

LVVA, 2574.f., 4.apr., 7468.l., pp. 72-73. Copy

¹The reference is to the German-Soviet non-aggression pact which was signed on 23 August 1939.

²In the spring and summer of 1939, England, France and the USSR conducted negotiations on the establishment of a union. The Baltic matter played an important role in these negotiations.

³In March 1939, Germany abolished Czechoslovakia as a sovereign country. Czechia became a province of Germany ("The Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia), while Slovakia was given the status of a formally independent state (it was actually fully dependent on Berlin). Transcarpathian Ukraine was attached to Hungary.

⁴Germany signed non-aggression agreements with Latvia and Estonia on 7 June 1939.

No. 22

**A Report from the Latvian Ambassador
to German, E. Krieviņš,
to Foreign Minister V. Munters**

Confidential

Berlin, 26 August 1939

Honored Minister:

To supplement my report of yesterday¹ about the way in which the Baltic states were a topic of discussion in Moscow, I am honored to report that rumors with respect to this issue have continued to circulate unabated. Today's information about this is somewhat more positive than the previous information. It reads: "*Deutschland und Russland sind uebereingekommen hinsichtlich der Baltischen Staaten einen Interessenausgleich auf folgender Basis anzustreben:*

- 1) *Deutschland und Russland stellen bis auf weiteres keine territorialen Ansprueche anddie Baltischen Staaten (!? - E.K.).*

- 2) *Russland anerkennt den deutschen Anspruch, die Baltischen Staaten als Versorgungsbasis Deutschlands zu betrachten, als zu Recht bestehend.*

- 3) *Deutschland raeumt Russland das Recht ein, seine Lebensinteressen in den Baltischen Haefen wahrzunehmen.*

- 4) *An eine Schmaelerung der Suveraenitaet der Baltischen Staaten sei nicht gedacht*"².

In this same context, please permit me to present a quote from an editorial in the August 24 edition of *Koelnische Zeitung* (No. 426), titled "*Gemeinsamkeit der Interessen*"³: "*Die Konsultationszusage ermoeglicht es beiden Staaten, alle schwebenden Fragen in diesen Lebensraeumen von sich aus zo loesen, ohne dass ein anderer Faktor, der in diesen Lebensraeumen nichts zu suchen hat, dazu seine Zustimmung geben muesste*"⁴.

Please accept, honored minister, my confirmation of the deepest respect.

E. Krieviņš

LVVA, 2574.f., 4. apr., 7468.l., pp. 57-58. Original.

¹ See Doc. 21.

² "*Germany and Russia have agreed with respect to the Baltic states to attempt to balance interests on this basis:*

1) Germany and Russia for the time present do not have any territorial pretensions against the Baltic states.

2) Russia recognizes as legitimate the German demand that the Baltic states be considered a supply base for Germany.

3) Germany recognizes the rights of Russia to observe its vital interests in the ports of the Baltic states.

4) There has been no thought of limiting the sovereignty of the Baltic states."

³"Commonality of Interests"

⁴"The promise for further consultations gives the opportunities for both countries to resolve all unsettled matters in these Lebensraeumen by themselves without any need for agreement from any other factor which has nothing to do with the Lebensraeumen in question."

No. 23

Excerpt from a Report from the Latvian Ambassador to France, O. Grosvalds, to Foreign Minister V. Munters

Confidential

31 August 1939

Honored Minister:

[..] Yesterday I had a lengthy conversation with the counselor at the Polish embassy, Frankowski. He has no doubt that Poland is facing war. He says even if a peace agreement can be reached for the time being, Germany's yearning for expansion will soon rise again and will not be calmed until the matter is resolved militarily. The Poles feel that they can move in Germany's direction on the Danzig matter¹ and to find some statutory changes which would favor the Danzig Germans. But the Poles do not find it possible to turn Danzig over to full German sovereignty, and they say there can be no talk of any corridor². The cessation of even the smallest part of Polish territory would mean the beginning of Poland's breakup. I can only agree with this assessment.

The counselor's words reflected a strong and unyielding dedication to defend his fatherland in every way. He says this type of dedication can be found throughout Poland.

In speaking of Russia, Frankowski said that according to information which the Poles have, the Russians have very demandingly spoken of the Baltic states in their negotiations with the British and French³. The Poles were

to some extent surprised at this extraordinary interest, which the Poles feel can be explained by no other cause than a re-awakening of Russian imperialism which seeks to re-conquer the lands of Peter the Great. Surprisingly enough, the Poles say, places like Romania, for example, were discussed little (despite the fact that Bessarabia might be of interest to Russia), but there was much discussion of the Baltic states, including Finland. Frankowski also believed that Germany and Russia have already secretly agreed, or are about to agree, on the division of Poland and the Baltic states. [...]

O. Grosvalds

Ambassador to France

LVVA, 2574.f., 4. apr., 7444.l., pp. 125-126. Original.

¹ Under the Versailles Peace Treaty of 28 June 1919, Danzig (Gdansk) and a small territory around it was given the rights of a "free city". Danzig was a protectorate of the League of Nations and was included in the customs system of Poland. Even though the city did not belong to Poland, the Danzig matter was of importance in Polish-German relations throughout the interwar period. In negotiations between the two countries in late 1938 and early 1939, Germany presented the return of Danzig as one of the primary pre-requisites for Polish-German rapprochement.

² The Polish Corridor, a strip of land awarded to Poland under the Versailles Treaty which gave it access to the sea but which divided German territory into two unconnected parts.

³ The reference is to the British, French and Soviet political and military negotiations which took place in the spring and summer of 1939.

No. 24

Latvia's Declaration of Neutrality

1 September 1939

A Declaration by the President

President Kārlis Ulmanis yesterday signed the following declaration:

1) I hereby declare that in the matter of the war which has arisen between other countries, Latvia shall maintain strict neutrality.

2) Based on the Law on the rules of neutrality¹ I determine that the regulations of the law are to be applied

with respect to all combatant countries beginning on 1 September 1939.

K. Ulmanis
President

Valdības Vēstnesis, 2 September 1939

¹*The law was adopted on 21 December 1938.*

No. 25

**Excerpt from a Telegram from the Soviet
Representative to Latvia, I. Zotov,
to the Foreign Affairs Commissariat**

2 September 1939

Urgent

Received 3 September 1939, 03:10 hours

Munters announced that there are rumors circulating in Latvian society that Germany and the USSR have split up Poland and that the same fate is threatening the Baltic states. To calm people down and develop correct societal understanding, he recommended either publishing a TASS announcement which denies these rumors or to publish my conversation with him in the local newspapers, thus refuting the rumors. I reminded him of comrade Molotov's speech¹ which in its essence destroys such rumors and suggested that it be published in the press. Munters was not satisfied by this, however, and he asked that one of his recommended steps be taken. Germany has done so, and Latvia wants an explanation from our side, too. I believe that our announcement of numerical increases in our troop strength along the western border² has been seized upon and twisted by the enemies of the USSR and that therefore it would be better to adopt one of the proposals offered by Munters.

Representative

Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 21.

¹*The reference is to a speech made by Molotov at an emergency session of the USSR Supreme Council on 31 August 1939, in which he reported on the trust placed by the USSR in peaceful co-existence with "non-Soviet countries". Latvia was not mentioned directly in the speech. With respect to the 23 August agreement, Molotov said that there were people in other countries who wished to see more in the agreement than was*

really there and to sow distrust in the pact. *Izvestia*, 1 September 1939.

² On 30 August 1939, the Soviet government published an announcement that "...in connection with the sharpening of tensions in the Eastern regions of Europe...", the USSR had decided to increase troop strength along the western border of the Soviet Union. *Izvestia*, 30 August 1939.

No. 26

A Telegram from the Soviet Representative to Germany, A. Shkvartsev, to Foreign Affairs Commissar V. Molotov

3 September 1939

Extremely urgent, fully secret

At noon on 3 September I submitted withdrawal and accrediting documents to Hitler. Our conversation lasted for 15 minutes. I summarizing my discussion with Hitler, I would note this, the most important of his statements. Hitler confirmed that Germany would fully execute its obligations with respect to our agreement, and in the event of a successful military campaign, the situation which was established after the Versailles Treaty will be liquidated, and Germany and the USSR will restore the borders which existed prior to the world war. I asked whether there is any supplementary information about the military campaign beyond that which has been published in the newspapers. Hitler replied that he cannot supplement the newspaper reports in any way, because they are all fully correct, and that the military campaign has been ongoing for only two days. Having returned to the office at 12:30 PM, I learned from a TASS employee that England has declared war on Germany. This was news to me, as Hitler had mentioned nothing of it in our discussion. I am sending a full report on the conversation in a letter¹.

Representative

Документы внешней политики, 1939 год, т.22, кн.2, с. 15.

¹ The letter was never published.

No. 27

**Excerpt from a Report from the German
Ambassador to Latvia, U. von Kotze,
to the Foreign Ministry**

13 September 1939

[..] Munters¹ said that while in Moscow, he had tried to learn more about the circumstances under which the Soviet and German non-aggression agreement was concluded. Munters has asked the Russian ambassador here² to receive authorization from his government to report on the Russian position toward Latvia, and the ambassador has stated that rumors concerning the assignation of border countries to Russia to be lies. He has not yet received an authenticated reply, but Molotov³ meanwhile has received the Latvian ambassador to Moscow⁴ and has explained to him that Russia believes the Latvian-Russian non-aggression agreement to be the basis for relations with Latvia. He was not prepared to confirm anything else. When I told Mr. Munters that the fact that both Germany and the Soviet Union fully recognize their obligations under the various non-aggression pacts should give the Latvian government a full feeling of security, Munters replied that the government itself might be satisfied with the situation, but that it would be difficult to convince Latvian society to feel the same way.

Kotze

*Politisches Archiv des Auswaertigen Amts (hereafter - PAAA),
R104628 - E597401. Original.*

¹ The Latvian foreign minister.

² I. Zotov.

³ The Soviet foreign affairs commissar.

⁴ F. Kociņš.

No. 28

**Excerpt from a Report from the General
Secretary of the Latvian Foreign Ministry,
M. Nukša, to Ambassadors Posted Abroad**

Confidential

Rīga, 15 September 1939

Because of communications difficulties, the ministry has been forced to limit the sending of reports to the

embassies. In place of this, the ministry will give overviews and summaries of the existing situation, based on information received at the ministry.

These overviews will also contain information about steps which the Latvian government has taken to protect our country's neutrality and to maintain the flow of economic life.

The ministry intends to organize a courier service along with the other Baltic states in order to have links with at least a few embassies and thus to provide for an exchange of information even in these times of war.

War in Poland and Western Europe¹ has thus far created no complications in the political situation of the Baltic states. Thanks to a firmly implemented and executed policy of neutrality, there is no threat of danger from any side at this time. Last year's Geneva declaration on our refusal to participate in sanctions², the concerted reply we gave to Litvinov in March³, the non-aggression agreement with Germany⁴, and our position during the British-Russian negotiations⁵ - all of these acts are part of a straight, clear and continuous political line. The result is that the Baltic states can consider themselves to be in a fairly good state of affairs today. This is the general view in the Baltic states. Foreign representatives have recognized this. We have received reports from Tallinn that the Soviet ambassador there⁶ has repeatedly stated that Baltic foreign policy has been not only wise, but also far-sighted. Similar information has arrived from Germany. Von Grundherr⁷, for example, has stated to our ambassador⁸ that he is fully satisfied with the fact that the German-Russian pact strengthened security and stability in the Baltic states, although it appeared from other things which Grundherr said that the gentleman is not fully satisfied with the pact itself. Now that the German-Soviet non-aggression pact has been signed, the Baltic states have been freed from the unwelcome attentions which they received during the British-French-Russian negotiations in Moscow.

Perhaps it has occurred to you that while Germany has provided specific declarations to some of its neighboring countries that it would respect their policies of neutrality, no such declarations from Germany have been received by the Baltic states. But the Scandinavian countries do not have non-aggression pacts with Germany,

which the Baltic states do. This is why the German confirmation that they would respect Scandinavian neutrality was appropriate. The Baltic states needed no supplementary declaration after the non-aggression agreement which was concluded in 7 June. The German ambassador⁹ fully confirmed this view to our foreign minister, reporting on behalf of his government on 4 September that the basis for Latvian and German relations is the non-aggression pact of 7 June; that Germany has not concluded any agreements which would be in contradiction to the cited agreement; and that therefore a special declaration concerning respect for Latvia's neutrality would be superfluous. This statement by the ambassador was in response to the minister's question about the German-Russian non-aggression pact. Because of the war, there have been rumors, especially in the foreign press, that the pact might also speak to the Baltic states¹⁰.

I would also bring other elements of this discussion to your attention. The Soviet ambassador in Tallinn has stated several times that "upon his word of honor, nothing about the Baltic states was discussed during the signing of the Moscow agreement, and nothing with respect to the Baltic countries was signed". Similar information has come to our embassy in Moscow, where French military representatives have stated that the Baltic states were not discussed during the military negotiations. Representatives of the German embassy in Moscow, including the ambassador himself¹¹ have, according to our ambassador¹², stated that "while there are good relations between Germany and the Soviet Union, the Baltic states have nothing to fear, and their neutrality will be respected". The German military attache in Moscow, Gen. Koestring, has told our military representative that "on concluding the non-aggression pact between Germany and the Soviet Union, there was absolutely no talk about the interests of the Baltic states. Rumors of a secret portion to the agreement, where the parties have supposedly dealt with their intentions toward the Baltic states, have been spread by the Brits and the French with the purpose of creating distrust vis a vis Germany".

In order to provide a complete picture, I might also submit the following, contradictory information. Tallinn reports that "the Estonian embassy in Moscow has received

information from the American embassy that during the signing of the agreement, there were discussions between the Germans and the Russians about the Baltic states, both only in the sense that the parties to the negotiations felt that the independent existence of the Baltic states is desirable"; our embassy in Moscow, however, has received reports from the same American embassy that the German-Russian agreement has a secret protocol and that "an agreement to divide the Baltic states between Germany and the USSR must be viewed as *fait accompli*". Our ambassador has reason to believe that this information has come from French sources.

We have also received a report from Moscow concerning Ambassador Kociņš' discussion with Molotov¹³ in which the ambassador sought a response to various rumors, mostly from the newspapers, of a secret agreement between Germany and the USSR. Molotov coolly replied that he had given full information about the Soviet-German non-aggression pact in his report to the Supreme Council¹⁴, that the basis for Soviet-Latvian relations is the non-aggression pact between the two countries¹⁵, and that he has nothing more to say because "there is no point in swearing any oath". Kociņš replied that he expected no oaths from Molotov, but did want information to deal with the various rumors. Molotov again calmly replied: "We have a non-aggression agreement, after all; what more can you want? There would be no point at all in giving any oath"...

[..] With respect to the communications system which is to be established under the provisions of the German-Russian non-aggression pact, there is no specific data at this time, and there is no point in making any predictions in this respect. It should be noted, however, that from the various discussions which our ambassador has had in Moscow recently, as well as from discussions we have had with local diplomats, we can conclude one thing: the Soviet Union does not place much faith in the German-Soviet non-aggression pact. High-ranking Soviet officials have frequently referred to it as "a piece of paper". There is no official report on this from Berlin, except for the discussion between our ambassador and von Grundherr which is referenced above. One observer who is closely familiar with the situation in Berlin, has reported that "people [in Berlin] are starting to lose faith in the inviolable principles of National So-

cialist foreign policy, among which there once was the implacable battle against bolshevism".

Our military representative in Moscow has submitted information concerning the breakdown of the British-French-Russian military negotiations¹⁶. The information has come from French sources. They say that the negotiations began with a categorical Russian demand that it be permitted to bring the Red Army into Poland should this become necessary. The British and French military missions objected that only Poland itself could resolve this question. The British and French missions submitted several proposals on supporting Poland with war materiel, but the Soviet delegation rejected all such suggestions. At this phase, the negotiations broke down. It should be noted that our military representative was told several times by a representative of the French military mission that "the Baltic states were not mentioned in the military negotiations, because the talks did not move beyond the Polish question". In London, however, Northern Department Director Collier¹⁷ told our ambassador and his Estonian colleague¹⁸ that "the Russian leadership demanded of the British and French military representatives that in the event of war with Germany, they be allowed to occupy certain posts in Finland and Estonia". The Director added: "In fact, it means that they should occupy Finland and Estonia". No demands were made with respect to Latvia.

[..] On 11 September, the war minister¹⁹ issued an order concerning the drafting into active military service of men born in three years (1914, 1915 and 1916). The draft took place without any undue trouble. The mood was good and definite. I might add that even though the front lines in Poland have shifted to the North, including areas near the Vilnius region, we have seen no massing of Polish civilian or military personnel on our border with Poland.

M. Nukša
General Secretary

LVVA, 2574.f., 3.apr., 3305.l., pp. 163-167. Original.

¹ Germany attacked Poland on 1 September 1939. On 3 September, Britain and France declared war against Germany.

² On 19 September 1938, Foreign Minister V. Munters declared in Geneva that Latvia would reserve the right of absolute neutrality. This meant that Latvia would not observe Paragraph 16 of the League of Nations statutes. Latvia did

not consider itself obliged to participate in sanctions against aggressors. Latvia's declaration was not a far-sighted political step. Paragraph 16 was, indeed, the only international guarantee of Baltic independence to which they could refer in the event of a foreign attack. The 19 September declaration severely damaged one of the basic elements of Latvian foreign policy - cooperation with the League of Nations. Moreover, the declaration had the unintended consequence of creating more favorable circumstances for the two great aggressors of the 1930s - the USSR and Germany.

³ The reply was coordinated between Latvia and Estonia and was submitted on 7 April 1939. Neither Latvia nor Estonia wished to permit any limitation of their sovereignty.

⁴ Latvia and Germany signed a non-aggression agreement on 7 June 1939.

⁵ During the British-French-Soviet political negotiations (April-August 1939), Latvia rejected any unilateral guarantees which the three powers might offer.

⁶ K. Nikitin.

⁷ V. von Grundherr, director of Department IV of the German Foreign Ministry.

⁸ E. Krieviņš.

⁹ U. von Kotze.

¹⁰ See Doc. No. 23.

¹¹ F. von der Schulenburg.

¹² F. Kociņš.

¹³ V. Molotov, the Soviet foreign affairs commissar.

¹⁴ Molotov gave a report on Soviet foreign policy on 31 August 1939.

¹⁵ Latvia and the Soviet Union signed a non-aggression agreement in 1932.

¹⁶ The British-French-Soviet military negotiations took place in August 1939.

¹⁷ L. Collier.

¹⁸ K. Zariņš and A. Schmidt.

¹⁹ J. Balodis.

No. 29

A Telegram from the Soviet Representative in Latvia, I. Zotov, to the Soviet Foreign Affairs Commissariat

16 September 1939

Urgent. Fully confidential.

Meeting with War Minister Balodis, I heard concerns about the possibility that the Red Army might enter. I was asked to help them in liquidating economic difficulties. I felt him out about the possibility that they might recommend

other forms of closer relations. It became clear that they wish to receive temporary economic aid, without undertaking any economic or political connections with the Soviet Union. They consider comrade Molotov's speech¹ to be resolute and open and Pravda's analysis of events in Poland² to be very correct. Balodis, as well as Munters, mentioned com. Molotov's response to Kociņš: "It is not my style to give any oath". Munters and Kociņš both considered this to have been an offensive statement, and both associated it with the mobilization which we are carrying out³. The phrase increased their fears and was taken to be a confirmation of the possibility that the Red Army might enter Latvia. Balodis has a different view, believing that what Molotov said at the Supreme Council session was a principal and high-standing statement which does not require any further confirmation.

Representative

Документы внешней политики, 1939 год, т.22, кв.2, с. 91-92.

¹ The reference is to Molotov's address to an emergency session of the Soviet Supreme Council on 31 August 1939.

² The reference is to an article published by Pravda on 14 September 1939. Titled "On the Domestic Reasons for Poland's Military Defeat", the article was fully supportive of Germany's aggression against Poland. It is surprising that J. Balodis expressed support for the Soviet viewpoints, which was laying propagandistic groundwork for Moscow's own aggression against Poland, which would begin on 17 September.

³ On 15 September 1939, I. Zotov reported that V. Munters had informed him about Ambassador F. Kociņš' reception at the Kremlin, during the course of which V. Molotov coolly told him that he would give no oath to swear that there had been no division of spheres of interest between Germany and the Soviet Union. I. Zotov wrote in his journal that after this statement, V. Munters became offended and felt that the statement was a signal of the preparation of a Soviet military action.

No. 30

**A Telegram from the German ambassador
to Latvia, U. von Kotze,
to the German Foreign Ministry**

Telegram

Riga, 18 September 1939, 13:57

Received on 18 September, 16:15

As soon as news of the Soviet attack¹ became known, Munters turned to me with a request for the views of the

German government. Official circles here, as well as society at large, are quite disturbed. Munters assumed that the earlier Russian agreement with Germany is secure and asked whether I know the extent to which the Russian advance has been coordinated and whether some "inadvertent" border violations with respect to Latvia and Lithuania might not occur. I tried to calm him down, pointing to the bilateral non-aggression agreements, as well as to the Russian statement to the Latvian ambassador², but with respect to the rest of his question, I had to decline to reply due to an absence of official instructions. He asked me to provide supplementary information as soon as possible, should I learn more from my government. If possible, please submit instructions for further statements.

Kotze

Diktierte Option..., p. 21-22

¹ The reference is to the Soviet attack on Poland, which commenced on 17 September 1939.

² See Doc. 30.

No. 31

Excerpt from a Report from the German Ambassador in Riga, U. von Kotze, to the German Foreign Ministry

Riga, 21 September 1939

Supplementary to report A1532¹
and in response to telephone and
telegraph reports concerning the
escape of the Polish submarine
from the Tallinn harbor²

Confidential

Moscow's promise that Russian ships would search for the lost Polish submarine outside Estonia's territorial waters, as well as the fact that over the past 48 hours, despite the ambiguous questions of the Soviet ambassador³ here, there has been no actual violation of Latvian or Estonian neutrality, led to a certain calming of the situation after Foreign Minister Munters' statement. Fears of imminent changes in the status of independent Latvia have receded. This gives us time to gain greater clarity about the consequences might be caused in Latvia by these processes, which could, of course, be repeated at any time.

Observations over the past year concerning tiny Latvia's comparison to its vast neighbor leave one to conclude that nothing else can be expected and that Latvia's nationalists are unlikely to mount any tough or particularly successive resistance. I do not doubt that Latvian young people in particular have an honest devotion to their country's freedom and independence and that, as the military attache has recently noted, a certain level of military strength has been achieved. But these positive factors are definitively lessened by, first of all, the deep-seated antagonism between the president⁴ and the minister of war⁵, an antagonism which began in the freedom battles of 1918 and 1919. Today this antagonism is all the more acute because the president has established his policies by faithfully following England, and in today's world this position has lost its appeal throughout Eastern Europe. The war minister, for his part, is considered to be in favor of an early understanding with Russia. This may well signal a certain political far-sightedness on his part, but his position has created such deep divisions in the army that even the highest officials, in answering to the question of how they might respond to a Russian invasion, will only respond in a somber voice: "I suppose we will have to fight". I need say no more about how such a level of preparedness can be assessed. I have not yet obtained any concrete information about the establishment of fortifications on the Russian border. We must, in other words, take account of the likelihood that if Russia were to launch an attack on Latvian territory and execute it with the energetic use of motorized forces, the country will fall to the Russians quickly and with no particular opposition.

In the last several days, based on the situation which I have reflected here, I have tried to learn more about the options which might be available to defend the national Germans⁶, as well as the approximately 63,000 domestic Germans⁷ here. We must keep in mind that even the first reports of the entry of the Red Army will sow considerable panic among the Baltic Germans living here, because they still vividly remember the events of 1919⁸. Furthermore, we must consider that the current government and its law enforcement agencies will not survive so heavy a burden. From a trustworthy, confidential source I have learned that some ministers already have arranged entry visas to

Sweden for themselves. A side-effect to the Russian invasion and the more-or-less unopposed collapse of the Latvian army will be the fact that in Riga, as well as the larger rural centers, power will be taken by a mob, and one cannot predict how long such a situation might last. There can be no doubt, however, that the mob's urge to murder and plunder will first be turned against the Germans. Given this, I would like recommend in addition to what I suggested in my report of 16 September the idea that we consider the resources which might be brought to bear in order to ensure that the virtually defenseless Germans here do not end up in the hands of a violent mob.

Kotze

Diktierte Option..., p. 21-22.

¹ Unpublished.

² On 18 September 1939, a Polish submarine (The "Orzel") which had been interred by the Estonian authorities escaped from the Tallinn harbor. Moscow hypocritically accused Estonia of violating the principles of neutrality and of engaging in actions hostile to the Soviet Union.

³ I. Zotov.

⁴ K. Ulmanis.

⁵ J. Balodis.

⁶ The reference is to Germans living in Latvia but possessing German citizenship.

⁷ Germans living in Latvia and possessing Latvian citizenship.

⁸ In 1919, the Soviet government carried out considerable repressions against the Baltic Germans.

No. 32

A Telegram from the German Ambassador to Moscow, F. von der Schulenburg, to the German Foreign Ministry¹

25 September 1939

Telegram

Extremely urgent

Strictly confidential

Moscow, 25 September 1939, 22:58

Received 26 September, 00:30

Stalin and Molotov ordered me to come to the Kremlin at 20:00 this evening. Stalin recommended that in our final disposition of the Polish matter, we should avoid any issue which in the future might lead to discord between

Germany and the Soviet Union. From this perspective, Stalin believes that the maintenance of an independent Polish state would be a mistake. He is now proposing that to the East from the demarcation line, our territory would be supplemented by the entire Lublina vojevodiste, as well as the part of the Warsaw vojedoviste up to the Buga. In return, we would renounce our right to Lithuania².

Stalin termed his offer a source for discussions during the anticipated meeting with the Reich's foreign minister and added that should we agree, the Soviet Union will immediately turn to a resolution of the Baltic problem in keeping with the 23 August protocol and will expect unquestioned support from the German government. Stalin emphasized the matter of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania but did not mention Finland.

I told Stalin that I would inform my government.

Schulenburg

Diktierte Option..., pp. 27-28.

¹ The telegram led to an active campaign to organize the "rescue" of Germans in Latvia and Estonia.

² Berlin accepted Stalin's recommendation, and the agreement was written into one of the secret protocols which the German and Soviet governments signed on 28 September 1939.

No. 33

Excerpt from Notes taken by the Counselor to the German Embassy in the USSR, G. Hilger, Concerning Talks Between Stalin and Ribbentrop in Moscow

27-29 September 1939

[...] With respect to the third point ("the Baltic") the minister¹ announced the following.

According to the report from Ambassador Graf von der Schulenburg, the Soviet government has begun to deal with this matter, and this unquestionably is in some way connected to the negotiations which are being carried out with the Estonian government. The German ambassador in Estonia has reported that the Soviet Union has offered Estonia a five-year military convention (Stalin interjected that the proposal is for a ten-year convention) and has demanded in return that Soviet naval and

air bases be established on Estonian territory and that close cooperation be undertaken . This must be seen as the first step in resolving the Baltic matter. Germany is currently at war and would welcome the gradual resolution of the Baltic matter. It is clear that we are not interested in the Estonian and Latvian matters. We would, however, be thankful if the Soviet government would inform us about when and how it is preparing to resolve the entire complex of matters so that in concert with the adopted agreement, the German government could formulate its position. According to reports from Graf von der Schulenburg, the Soviet government is expecting clear agreement from us (Stalin added - we are expecting a favorable attitude). [..]

[..] On the matter of the Baltic, Stalin announced that the Soviet Union has demanded of the Estonian government that it provide bases for Russian warships at Estonian harbors, as well as on the Dago and Ezel islands, and also that it provide bases for the Russian air force. For the defense of these bases, the Soviet Union will place one infantry division in Estonia, as well as one cavalry brigade, one tank brigade and one air force brigade. These undertakings will be executed under the aegis of the Soviet-Estonian mutual aid agreement. Estonia has already agreed.

To the minister's question of whether the Soviet government is intending to use this as a gradual way of entering Estonia and, possibly, also Latvia, Stalin responded affirmatively, adding that irrespective of this, the current government, ministries, etc., will for the time being be left in place in Estonia.

With respect to Latvia, Stalin announced that the Soviet government is planning to offer analog recommendations to it. If Latvia will oppose the offer of a mutual aid pact based on the same terms as the one with Estonia, the Red Army will "deal with" Latvia in the nearest term.

With respect to Lithuania, Stalin announced that the Soviet Union will incorporate Lithuania if agreement is reached with Germany about an "exchange" of territories. During the first part of the discussion² Stalin did not state his intention to grab Lithuania quite so clearly. [..]

When this portion of the discussion³ had ended, the minister asked Stalin to state the way in which the Soviet

Union intends to execute its intentions with respect to the Baltic, and when.

Stalin responded that the Estonian government has acceded to the Soviet Union's offer and that the proper agreement with Estonia should be signed this evening, or tonight at the latest. Then Stalin told us the content of the agreement with Estonia (it has already been published). In addition, he announced that the agreement text on the placement of Soviet military ships mentions Baltišporta⁴, but in a separate and confidential discussion the two sides have also agreed that ships will be placed in Tallinn, because Baltišporta is not yet fully ready. As to the highest number of Soviet troops to enter Estonia, Stalin said it might be 25,000 individuals. With respect to the aviation brigades which he had mentioned earlier, Stalin said that they would be made up of three regiments. At the end, Stalin reiterated that there is no immediate intention to change the political and economic systems which exist in Estonia at this time and to replace them with a Soviet system. For the time being, the Estonian Constitution will remain in effect, and the government ministries will continue their work. For a certain period of time, Estonia will continue to resolve its own foreign policy issues.

The intentions of the Soviet government with respect to Lithuania and Latvia were not expressed in this discussion, as Stalin had spoken to these issues on the previous day. [..]

Документы внешней политики, 1939 год, т.22, кв.2, с. 608, 610-611, 613.

¹ *J. von Ribbentrop.*

² *The reference is to the discussion which began at 22:00 on 27 September 1939.*

³ *The reference is to the discussion of 28 September 1939.*

⁴ *The present-day name is Paldiski.*

No. 34

A Confidential Protocol Between Germany and the USSR¹

28 September 1939

The government of the USSR shall place no obstacles in the way of German citizens and other persons of German extraction who are resident in territories which are

included in the Soviet sphere of interest, should such persons seek to depart for Germany or for territories in the German sphere of interest. The Soviet government agrees that the movement of individuals will be carried out by authorized representatives of the German government in concert with the appropriate local officials². The property rights of those who depart will not be violated.

The German government undertakes analogous obligations with respect to persons of Ukrainian and Byelorussian origin who are resident in territories which are in the German sphere of interest.

Moscow, 28 September 1939

For the German
government
J. von Ribbentrop

Authorized by
the Soviet government
V. Molotov

Akten zur detuschen auswaertigen Politik: 1918-1945. Serie D., Bd. 8, Baden-Baden, 1961, p. 128.

¹ *This is one of three agreements of various levels of secrecy which the Soviet Union and German signed in connection with their agreement on friendship and border issues. It seems that this protocol has no precedent in the history of international justice. It apparently is the only agreement of its type: two dictators choosing citizens of a third, sovereign country to be the object of an agreement.*

² *The agreement also refers to Germans in Latvia and Estonia, but the two countries are not mentioned by name. Apparently the agreement was intended to remain in force should the Baltic countries be occupied by the USSR while Germans were still resident there.*

No. 35

Excerpt from a Report from the Latvian Ambassador to France, O. Grosvalds, to Foreign Minister V. Munters

Confidential
30 September 1939

Honored Minister:

The Russian-Estonian agreement of 28 September¹, which might be of such dire consequence in the history of the Baltic countries, has not been given as much attention here as would be granted if it were not the case that there are also a number of events in Europe today which are of

pan-European significance. France is mostly interested in the discussions and agreements² between Ribbentrop and Molotov (i.e., Stalin) and the so-called "peace offensive" which might occur as a result³. As I reported earlier, there is a group of "peace seekers" here, and no doubt the idea has its appeal to segments of the broader population, as well. Having given the matter due consideration, however, and having acquainted myself with the views of the military establishment here, I can say that Hitler's peace offer will not be accepted. England, upon which French foreign policy is now fully dependent, will under no circumstances permit this.

The Russian-Estonian agreement was fully unexpected to all of us. No one, including the Estonian ambassador here⁴, could have foreseen such a capitulation - the admission of the Russian military into Estonian territory. We are so cut off from the Baltic (newspapers and letters arrive in two weeks at the earliest) that we know absolutely nothing about the history and details of this agreement. Neither do we have any indication of the Latvian government's views on this matter, nor on the impact which this fact might have on the Latvian-Estonian alliance⁵ and on the Estonian-Latvian-Lithuanian agreement of political cooperation⁶...

O. Grosvalds

Ambassador to France

LVVA, 2574.f., 4. apr., 8444.l., pp. 175-176. Original

¹ The reference is to the mutual aid agreement which the Soviet Union forced upon Estonia. The agreement was the first step in destroying the Estonian state, because it provided for the entry of the Soviet armed forces into Estonian territory.

² On 27 September 1939, German Foreign Minister J. von Ribbentrop went to Moscow for a second time, to give final resolution to the "Polish question" and to reach agreement on future cooperation with the USSR. On 28 September, the two countries sign an agreement on friendship and border matters, which officially sanctioned the destruction of Polish independence at the hands of Soviet and German aggression. The agreement was supplemented by several protocols of varying degrees of secrecy. One of them provided that the boundaries of the German and Soviet spheres of interest which had been delineated in the German-Soviet non-aggression pact would be amended. Lithuania was included into the Soviet sphere of interest, while the Lublina vojevodist and part of

the Warsaw vojevodist were included in the German sphere of interest. The protocol also stated that as soon as the Soviet Union would "take special steps" for the purpose of "defending its interests" in Lithuania, the border between Germany and the USSR would be changed. The Germans hoped to get Lithuanian territory around Mariampol. In the summer of 1940, when it occupied the Baltic states, the Soviet Union grabbed all of Lithuania, including the Mariampol region.

³ The German-Soviet agreements of 28 September 1939 represented a new level in the relations between the two countries. These relations might be described as a fragile union. The joint communique between the Soviet Union and Germany, for example, noted that the two governments would consult each other on "necessary steps" to be taken if the war between Germany and England and France were not brought to an end. The "peace offensive" mentioned by O. Grosvalds was manifested in Hitler's speech to the Reichstag on 6 October, in which he presented the German "peace proposal". It was not acceptable to England and France, because it would have legitimized Germany's territorial conquests.

⁴ O. Strandmans.

⁵ Latvia and Estonia signed a mutual defense pact on 1 November 1923. On 17 February 1934 it was reconfirmed and expanded.

⁶ The Baltic agreement on understanding and cooperation was signed on 12 September 1934.

No. 36

Protocol (No. 54) of a Meeting of the Latvian Cabinet of Ministers

1 October 1939

Present:

Prime Minister

Dr. K. Ulmanis

Deputy Prime Minister

and War Minister

Gen. J. Balodis

Foreign Minister

V. Munters

Interior Minister

K. Veitmanis

Education Minister

Prof. J. Auškāps

Social Affairs Minister

A. Bērziņš

Transportation Minister

B. Einbergs

Welfare Minister

J. Volonts

Agriculture Minister

J. Birznieks

Minister

J. Čamanis

Comptroller

J. Kaminskis

Minutes taken by:

Justice Minister

H. Apsīts

The meeting began at 18:10.

The president reported on the reason for the summoning of this emergency session of the Cabinet of Ministers. The matter of sending a delegate to Moscow is of considerable urgency.

Foreign Minister Munters has talked with our ambassador in Moscow about sending a Latvian government representative to Moscow to negotiate with the Soviet government. The need for such a journey is indicated by the agreements which the USSR signed with Germany and with Estonia on 28 September.

The Cabinet decided to send Foreign Minister V. Munters to Moscow on 2 October.

The president presented a draft statement on the upcoming negotiations with the Soviet government and on the dispatching of the foreign minister to Moscow.

The Cabinet approved the statement in its presented form.

In discussing the duties of the delegate, the ministers unanimously agreed that the desire is to maintain peace in the country and to use all possible resources to defend the interests of the Latvian people and state.

The meeting ended at 20:10.

Prime Minister *K. Ulmanis* (signed)

Justice Minister *H. Apsīts* (signed)

LVVA, 1307.f., 1. apr., 315.l., p. 213. Copy.

No. 37

Protocol of an Emergency Meeting of the Latvian Cabinet of Ministers

3 October 1939

Present:

Prime Minister

Dr. K. Ulmanis

Deputy Prime Minister

and War Minister

Gen. J. Balodis

Finance Minister

A. Valdmanis

Interior Minister

K. Veitmanis

Education Minister

Prof. J. Auškāps

Social Affairs Minister

A. Bērziņš

Transportation Minister

B. Einbergs

Welfare Minister

J. Volonts

Agriculture Minister J. Birznieks
Minister J. Čamanis
Comptroller J. Kaminskis
Minutes taken by:
Justice Minister H. Apsīts

The meeting began at 21:33.

President and Prime Minister K. Ulmanis¹ gave a detailed report about negotiations in Moscow between Foreign Minister Munters and the Soviet government. The ministers discussed the contents of the anticipated agreement, and especially the demands made by the Soviet government during the negotiations. The Cabinet of Ministers **decided**:

- 1) To express agreement with the negotiations carried out thus far by Foreign Minister Munters on the basis of the Estonian-Soviet mutual aid agreement;
- 2) To order the foreign minister to make all necessary efforts to improve upon the Estonian-Russian agreement text, attempting to achieve the most favorable terms for the Soviet agreement with Latvia;
- 3) To authorize Foreign Minister V. Munters to sign a mutual aid agreement between Latvia and the USSR;
- 4) To dispatch Senator Osvalds Ozoliņš of the Senate civil department to Moscow for further negotiations with the Soviet government, in which, besides Foreign Minister Munters, participation has also been taken by the ambassador to Moscow, Kociņš, and the director of the agreements department of the Foreign Ministry, Kampe, ordering him to deliver the decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers to Minister Munters.

God, bless Latvia!

The meeting ended at 22:35

President and Prime Minister K. Ulmanis (signed)

Justice Minister H. Apsīts (signed)

LVVA, 1307.f., 2. apr., 1.l., pp. 98-98.a. Original.

¹ On 3 October Ulmanis summoned the German ambassador, U. von Kotze, in an effort to obtain information about Germany's position vis a vis Moscow's demands against Latvia. Kotze, who at that time was not informed of the secret protocol to the 23 August agreement and the inclusion of Latvia in the Soviet sphere of interest, responded that he could, should Ulmanis so desire, "ask Berlin whether Russia has made its demands in concert with Germany and what is the view of the Berlin

government" (LVVA, 5969.f, 1. apr., 291.l., p. 10). After this discussion with Kotze, Ulmanis finally realized that Latvia could expect no support from Germany. The proposal for the Cabinet of Ministers decision was written by Ulmanis himself. In his archive, there is a draft decision with the following text: "The government agrees to M.'s [Munters'] actions and line of thought and orders M. to achieve an agreement on the basic principles of the Estonian agreement, trying to achieve as positive an agreement as possible..." (Ibid., p. 12).

Chapter II

The Latvian and Soviet Mutual Assistance Pact of 5 October 1939

No. 38

The Mutual Assistance Pact between Latvia and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

5 October 1939

The President of the Republic of Latvia on the one side, and

The Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR on the other side,

With the purpose of developing further the friendly relations which were established through the peace treaty of 11 August 1920, said treaty being based on the mutual recognition of the other party's independent statehood and on the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of the other party;

Recognizing that the peace treaty of 11 August 1920 and the agreement of 5 February 1932 on non-aggression and on the peaceful settlement of conflicts remain the strong basis of their mutual relations;

Convinced that the interests of both Equal Parties shall be served by a precise definition of terms with respect to the assurance of mutual security,

Deemed it necessary to conclude the following mutual aid agreement and for this purpose appointed as their authorized representatives:

The President of the Republic of Latvia:

Vilhelms Munters, Foreign Minister

The Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR:

V.M. Molotov, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and Foreign Affairs Commissar,

who, having mutually presented their documents of authority, and same having been recognized to be proper and appropriate, agreed to the following:

Paragraph I

Both Signatory Parties undertake to provide one another with all manner of assistance, including military assistance, in the event that there should be a direct attack or the threat of attack from any European power against their sea boundaries in the Baltic Sea or their land boundaries through the territory of the Republic of Estonia or the Republic of Lithuania, or against the bases which are provided by Paragraph III of this agreement.

Paragraph II

The Soviet Union undertakes to extend assistance to the Latvian army in terms of armament and other war materiel.

Paragraph III

The Republic of Latvia, for the purpose of ensuring the security of the Soviet Union and the independence of the Republic of Latvia, hereby extends to the Soviet Union the right to take control of naval bases at the cities of Liepāja and Ventspils, as well as several aviation aerodromes, on the basis of a lease agreement, for an agreed lease price. The specific locations of the bases and aerodromes and their boundaries shall be determined on the basis of mutual agreement.

For the purpose of defending the Straits of Irbe, the Soviet Union hereby is granted the right to place a coastal artillery base on the shore between Ventspils and Pitragi, applying thereto the same terms and conditions.

For the purpose of defending the naval bases, aerodromes and coastal artillery base, the Soviet Union shall have the right to station at these bases and aerodromes, in specific locations and at its own cost, a strictly limited number of Soviet land and aviation troops. The maximum number of such troops shall be set by separate agreement.

Paragraph IV

Both Signatory Parties undertake not to conclude any agreement or participate in any coalition which is aimed against one of the Signatory Parties.

Paragraph V

The implementation of this pact shall have no impact upon the sovereign rights of the Signatory Parties, including therein their governing order, their economic and social system, and their military activities.

The bases and aerodromes (Paragraph III) shall remain the territory of the Republic of Latvia.

Paragraph VI

This pact shall take effect upon the exchange of documents of ratification. The exchange of documents shall take place in Riga within six days, counting from the day of signing¹.

This pact shall remain in effect for ten years. In the event that neither Signatory Party determines one year prior to the expiration of the agreement that the agreement

should be abrogated, the agreement shall automatically remain in effect for another ten years.

In confirmation of this, the authorized representatives have signed and sealed this agreement.

Concluded in Moscow in two originals, in the Latvian and Russian languages, on 5 October 1939.

V. Munter

V. Molotov

Valdības Vēstnesis, 10 October 1939.

¹The Latvian Cabinet of Ministers ratified the pact on 10 October 1939. The documents of ratification were exchanged in Riga on 11 October.

No. 39

A Confidential Protocol Attached to the 5 October 1939 Agreement of Mutual Assistance between the USSR and Latvia

I

It is determined that in order to avert and bring an end to efforts to draw the Signatory Parties into the war which is currently underway in Europe, the USSR shall have the right during such time as the war shall continue to maintain individual garrisons of land and aviation armed forces at the locations which are provided for aerodromes and bases (Paragraph III of the pact), the number of such troops not to exceed twenty-five thousand individuals.

II

The assistance specified in Paragraph I of the pact shall be extended at the express request of the other party. Moreover, upon agreement by both parties, the party whose obligation it is to extend assistance in the event of war between the other party and a third country may remain neutral.

III

In order to observe the implementation of this pact and to resolve any questions which may arise in this context, a parity-based Joint commission shall be established and shall develop its internal rules of procedure.

In the event of disagreement on the sites and boundaries of the bases and aerodromes, or in any other matter before the Joint commission, the respective dispute shall be resolved diplomatically or through direct negotiations between the two governments.

IV

This confidential protocol is an addendum to the agreement on mutual assistance between the USSR and Latvia which was signed on 5 October 1939.

Moscow, 5 October 1939.

V. Molotov

V. Munters

Полпреды сообщают..., с. 86 -87.

No. 40

Ribbentrop's Strictly Confidential Report on 6 October 1939 for Ambassadors Only

Berlin, 6 October 1939

pol. VI.....

1) Diplogram Tallinn No

" Riga No

" Helsinki No

Ambassadors only¹

In supplement to the telegram of this page

For 1.): No. 241,

For 2.): No. 302,

For 3.): No. 305

I report the following to you, strictly and confidentially and only for your personal information:

During the negotiations in Moscow with the Soviet government, there was a strictly confidential discussion of the delineation of the spheres of interest of both sides in Eastern Europe, namely, about the territory of the previous Polish state, as well as about the states of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland. The spheres of interest have been coordinated with the possible reform of the territorial and political nature of these regions. The determined border is the same as the border in the previously independent Polish state which was set out in the German-Soviet agreement on friendship and border of 28 September and which was publicly

announced. Incidentally, this line corresponds to the German-Lithuanian border. This means that Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland do not in this context belong to the German sphere of interest. I would ask you to refrain from any type of statement with respect to this matter.

Ribbentrop

¹ Referenced from the political archive of the German Foreign Ministry in Bonn, translated from the German. First published by Heinrihs Strods in the magazine *Latvijas Vēsture*, 1991, No. 1, p. 44.

No. 41

Excerpt from a Telegram from the Soviet Representative to Great Britain, I. Maiski, to the Soviet Foreign Affairs Commissariat

7 October 1939

[..] Churchill is working on an assumption which he has defended at other times as well -- that the fundamental interests of England and the USSR do not in any way coincide. The initial shock which was engendered by the Soviet and German non-aggression pact and the events which followed caused many people in England to lose their balance and their ability to see matters in their true perspective. Much has changed at this time, however. From a correctly interpreted British perspective, the fact that all of Eastern and Southeastern Europe lies outside the war zone is a positive, not a negative thing. England also has no basis to object to the activities of the USSR in the Baltic. Of course, one or two sentimental liberals or laborites may shed a tear about the "Russian protectorates" in Estonia and Latvia, but this cannot be taken seriously. Churchill fully understands that the USSR must have control over the Eastern shore of the Baltic Sea, and he is most delighted that the Baltic states have been included in our system, not Germany's. This is historically logical, and moreover, it narrows Hitler's possible *Lebensraum*. In this respect, the interests of England and the USSR do not conflict; rather, they coincide. [..]

Representative

Документы внешней политики: 1939 год, кн. 2, с. 168.

No. 42

**Excerpt from Notes Concerning a Meeting
between the Deputy Foreign Affairs Commissar
of the USSR, V. Potjomkin,
and the German Ambassador to the USSR,
F. von Schulenburg**

11 October 1939

Confidential

I began my discussion with Schulenburg by announcing that the Government has asked me to express our surprise at the activities of Germans who are living in Estonia and Latvia. After the conclusion of our mutual assistance agreements with these countries, these Germans have demonstrated inexplicable panic, have begun to liquidate their property, and are preparing to depart to other countries *en masse*.

One gets the impression that the Germans believe our agreements with Estonia and Latvia to be a catastrophe which threatens their security. I need not prove to the ambassador that the panic of his fellow citizens is baseless. I must note, however, that the German government is doing nothing to bring those Germans who are fleeing from Estonia and Latvia to their senses; on the contrary, the government is facilitating the panic by sending a whole armada of ships to the two countries in order to evacuate the refugees more quickly, by permitting the rapid closure of schools, hospitals and social institutions, and by in no way blocking the mass distribution of visas to Germans who are leaving Estonia and Latvia. We feel that these activities on the part of the German government are not correct. They certainly provide ammunition for those segments of the foreign media which are hostile to the Soviet Union and which already have begun to babble that instead of peace and order, the Soviet Union is sowing discord and confusion in Central Europe and the Baltic States. These provocations serve to frighten our neighbors and may well have a negative effect on the political negotiations which the Soviet government is conducting with them. I brought this to the ambassador's attention, and I hope that he will immediately ask his government to explain why it is doing nothing to bring an end to this

panic among the Germans who are resident in our neighboring states.

V. Potjomkin

Документы внешней политики: 1939 год, кн. 2, с. 176-177.

No. 43

**Excerpt from a Telegram from the Soviet
Representative to Great Britain,
I. Maiski, to the Soviet Foreign Affairs
Commissariat**

16 October 1939

[..] 3. Halifax expressed great interest in events in the Baltic and asked me about these matters in much detail. In the end he admitted that our pacts with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have stabilized relations and made an investment in the strengthening of peace in Eastern Europe. During the discussion it was evident that Halifax is considerably worried about the Soviet-Finnish negotiations, but he did not dare to make any open statement about this.

Representative

Документы внешней политики: 1939 год., кн. 2, с. 191.

No. 44

**Excerpt from a Report from the Latvian
Ambassador to Great Britain,
K. Zariņš, to Foreign Minister V. Munters**

Confidential

20 October 1939

Honored Minister:

As I have been reporting, England has recently evidenced a lively amount of interest in the Baltic states. Since 5 October, when the Latvian and Soviet agreement of union was signed, there have been a variety of articles about Latvia in the British press. The tone of these articles has been mostly favorable to us. On occasion, in the interest of sensationalism or because of a lack of understanding, there is something added, something exagger-

ated, but that is, after all, the way of the free press. I try to maintain contacts with the press as much as I can, trying to place the assessment of events in a proper context.

The gentlemen of the press have taken it into their heads that our foreign policy has lost its independence and will have to yield to our powerful neighbor. Whenever I have had the opportunity to be with newspeople, at social gatherings, in clubs, or elsewhere, I have tried to oppose this viewpoint, saying that our foreign policy will remain unchanged, placing Latvia's interests above all other considerations and maintaining a strongly neutral position vis a vis all conflicts or ideological battles involving other countries. I also add that the main goal of our foreign policy is and always will be the export of our country's goods. [...]

Respectfully yours,

K. Zariņš

Ambassador to London

LVVA, 2574.f, 4. apr., 7453.l., pp. 95-97. Original.

No. 45

Excerpt from an Article in the Newspaper

"Brīvā Zeme" Concerning a Meeting of Various Economic Organizations

23 October 1939

[...] Foreign Minister **V. Munters** provided an extensive report on foreign policy matters. The minister pointed out that along with changes in the balance of powers in Eastern Europe, there have also been changes in our position. During this time of great change, our Eastern neighbor, the Soviet Union, has achieved a new range of influence and has been strengthening its positions, resolving matters on the basis of mutuality and securing its interests through agreement, not through unilateral action.

Speaking about the mutual aid agreement between Latvia and the Soviet Union, the minister emphasized that the pact includes the political principle that the Soviet Union will not violate its Baltic neighbors. What is important to the Soviet Union is that it feel secure.

There has been talk in society that the agreement may avert direct occupation but that "sovietization" may

nevertheless occur in our country with the assistance of the Soviet armed forces which are here. The minister pointed out that agreement provides that the Soviet military bases in our country are being established not only to strengthen Soviet security, but also to strengthen Latvian independence. The Soviet Union cannot possibly wish to create complications with a country on whose territory its armed forces are stationed. Similarly, the Soviet Union can have no interest in "sovietizing" Latvia, because then there would be a loss of trust between the two governments, a complication which certainly would not strengthen the security of the Soviet Union

**We have the right to be masters of our own land,
to provide our own destiny, and we shall do this,
ensuring that we are strong and secure partners,
free of alien influence.**

Further in his speech, the minister spoke of the influence of the war on the economies of neutral countries. He emphasized that among all countries, the most important to our economy are Germany and the Soviet Union. War has never done any good for neutral countries, and we must steel ourselves to survive all difficulties and even to lose a few of the comforts which we have obtained. We can be strengthened only by our internal strength, the building of which is a task for everyone. Only thus shall we overcome the economic difficulties and maintain the freedom and national spirit upon which the future of our state is predicated.

Brīvā Zeme, 23 October 1939.

No. 46

**Excerpt from a Report from the Latvian
Ambassador to Great Britain, K. Zariņš, to
Foreign Minister V. Munters**

*Confidential
26 October 1939*

Honored Minister:

[...] With respect to us¹, Lord Halifax² (whom my partner in conversation³ feels to be fully confidential) said that England would have been able to attract Russia to its side in the June and July negotiations⁴, but that this would

necessarily have had to be done above the heads of the Baltic people, i.e., by agreeing that Russia has a certain right to occupy the Baltic states in the event of indirect aggression. As a democratic and humanitarian country, England did not wish to injure the sovereignty and self-determination rights of the Baltic states. Therefore it was forced to reject Russia's demands, thus sacrificing the Moscow negotiations.

At the end of the discussion, I asked whether the Noble Lord has not condemned for signing a mutual assistance agreement with Russia. I was told - absolutely not. I then informed my opposite of our views concerning the reason for the agreement. I was told that we should not devote much attention to the fact that a few correspondents in the British press (i.e., the one in Helsinki) are condemning us. Leading British society wishes to understand the national efforts of every country, as it has always done, and if in connection with the German-Russian agreement there are a few bitter pills to be swallowed, this does not mean that the Brits have lost hope in reaching democratic and humanitarian goals of understanding with our neighbor to the East.

Respectfully yours,

K. Zariņš
Ambassador

LVVA, 2574.f., 4. apr., 7453.l., pp. 87-89. Original.

¹ Meaning the Baltic countries.

² E. Halifax, the British foreign minister.

³ K. Zariņš does not identify his partner in conversation other than to say that it is an MP from the Conservative Party.

⁴ The reference is to the British-French and Soviet political negotiations in Moscow.

No. 47

A Secret Communique from the Commander of the Latvian Army, Gen. K. Berķis, on 7 November 1939

To All Division Unit Commanders and Institution
Directors in the Armed Forces:

In connection with the mutual aid pact which has been signed with the Soviet Union and with the arrival of its armed forces at bases in Latvia, contact with Soviet troops will be governed by the following rules:

The attitude toward Soviet soldiers must not be hostile, because we must assume that the Soviet Union will loyally execute its obligations under the agreement.

There can only be official relations between our troops and those of the Soviet Union, and only by officials who are specifically appointed to execute such relations.

During official contacts, our men must behave in an official, correct, tactful and self-confident manner, as befits our culture; this must be expressed in our overall attitude.

More detailed instructions concerning relations between the soldiers of the two armies in public places will be issued separately, after agreement is reached between the leadership of both armies and navies, but for the time being, our soldiers are not bound by the rules of salute with respect to the Soviet soldiers.

In talking about the Soviet armed forces, our soldiers must refrain from any offensive remarks. Particular care must be taken in the presence of the Soviet soldiers, because we have already learned that there are some in their midst who speak Latvian.

Under a separate protocol of agreement between the leadership of the two armies and navies, both sides are obliged to strictly follow the principles of military confidentiality with respect to the armed forces of both parties.

In connection with this, our soldiers must take care in all conversations not to disclose any information about the Soviet armed forces in Latvia to individuals who have no need to know such information.

Please inform all soldiers about these instructions.

General /Berķis/

Headquarters commander,

General /Rozenšteins/

LVVA, 1474.f., 1.apr., 1272.l., p. 128. Copy.

No. 48

Excerpt from a Conversation between the Deputy Foreign Affairs Commissar of the USSR, V. Potjomkin, and the French Ambassador to the USSR, P. Nadziar

3 December 1939

Nadziar complimented us on our agreements with the Balts. The ambassador emphasized that France has no

interests in the Baltic Sea. The ambassador expressed regret at the turn of events in our relations with the Finns. I remarked that the French press has opened a vicious campaign against the USSR in this respect. Nadziar responded that the French are an emotional people and are having trouble adapting to the change which has brought us from negotiations concerning international cooperation, collective security and opposition to aggression to the types of activities which we are currently carrying out against Finland.

V. Potjomkin

Документы внешней политики: 1939 год., кн. 2, с. 360-361.

No. 49

A Telegram from the Soviet Representative to Estonia, K. Nikitin, to the Soviet Foreign Affairs Commissariat

9 December 1939

I visited the Lithuanian ambassador Dailide¹. He stated frankly that the topic of the conference² largely concerned the exchange of goods among the Baltic states and the transit of their export goods through the USSR. Dailide emphasized that all three countries have noted that the Soviet Union fulfills its agreement obligations faithfully, and Lithuania wishes to do the same. Munters is not going to attend the next session of the League of Nations³. The Lithuanians and the others have confirmed their neutrality on matters concerning Finland. They believe that the tone which Finland has adopted vis a vis the USSR is pointless. None of them promised Finland any type of defense.

K. Nikitin

Полпреды сообщают..., с. 200.

¹ Broņus Dailide, the Lithuanian ambassador to Estonia.

² The reference is to the tenth conference of Baltic Entente foreign ministers in Tallinn on 7 and 8 December 1939.

³ The reference is to the session of the League of Nations at which Soviet aggression against Finland was considered (14 December 1939), with the result that the Soviet Union was expelled from the League.

No. 50

**Excerpt from a Report from the Latvian
Ambassador to the USSR, F. Kociņš, to Foreign
Minister V. Munters**

14 December 1939

Honored Minister:

[..] On 6 December at a meeting of Baltic ambassadors, Ambassador Rei¹ told me about General Laidoner's arrival, adding that the general was greeted by the military representative, Col. Sinka. The ambassador did not hide the fact that this was a poor time for the visit, given the conflict between the Soviet Union and Finland, but he explained that the trip was agreed to before the armed conflict began, and for that reason, it was no longer possible to cancel the voyage. The ambassador said that the general's schedule was not yet clear. It was known only that he would remain in Moscow for six days, reportedly visiting factories where military equipment is manufactured and reviewing several Soviet military units. When he last was in Tallinn, Gen. Laidoner said that one goal would be to encourage the building of barracks by the Soviet Union and to discuss other matters which are associated with the Russian army's accommodation.

The Soviet press gave considerable coverage to Gen. Laidoner's arrival, publishing detailed descriptions of the arrival, the way in which the general was greeted, and the visits he paid to Marshall Voroshilov and Molotov.

On the same evening at the Kremlin, Marshall Voroshilov organized a reception in honor of Laidoner. Stalin and Molotov were among the attendees. A detailed description of the eight-hour reception will be given to you by our military representative, Col. Zālītis, who was invited along with the Lithuanian military representative. I will send a copy of his notes with the next courier. Col. Zālītis indicated that the Estonians had done everything possible to curry favor with the Russians.

Before Laidoner's arrival, I had invited the employees of the Estonian and Lithuanian embassies to join me for a mug of beer on 8 December. Because the Estonian military delegation was in Moscow, the ambassador asked whether its members might also come along. I replied that I would be happy to see all of them, including Gen. Laidoner. Alas,

I did not have the opportunity to host the general, because, as Rei explained it, he was tired after the party at the Kremlin. Only Col. Saarsen came to my gathering.

On 10 December, the Estonian ambassador organized a well-attended reception at the embassy. Rei had already mentioned the possibility that I, along with Col. Zālītis and the Lithuanian ambassador and military representative, might participate. In inviting our military representative, Rei said: "Since the Russians have invited the Latvian and Lithuanian military representatives to the Kremlin, I can also invite them to my event without fear of being accused of organizing some conspiracy".

There were 24 persons at the Estonian reception: employees of the Estonian embassy, the military delegation with Gen. Laidoner, Molotov, Mikojan, Marshall Voroshilov, Naval Commissar Kuznecov, Marshall Budjonij, Potjomkin, headquarters commander Shaposnikov, Voroshilov's deputy Loktionov and others.

I tip my hat to the hosts of the event, who had devoted great effort to making sure that the reception was successful. This was true both with respect to the food and to the drinks.

This was my first opportunity to become acquainted with Gen. Laidoner. He shook my hand and then returned to his conversation with the embassy workers. The Lithuanian ambassador was accorded equal "attention".

When I greeted Potjomkin², he looked displeased. In the presence of several Estonians, Potjomkin said that he has had great problems with me. He said that the Latvians have been causing the Russians difficulties by raising the transit tariff, blocking postal rail shipments, demanding a high tariff for the transport of the armed forces, etc.

I had the chance to speak with Mikojan³ and thank him for his favorable attitude toward our importers and exporters. Mikojan said: "My employees speak well of your representatives. They were careful in their negotiations, which I cannot say about the representatives of other countries.

I also took the opportunity to talk with Voroshilov's deputy, Loktionov, who has been assigned the task of negotiating with Col. Dālbergs⁴. He said that there would be no difficulties with respect to weapons, but the matters of price and gasoline are not in his brief. Those topics will

have to be discussed with the foreign trade commissariat. He said that the placement of Russian troops in Liepāja and Ventspils is proceeding in a satisfactory manner, but in other locations the Soviets will rapidly have to start building barracks and other necessary structures.

The reception was timed to correspond to the Kremlin's reception for the Estonians and thus lasted four hours. The endless series of speeches was begun by Ambassador Rei, who remarked that the reception had attracted unusual attention to his embassy and that he was honored by the presence of high-ranking Soviet guests, including Molotov. The ambassador's speech was cautious and appropriate for the new relations between Estonia and the Soviet Union. We were surprised by the behavior of Gen. Laidoner, who interrupted the ambassador's official speech to state that the Estonian army will oppose anyone who threatens peace, which is in the interests of Estonia and the Soviet Union.

The response to Rei's speech was given by Molotov, who spoke for a long time about relations between Finland and the Soviet Union. He emphasized that the Soviet Union had not wanted war. If there is war now, he said, then the Finns are entirely to blame for it. He said the Finns have been intolerant and spiteful. The Brits and Americans have urged them to be stubborn. Molotov said that the war in Europe will continue for a long time and that no one can predict how events will develop. He said the Soviet Union wants to defend peace at all costs so that the aggressors might not draw other countries into the conflict.

After Molotov finished, Gen. Laidoner spoke several times. He had clearly not prepared any formal speech. Some of his discourses were unusually long, while others were made up of only a few sentences. He frequently interrupted other speakers, including Molotov and Marshall Voroshilov, but all of his remarks were flattering to the Soviet Union and tended to downplay Estonian strength. There was even the sentence, "How can you compare small Estonia with its million inhabitants with the great and strong Soviet Union?" Marshall Voroshilov underscored this thought, saying that "it is not good if one undervalues one's own strengths. If Estonia truly were so unimportant, then the Soviet Union would have no reason to conclude any agreement with it".

Gen. Laidoner devoted some sincere and true words to Stalin, whose personal involvement in negotiations led to the Estonian-Soviet agreement. But another comment by Laidoner sounded more peculiar: "As I think," he said, "so think the Estonian government, army and society..." Ambassador Rei supplemented this assertion with the phrase, "...and all the Estonian people".

The Lithuanian ambassador and I found ourselves in an unenviable position. There was much talk, but not a word was said about the Baltic states, about the representatives of Latvia and Lithuania. There were many toasts to individuals large and small, including one toast to the serving staff at the embassy. I must commend Molotov, who did raise a glass to the health of the Latvian and Lithuanian ambassadors. Seeing the Estonian behavior, I limited myself to a toast to the flowering of the Soviet Union and to strong and true comity between the Soviet Union and the Baltic states.

The Lithuanian ambassador had a deeper sense of the situation. He could not refrain from saying before his toast to Baltic-Soviet friendship that Lithuania has had the longest friendship with the Soviet Union, dating back even to the days when Vilnius was still occupied by Poland.

The well-known Col. Saarsen⁵ modestly apologized in his speech for even daring to talk in so august a gathering, but he did wish to note the great honor which was given him at the Kremlin, where he was seated between two marshals...

After four hours at table, Molotov and the other members of the government departed. Loktionov, Marshall Budjonij and others remained. The conversation continued in the ambassador's office over a glass of whisky.

While I was speaking with Ambassador Rei's wife, I was surprised by the following remark, which Gen. Laidoner said to Loktionov: "We beat the Germans, but they think of that day as a day of victory...". I do not know in what context the remark was made, or to what the general was referring, but I nevertheless believe the remark to be somewhat suspicious.

The Lithuanian ambassador and I lingered in order to have an opportunity to speak with Gen. Laidoner. When I asked him how his visit had gone, the general said that he was most satisfied, adding that he would meet "the father of the land"⁶ tomorrow. I asked whether the Esto-

nians were planning to address the issue of weapons purchases. Laidoner confirmed this, saying that the Estonians were mostly interested in airplanes, less so in artillery.

With that, our conversation ended, because Laidoner gave no indication of wishing to continue the discussion.

The next day the Lithuanian ambassador and I were invited to the opera. The government's box was occupied by members of the Estonian delegation. Laidoner came in his military uniform, which caused considerable comment in the audience. This time he at least appeared to be more friendly. Rei told me that Stalin would see Gen. Laidoner at 1:00 AM.

This was the last time that I saw Gen. Laidoner, as he departed the next day. Our military representative, Col. Zālītis, accompanied him to the station.

I will report further on Gen. Laidoner's visit in another dispatch. I have been invited to see Ambassador Rei tonight, and he will no doubt share his impressions with me.

I will send the report in the next several days, with the next courier.

Please accept my deepest confirmation of high respect, honored minister.

F. Kociņš

Ambassador to the USSR

LVVA, 2574.f., 3. apr., 3278.l., pp. 5-9. Original.

¹ *August Rei, the Estonian ambassador to the USSR.*

² *V. Potjomkin, the deputy foreign affairs commissar of the USSR.*

³ *A. Mikojan, the foreign trade commissar of the USSR.*

⁴ *A. Dālbergs, the head of the Latvian Army's supply division.*

⁵ *A former Estonian military attache in Latvia.*

⁶ *Meaning Stalin.*

No. 51

An Informational Letter from the Director of the Baltic States Department of the Latvian Foreign Ministry, V. Māsens, to Latvia's Ambassadors Abroad

Confidential

Riga, 19 December 1939

Honored Ambassador:

At the request of the Foreign Minister¹ I am honored to submit for your personal information a copy of the pro-

ocols of the 10th conference of Baltic foreign ministers, which took place on 7 and 8 December in Tallinn, as well as the appendixes which are mentioned in the protocols: the agenda of the conference, the report of the Lithuanian foreign minister about the extent to which decisions taken by the previous conference have been carried out, and the statement to the press which was published at the conclusion of the conference².

As you already know, the 10th conference was, according to a decision taken at the 9th conference, to have been convened in September in Geneva, but this proved impossible because of the war. In early September, the Lithuanian foreign minister³ proposed a conference in Kaunas on 14 September, but the Estonian foreign minister⁴ did not agree to this. After the restructuring of the Estonian government and the appointment of Prof. Piip to the job of foreign minister, Piip began discussions with his Latvian and Lithuanian colleagues about the convening of a conference in Tallinn. The Latvian and Lithuanian foreign ministers agreed with the Estonian foreign minister's suggestion, and the conference was convened in Tallinn on 7 and 8 December.

The conference was held in a friendly atmosphere. All participants endeavored to speak as openly and forthrightly as possible. The conference discussed, to the extent that it was possible in only two days, all of the major economic and political questions which are common to the three states. The conference entrusted the discussion of economic matters to an economic commission, which included experts from the three countries. **Political matters were largely discussed by the foreign ministers themselves.**

The economic commission worked out a special document which addresses cooperation among the three countries in economic matters. The conference approbated this document. As you will see from the statement to the press, the document provides that 1) the three countries will coordinate their response to the economic war, and 2) they will seek appropriate institutions to extend mutual support to the provision of the three countries with raw materials and consumer goods. The document also recommends greater efforts to strengthen the exchange of information and views among the appropriate institutions

in the three countries, including their central organizations for the export of agricultural produce, as well as their representative offices abroad, especially as concerns agreements and deals with other countries. The document also speaks to mutual exchange of goods and facilitation of common purchases of necessary goods abroad.

In the political discussion, certain characteristics were in evidence at this conference, as they had been in previous conferences. For example, the Lithuanian foreign minister, in his report on the execution of the previous conference's decisions, [...] which he presented for the conference's approval, had included a lengthy section on Vilnius⁵. The Latvian and Estonian foreign ministers refused to approve the text with that inclusion, so the report had to be reworked.

The Estonian foreign minister faced a particularly difficult situation. His Latvian and Lithuanian colleagues did not force him to own up to Estonian mistakes, but he himself admitted that the Estonians had sinned grievously in trying at all costs to carry out policies which simply cannot be justified, given the current situation. It might be added here that the former Estonian foreign minister, Selter, has completely lost favor with his policies⁶ and that it is no longer clear that he will be posted to Geneva.

One of the accomplishments of the conference was that Lithuania has decided to propose that the third paragraph of the Understanding and cooperation agreement⁷, which speaks to specific problems⁸, be stricken. At first Urbšys had intended to resolve this issue with a special declaration attached to the secret declaration of 20 August 1934, in which Lithuania had asked that the provisions of Paragraph 3 not be applied to the Vilnius matter. Our foreign minister objected to this, pointing out that an open declaration cannot be used to amend a secret declaration, which is what the previously cited declaration of 29 August 1934 is. Urbšys agreed with this and promised to propose that Paragraph 3 be stricken.

The three ministers devoted a great deal of attention to the new relations with the Soviet Union, especially with respect to practical matters which have arisen as a consequence of the presence of the Soviet military in the Baltic states. These matters have generally been resolved in a satisfactory manner, but given the experience which we

have had so far, we must not forget that this is a case of an alien force being present in our land - people who have a different approach to things and who are accustomed to a different order. This hampers the quick resolution of many matters, but we must get used to this. In this respect, all three countries have similar experiences.

The ministers especially discussed the theoretical basis of relations with the Soviet Union, which has been of most specific consequence in Estonia, because of the Finnish-Soviet conflict⁹. The Estonian foreign minister informed his colleagues that there is no proof to claims that Soviet aircraft have used bases in Estonia to launch bombing raids against Helsinki. Such reports, as you know, have appeared in newspapers in Scandinavia and elsewhere. The use of bases in Estonia for bombing raids is theoretically possible, because Soviet aircraft are present there. There are no Soviet aircraft in Latvia at this time, because the Russians say they are waiting for more favorable weather conditions before transferring aircraft to their bases here. The Estonians think that if attacks against Finland were to occur, Estonia could not be faulted for abetting the Soviet effort, because the action would take place entirely without Estonian participation. The question of what would happen if the Finns attacked Soviet bases in Estonia is of a theoretical nature, because it is not likely that the Finns would do so. But if such an attack were to occur, Prof. Piip believes that Estonia would not be forced to defend the bases, and the occurrence would not impinge upon Estonian neutrality. The ministers also discussed what would happen if Germany were to attack the Soviet bases, but it is difficult to provide an answer for this question at this time.

The ministers discussed these matters theoretically and took no decisions.

The Estonian foreign minister has also developed a theory under which the mutual aid agreements which have been signed with the Soviet Union do not hamper the Baltic states in keeping to the rules of their neutrality laws¹⁰. The Tallinn newspaper *The Baltic Times* has published an article on this theme which was inspired by the Estonian Foreign Ministry. Broadly stated, the article says this:

The strictly neutral position taken by Estonia has not changed as a consequence of the Soviet-Finnish conflict.

The 28 September assistance pact with the Soviet Union does not require Estonia to abandon its neutrality, except in the case of an attack against it by a major power.

This has not happened and, despite the fact that the threat of war is now closer to Estonia than ever, its neutrality has been strengthened and become more universal. It is true, however, that while the **position** has remained unchanged, there have been changes in the **application of the rules of neutrality** which have to do with the leasing of military bases to the Soviet Union. The bases remain the territory of Estonia, and they are treated in keeping with the international norms of neutrality at a time of war.

The situation would change if the Soviet Union were to enter the war while Estonia remained neutral. In such an event, the principles of neutrality could no longer be applied vis a vis the Soviet Union, because that would hamper the Soviet Union's rights to utilize its bases.

Juridically, in other words, **the situation with the bases must be seen as an exception** to the general order, one which grants the Soviet Union special rights to use the bases and to access Estonia's territorial waters.

In speaking of the Finnish-Soviet conflict, it is important to note first and foremost that neither of the parties considers itself to be at war with the other¹¹. For this reason, the Estonians feel that their neutrality need not be reviewed in connection with this particular situation. If it becomes necessary to apply the principles of neutrality, the Estonians will do so.

The conference also discussed the situation of the Baltic states vis a vis the League of Nations. Urbšys reported that because of the war, Lithuania has withdrawn its candidacy for a place on the League of Nations council. The three countries have decided to work together and present a reserved attitude at plenary sessions of the League. As a result of this, our permanent representative to the League of Nations¹² recently presented, for the first time in the history of the Baltic states, a declaration on behalf of all three countries that they would abstain in voting on the resolution concerning Finland¹³.

The three ministers also discussed the Polish situation in general terms, noting the status of Polish diplomatic representatives in each country.

Besides the listed matters, our foreign minister also discussed the existence and significance of the Latvian-Estonian defense union agreement with his Estonian colleague. Our foreign minister noted that according to former Estonian Foreign Minister Selter's declaration in Riga in May, the agreement is aimed neither against Germany nor against the Soviet Union and is not, in fact, aimed at anyone. As far as the signing of a similar agreement with Lithuania is concerned, this is out of the question, because there is no reason to justify such a step. Military cooperation with Lithuania will thus have to continue without any agreement.

The foreign minister also talked with Prof. Piip about the old minority question which over time has created no small amount of discord between the two countries. The foreign minister stressed that the artificial promotion of the question of the Estonian minority in Latvia should be stopped¹⁴.

The three foreign ministers agreed that henceforth, each of them will receive the two Baltic ambassadors in his country once a week for a discussion of matters of common interest.

At the close of the conference, the foreign ministers expressed their satisfaction at what had been achieved, saying that the accomplishments were facilitated by the mutual trust and the desire for understanding which were prevalent at the conference.

It was decided that the next conference will take place in Riga in March 1940.

Appendix: Copies of the documents mentioned in the report.

Respectfully yours,

V. Māsens

Director of the Baltic States Department

LVVA, 2574.f., 3. apr., 3217.l., pp. 2-7. Copy.

¹ V. Munters.

² Unpublished.

³ J. Urbšys.

⁴ A. Piip.

⁵ In October 1939, Lithuania was forced to take possession of Vilnius from the USSR, which had grabbed the city during its September invasion of Poland.

⁶ K. Selter, who became Estonia's foreign minister in 1938, was notably pro-German. His policies were based on the assumption that Estonia could protect itself against its chief enemy (the USSR) by leaning on Germany. Selter's policies on Finland proved to be equally unsuccessful.

⁷ Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia signed this agreement on 12 September 1934, thus concluding the establishment of the Baltic Entente.

⁸ The third paragraph of the Agreement of Understanding and Cooperation among the Baltic countries stated that Lithuania's "specific problems" (meaning the Vilnius question) were an exception and that the cooperation and diplomatic assistance to which the pact spoke would not be applicable to these problems.

⁹ The Soviet attack against Finland began on 30 November 1939.

¹⁰ Piip's idea was erroneous. After the signing of the mutual assistance agreement, Estonia's neutrality was nothing more than absolute fiction.

¹¹ This perception of the situation was not really accurate. The USSR and Finland were in a *de facto* state of war. At the given time (3 December 1939), Finland had already asked the League of Nations to take all necessary steps to stop Soviet aggression. The performance which Moscow staged with O. Kuusinen's puppet government convinced no one. In the eyes of the world, the government was simply laughable, as was Molotov's assertion that the Soviet Union was not fighting against Finland and the Finnish people.

¹² J. Feldmanis.

¹³ See Footnote 11; on 14 December 1939, the Soviet Union was expelled from the League of Nations.

¹⁴ In the latter half of the 1930s, Tallinn often accused Riga of failing to observe the interests of the Estonian minority in Latvia.

No. 52

Excerpt from a Report from the Latvian Ambassador to Germany, E. Krieviņš, to V. Munters

2 January 1940

Honored Minister:

Yesterday, on New Year's Day, I was visited by the newly appointed Estonian ambassador, Moellerson¹, who presented his accreditation papers to Hitler shortly before the holidays, and also by the Finnish ambassador, Wuorimaa², each separately.

Moellerson told me about his discussions with Ribbentrop and Hitler.

He said Ribbentrop was very restless and left the impression of a very weary man. Ribbentrop did almost all of the talking, and Moellerson found it difficult to say anything at all. Ribbentrop said that Germany's agreements with Russia are eternal and are not objects of conjecture or one-day importance. For us³ the agreements may well be "schmerzlich"⁴, but after all - we have profited greatly from their presence. We should give some thought to what would be left of our countries if Germany's relations with Russia had worsened and if our countries were now a battleground. Moellerson said that he waited to see whether Ribbentrop might speak of any aspect of German-Estonian relations (the issue of Baltic repatriation, for example), but this did not happen.

Moellerson reported that Hitler was much calmer than Ribbentrop. If Moellerson had been forced to listen to a virtual monologue by Ribbentrop, then the meeting with Hitler, contrary to Moellerson's expectations, had the characteristics of a true conversation. Hitler asked Moellerson several questions about relatively harmless issues such as the economic relations between the two countries, but at least Moellerson had the opportunity to speak.

Hitler said that we did the right thing by signing agreements with Russia. Finland received poor advice (the Germans know from whom), which led the Finns into war and into difficulties which will be quite difficult to resolve. In speaking of the fate of Poland, Hitler even sounded a little compassionate. He said his anger was aimed directly at England. With respect to relations between Estonia (i.e., the Baltic states) and Germany, Hitler said nothing except the question concerning economic relations.

Edg. Krieviņš

LVVA, 2574.f., 3. apr. 3295.l., p. 140. Copy.

¹ R. Moellerson, the Estonian ambassador to Germany.

² A. Wuorimaa, the Finnish ambassador to Germany.

³ Meaning the Baltic states.

⁴ Painful.

**Excerpt from a "Pro Memoria" Issued
by the Director of the Baltic States Department
of the Latvian Foreign Ministry, V. Māsens**

3 January 1940

Confidential

[...] II. In Moscow, Ambassador Kociņš was called in by Potjomkin, who in a friendly manner remarked that a sizeable contingent of Polish soldiers¹ has left Latvia and that some of these soldiers have gone to Finland. Potjomkin also said that there have been suspicious flights at the Riga aerodrome (meant for the transportation of the Poles). Zotov made similar accusations in his discussion with the foreign minister. The minister responded by saying that the allegations are fully untrue. The Soviet Union has no formal reason to accuse us of anything. Only Germany has been at war with Poland, and before beginning negotiations with Lithuania and the Soviet Union about the repatriation of interned individuals to their places of residence, we took pains to learn Germany's view on the matter. In the entire month of December, 40 Poles left Latvia, but they all went to *Sweden*. 430 Poles, including women and children, passed through Latvia on their way from Lithuania to Sweden. It is not known that any of these individuals wanted to go to Finland. If some did end up in Finland, then questions about this must be posed to Sweden. The Lithuanian ambassador to Moscow was told that a recruitment office for the Sikorski² government was active in Lithuania.

III. The Soviet ambassador to Riga asked in a private conversation whether Latvia is not planning to recall its ambassador to Helsinki³. It is not known whether a similar question has been posed in Tallinn. We were also asked what we would say if the Soviet Union requested the right to move into the Polish embassy in Riga. We responded that this would be an interesting international *casus* and that we would consult with Germany and Lithuania, and also the city of Riga, seeking to learn whether the city might not be interested in the property.

IV. There are significant indications that the Russians may take steps against Sweden and Norway in the nearest future, although it is not known what form these steps might take. Reports from Berlin are that cooperation be-

tween Germany and the Soviet Union is growing stronger. There are reports of a very nervous atmosphere in Germany and the sense that something is afoot. People in Germany are assuming that as soon as conditions are right, Germany will take action somewhere.

There is growing tension between Turkey and the Soviet Union. Soldiers are being moved to the border.

V. Recently we have received reports about Finnish flights above Estonian territory. The Finnish matter may become very complicated⁴. Active support for the Finns by the allies may lead to greater German-Soviet cooperation. [..]

LVVA, 2574.f., 3. apr. 3281.l., pp. 38-39. Original.

¹The reference is to Polish soldiers who were interned in Latvia and Lithuania in September 1939.

²Gen. V. Sikorski, leader of the Polish government-in-exile (in France).

³The USSR did not put any significant pressure on Latvia to break diplomatic relations with Finland. In a letter to the Latvian ambassador in Helsinki, J. Tepfer, on 9 December 1939, Munters wrote: "We will maintain the current position as long as possible" (LVVA, 2575.f., 17.apr., 76.l., p. 25). The Soviet embassy in Latvia limited itself to just a few suggestions.

⁴On 5 December 1939, the Estonian foreign minister, A. Piip, wrote to the Estonian ambassador in Helsinki to inform him that Estonia did not consider the conflict between Finland and the USSR to be a formal war and that therefore, should the USSR begin bombing raids against Finland from its bases in Estonia, this would not be a violation of Estonian neutrality. On 25 December, the Finnish embassy in Tallinn submitted a protest to the Estonian government, pointing out that Soviet warships were anchored at Tallinn harbor, even though Tallinn was not supposed to be a military base under the terms of the 28 September 1939 agreement. See Laasi, E. "Finland's Winter War and Estonian Neutrality", in *JBS*, Vol. XXIV, No. 3, Fall 1993, pp. 273-280.

No. 54

Excerpt from a Report by "Agent Mihailov" of the Security Police

10 January 1940

[..] Ambassador Zotov from Soviet Russia said in an intimate conversation said that [..] the first step would be to crush the opposition of the "white guard" in Finland. Victory has been delayed because of sabotage. The army commander who sent divisions from Tashkent to Finland has

been shot. Now the Finns will have to deal with Siberians who do not fear the cold. After Finland is conquered, the Soviet Union will turn on the "white guard" movement in Sweden, the purpose being to obtain Swedish ore for Germany. Then the Soviets will begin to reorder the government system in Latvia and the other Baltic states, because there is no point in having military bases here if there are also nationalist governments which are hostile to Russia. Of course, the Soviets will need domestic unrest in order to carry out their plans, but Zotov feels that will not be a problem. He said some naive people still don't understand why Russia needed bases here in the first place. They should take a close look at a map of the Baltic Sea and understand that the Russians would either have to leave Leningrad and scuttle the Baltic fleet, or else they would have to sow mines in the Baltic Sea and place coastal artillery and air bases on the shore. This is being done. The issue of spheres of interest and influence has long been settled, and the Russian agreement with Germany is now bearing fruit. Zotov said it is stupid to think that the Russians will let their long-range plans be altered by the so-called national interests of three small countries. Those who are hoping for internal unrest in the Soviet Union will be bitterly disappointed. There are no symptoms of unrest, and disturbances might occur only if the Soviet Union were attacked by a foreign power. But that, said Zotov, is impossible. The Russian reserves of manpower and weaponry are endless, and the Red Army cannot be conquered. Everyone except possibly the stupid English understands this. The British, said Zotov, are still clinging to the reactions and traditions which they held 50 years ago. [...]

LVVA, 3235.f., 1/22.apr., 1853.l., pp. 7, 7a and 8. Original.

No. 55

**A Report from Gen. M. Hartmanis
to Foreign Minister V. Munters**

2 February 1940

In personal conversations, the commander of the Soviet military corps¹ has asked several times that family members of officers and instructors be allowed to enter Latvia. He is seeking to learn our government's attitude toward this possibility. The commander was told from the very begin-

ning that the mutual assistance agreement does not speak to the entry of family members, that the armed forces have entered Latvia only for the duration of the war, and that there is no housing for family members. The commander has not submitted a written request with respect to this issue. In a meeting with the war minister on 22 December 1939, the commander again raised the issue of family members, but again he was rebuffed. The government has also rejected the idea of permitting the entry of families.

Despite our negative stand on this matter, 68 wives and 36 children illegally entered Latvia on 14 January and traveled to Liepāja. 19 wives and 10 children arrived in Ventspils.

In discussions with the commander about this fact, he apologized for what had happened, claimed to have been misled by his subordinates, and said that he was opposed to such unilateral action. He promised that this would not occur again, and promised that there would be no demands made with respect to schools or apartments for the family members. We asked the commander to see to it that all of the illegal immigrants be issued appropriate documentation, that they all be registered with the police, and that all of them be housed in the areas used by the Soviet armed forces.

We further announced that we consider all of the illegal entrants to be in Latvia for short-term visits only and that we expect that within three months all of these individuals will return to the Soviet Union.

Gen. *M. Hartmanis*

Delegation secretary, Capt. *Gailitis*

LVVA, 1474.f., 3. apr., 9. l., p. 25. Original.

¹ *N. Morozov.*

No. 56

A Report from the Latvian Ambassador to Brussels, M. Valters, to Foreign Minister V. Munters

Confidential

Brussels, 12 February 1940

Honored Minister:

I have had occasion to receive reports of several sets of negotiations *between Berlin and Moscow* which took place before the conclusion of their agreement last Au-

gust. I have been told that the major topic of discussion in these talks was the issue of the Baltic states. Berlin told Moscow that it wanted to take a fully different position on the Baltic matter than Britain and France did in their own talks with Moscow. Germany said that those two countries had always rejected the Russian demand that Moscow be permitted to establish certain bases in the Baltic states. The Germans, by comparison, were not demanding that Russia go to war, as the Brits and French had done, and if Russia wanted bases, Germany was ready to accede to the demand without delay. With respect to Lithuania, however, Germany insisted that the country remain outside the direct influence of Soviet Russia so that there be a buffer between Germany and Soviet Russia. There was supposed to be a discussion about Poland as another part of this buffer between the two boundaries. Germany agreed that Poland's Belarussian regions should be attached to Soviet Russia, along with border areas in the Ukrainian area. When Russia entered Vilnius, Moscow wanted to keep the region, but the Germans insisted that this was not right, because the agreement provided that Vilnius be attached to Lithuania. After lengthy discussions, the Russians yielded on this issue. In terms of territories which lie further South, the Russians asked what Germany would say if the Russians took back Besarabia. The Germans raised no objections. The Russians also said that they want to take full control over the northwestern shore of the Black Sea with its Romanian and Bulgarian ports, as well as the straits connecting the Black Sea with the eastern Mediterranean. The Germans objected, pointing out that access to the Mediterranean largely depended on Turkey and that nothing could be promised without consultations with Turkey. The Germans added that access to the Mediterranean would not mean anything to the Russians, because it could be closed off, but the Russians insisted. It was clear that the Russians were aiming at northern Africa and also at Asia Minor, primarily for propaganda value. The Russians openly stated that they wished to take Bulgaria as a protectorate, and they also told the Germans that they would establish protectorates in Estonia and Latvia. The Bulgarian situation would be based on the Baltic model. With respect to the northern part of the Baltic Sea and its ac-

cess points to the ocean, the Russians said very little, also saying nothing about Finland. Nevertheless, the Germans understood that Russia has some intentions with respect to Finland. The Germans did not wish to pursue this matter and were fairly surprised when Russia evidenced interest in Narvik¹. The negotiations in Moscow were brief, because the Germans were prepared to agree to everything the Russians proposed at a time when Germany's views had to be learned only a few days before the beginning of the war.

Respectfully,

Dr. M. Valters
Ambassador

LVVA, 2574.f., 4. apr., 7656.l., pp. 75-76. Copy.

¹ Narvik, an ice-free port in northern Norway.

No. 57

Excerpt from an Address by Foreign Minister V. Munters at the University of Latvia

12 February 1940

[...] Nevertheless in the last several days we have experienced another one of those events which some members of the foreign press seek to sensationalize beyond all reason and, even worse, in which the media become accomplices to the distribution of hostile propaganda. The innocent report of the gathering of Soviet ambassadors in Moscow flowed like an avalanche through Finland to Sweden, Switzerland, London, Paris and probably many other places as well, becoming ever more sensational with respect to alleged demands being made by the Soviet Union vis a vis the Baltic states. Of course, the entire chain of information, the purpose of which was to create the idea that the Baltic states are under threat, was completely false. But for several days now, the seekers of sensationalism have been well satisfied.

To touch for a moment on two of the major allegations which have on occasion been made in the foreign press, I should like to ask - where is the sovietization of which we have been compassionately warned? Is there anyone in Latvia who can say that the Soviet Union is in any way interfering in our domestic affairs? The second frequently

made allegation describes us as a protectorate which has lost its independence. Here, too, the actual condition, which anyone can review, demonstrably repudiates the allegation. We can point to the successful trade talks and other negotiations which have been carried out between the two governments recently, talks which have already led to specific results, and we can say that our relations with the Soviet Union are very satisfactory at this time.

There are people who say that these favorable conditions are only a temporary thing and that sooner or later we will face domestic and foreign policy pressure from the Soviet Union. Only those who make these statements can know on what basis they are made. The government knows of nothing that would confirm these suspicions. The government believes that the 5 October agreement serves the interests of both countries, especially given these times of war, and that it was concluded under good faith from both sides and with full respect for the sovereignty of both parties. It is appropriate here to repeat what the President said on 12 October: "Our country is sovereign and independent and free in its domestic and foreign policies, and so it shall remain. We ourselves shall see to it." [...]

Latvijas Vēstures Institūta žurnāls, 4. gads, Nr. 1 (13), Rīga (1940), pp. 12-14.

No. 58

Excerpt from a "Pro Memoria" Issued by the Director of the Baltic States Department of the Latvian Foreign Ministry, V. Māsens

7 March 1940

Secret

[..] 3. Matters concerning the execution of the mutual assistance agreement

First there are two fundamental and delicate matters:
a) Great problems are being created by naval units which do not wish to submit to any regulation, which refuse to recognize signed agreements, which operate unilaterally and which make all manner of demand concerning new facilities and permission for family members to enter Latvia. b) We have been told that the Soviet Union wishes to send a battalion of 1,200 construction workers and 1,500

other individuals to Latvia for the purpose of executing construction jobs and that neither group should be counted toward the limit on Soviet residents in Latvia.

We did not discuss these matters in Riga, because the *polpred*¹ cannot make unilateral decisions on such issues, and we have asked that the matters be resolved in Moscow. Speaking with the minister, Piip² expressed the view that the Russian position will have to be adopted on not including certain number of people in the overall contingent³. The minister⁴ asked that this not be done, arguing that this would cast the agreements themselves into doubt. We must follow the terms of the pact, which speak to **locations for bases** and **aerodromes**, and we must state that the Soviets have the right only to maintain a strongly limited number of personnel at these bases and aerodromes. The number of such personnel has been set out in separate agreements. The pact does not speak to any other groups of Soviets. By accepting the Soviet position, we would permit others to enter our territory beyond those forces which are set out in the agreement, and then there would be no limitations at all. While we stand on the basis of the agreement, we are safe. Incidentally, we have reports that Moscow does not support the overly great eagerness of local commanders. Kociņš has been instructed to insist that the terms of the agreement be fulfilled.

*Dailide*⁵ - Molotov has told Natkevičius⁶ that service personnel must not be counted toward the limit. N[atkevičius] responded that the agreement does not speak to service personnel and that a separate agreement must be reached on such individuals. Molotov said the discussion concerns only 300 "vojentorgi"⁷. There is no intention to send field engineers to Lithuania, because no secret construction projects are planned. The Lithuanians feel that the agreement must be fulfilled. Otherwise, a new agreement must be reached.

*Rebane*⁸ - Russian pressure against Estonia is greater than pressure against Lithuania and Latvia. The Russians are stating that only land forces are to be counted toward the limit. At Hapsala, they are demanding housing of 70,000 square meters for 5,000 family members (3,000 wives and 2,000 children). They also want seven schools and seven kindergartens. They are also preparing to build

monumental stone constructions outside their bases (for example - at Hapsala). They want to bring in workers, motivating the demand with the excuse that there are no workers in Estonia. The Estonians have responded that they can provide 10,000 workers.

On the matter of leasing, there are great differences between what the Estonians are demanding and what the Russians are willing to pay.

If the Estonians were to carry out all of the Russian demands, they would have to completely evacuate Paldiski, along with the Pakri islands and the surrounding territory.

Another issue is whether Tallinn is being considered a base. Moscow has reportedly determined that Tallinn is not a base.

Many homes have been sold to the Russians in Tallinn, and Russian soldiers had moved into some of them. They have now been taken out.

12 conventions have already been worked out, it is not known how many more there might be.

Molotov has told Rei that the Soviets would fulfill the agreement like "gentlemen".

Rebane feels that the Estonians are prepared for compromise.

The minister has asked his colleagues to **bring definite and precise information** about the Russian matters so that **during the conference⁹ there can be a discussion of the boundaries which must be drawn.**

Estonia has signed the rules for the joint commission¹⁰. The matter of the "vojentorgi" is addressed in this document. Latvia and Lithuania have not signed an analogous document.

In the talks with the minister¹¹, the issue of opening an Intourist¹² restaurant in Riga was raised in passing. We will not permit this.

With respect to the trade balance, the Russians have demanded that purchases made by the Soviet armed forces here be counted as exports to the Soviet Union. We will never agree to this.

The Torgpredstvo¹³ matter is very important, because it is trying to turn into a podrjadčiki¹⁴. We have signed nothing with respect to this matter.

Lithuania has rejected a demand by the Torgpredstvo that it be permitted to advertise bids for tenders in

Lithuanian newspapers. The Lithuanians have said that Torgpredstvo must handle this matter through headquarters. In Lithuania, the Russians have announced that this summer they will carry out construction projects worth 30 million liti. Local construction workers will be used, and materials will be imported without customs duties.

Germany is making friendly advances toward Lithuania.

Zechlin¹⁵ has said that the Germans will not be repatriated from Lithuania in the near term, because individuals repatriated from other countries have not yet been settled.

Ritter¹⁶ and Schnurre¹⁷ visited Urbšys and warned him that they are expecting goods from Lithuania with a value of 150 million liti, in exchange for which Germany will provide German goods. The tendency has been to take goods but to give nothing in return.

LVVA, 2574.f., 3.apr., 3281.l., pp. 14-16. Original.

¹ *The Soviet representative in Latvia (I. Zotov).*

² *A. Piip, the Estonian foreign minister.*

³ *On 7 March 1940, the Estonian government informed Moscow that it was prepared to admit 17,000 Soviet workers, technicians and engineers for the purpose of carrying out construction projects at the Soviet bases. Полпреды сообщают, с. 243.*

⁴ *V. Munters.*

⁵ *P. Dailide, the Lithuanian ambassador to Latvia.*

⁶ *L. Natkus-Natkevičius, the Lithuanian ambassador to the USSR.*

⁷ *Literally - war merchants, i.e., people who provided the Soviet armed forces with consumer goods and sold them at stores placed on Soviet military bases. In a meeting on 26 November 1939 at the foreign affairs commissariat in Moscow, it was decided that the "vojentorgi" in the Baltic states would require approximately 1,000 employees. Полпреды сообщают, с. 174.*

⁸ *H. Rebane, the Estonian ambassador to Latvia.*

⁹ *The reference is to the planned 11th conference of Baltic foreign ministers, which was to have taken place from 14 to 16 March 1940.*

¹⁰ *The reference is to the Estonian-Soviet commission which was meant to deal with issues arising from the placement of the Soviet armed forces in Estonia.*

¹¹ *The reference is to a discussion between the Soviet ambassador, I. Zotov, and V. Munters.*

¹² *The foreign tourism service of the USSR.*

¹³ *The trade office of the USSR.*

¹⁴ *Business. The essence of the matter was that the Soviet Union wanted its trade mission in Latvia to conclude agreements directly with Latvian companies and individuals in order to provide food supplies and other goods for its forces in the country. The Latvian government preferred an indirect supply system. On 20 November 1939, a commission to provide goods to the Soviet armed forces was established (it was headed by a senior agronomist at the Ministry of Agriculture, J. Krīšbergs). It was granted monopoly rights in supply matters. The Soviet Union believed that the commission artificially raised prices and demanded several times that the committee be disbanded. Moscow's demands were satisfied only partially. The committee itself continued to work.*

¹⁵ *E. Zechlin, the German ambassador to Lithuania.*

¹⁶ *K. Ritter, the director of the trade department in the German Foreign Ministry.*

¹⁷ *Dr. K. Schnurre, the German Foreign Ministry's expert on Eastern European trade matters.*

No. 59

A Report from the Director of the Interior Ministry Police Department, A. Austrums, to General M. Hartmanis

10 March 1940

General, I would request your views and recommendations on the following matters:

1) The pontoon bridge across the Venta River at Ventpils is in very bad condition. There have been occasions when the wooden barges upon which the bridge is supported have flooded with water, because they are structurally unsound. Vehicles of the Soviet armed forces, including tankers which according to experts weigh more than 12 tons, have continued to cross the bridge, despite the fact that its maximum load is six tons. As the ice melts, the load capacity of the bridge will be reduced even further. We should warn the leadership of the Soviet armed forces.

2) In the Ēdole park, opposite the guardhouse, approximately 100 metres away from it, next to a footpath and without any protective cover, the Soviet soldiers have dug latrines. They use these latrines in full sight of all passers-by, including visitors to the Post Office.

3) At the Edole base, the Soviet soldiers are frequently conducting training operations in the fields of surrounding homes.

4) The Russian soldiers are increasingly spending time in private apartments, especially in Ventspils, where drinking sessions are held which could result in conflict. The Russians apparently cannot bring order to this situation, and they say they cannot understand why there is a ban on visits to private apartments.

Austrums

Department director

LVVA, 1474.f., 3. apr., 10.l., p. 24. Original.

No. 60

Excerpt from a Letter from the First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy to Latvia, M. Vetrov, to the Soviet Foreign Affairs Commissariat

23 March 1940

[..] We can definitely assume that:

first, a secret military alliance has been established among the three Baltic states,

second that this secret military alliance is targeted against the Soviet Union.

The conference¹ apparently took note of the actual situation, and it is not difficult to understand who ordered this and who led the work.

The situation which occurred after the USSR had stated its strict views concerning the planned "defensive union" of the Nordic countries² made the participants in the conference keep their deliberations in strict confidence.

Now we see why, during his discussions with comrade Zotov, Munters responded to a question about the military alliance with another question: "Do you have wishes in this respect, or are you simply asking for the sake of information?"

It is clear that Munters' question reflected the wish to learn our attitude toward the defensive alliance which was unquestionably discussed at the conference.

At the conference, the Balts also discussed the matter of a Baltic federation³. Testimony to this fact is provided by the fact that the ministers reached understanding on industrial production and foreign trade matters. The cus-

toms union which the countries signed did not work out, but the conference stated that the industrial production programs of the three countries must be coordinated as far as is possible so that as new industries are established, consideration could be given not just to domestic, but to pan-Baltic markets...

For this purpose, the three countries, each on the basis of a decision taken by the respective cabinet of ministers, established interdepartmental commissions to work on the coordination of closer trade contacts in the interests of developing the industrial and economic situation in the three states.

It is expected that immediately after the conference, a meeting of economic specialists from the three countries will be convened. The meeting would give detailed consideration to the practical aspects of economic cooperation among the three countries.

Political, military and trade contacts among the three countries are supplemented by a decision to engage in close cultural contacts. The conference concluded that such cooperation must be intensified. "We must learn," it says in the conference documents, "to respect and recognize the cultural achievements of another country, and then the people of that country will be closer to us". [..]

Simply put, in talking about a federation, the conference did nothing more than to note with some satisfaction that "cooperation among the three countries is becoming ever closer and more concrete. Unity among the countries is becoming increasingly evident", and "the cooperation among these countries is of immense importance; in fact, history and the geographic location of the three countries indicate that cooperation is a true necessity".

Munters made the following conclusion about the 11th conference: "Relations among the Balts have improved considerably, and their mutual ties in political, economic and cultural affairs have become much stronger".

On 15 March the Lithuanian and Estonian foreign ministers, Urbšys and prof. Piip, were granted a private audience with the Latvian president, Ulmanis. The commander of the army, Gen. Berķis, was also present. On 16 March, the official part of the conference was concluded, but the writing of specific decisions, and meetings between the Estonian and Lithuanian ministers and

representatives of the Latvian government continued on 17 March.

The conference ordered the Lithuanian foreign minister to prepare for the 12th conference of the Baltic Entente, which is scheduled to take place in Kaunas in September 1940.

First secretary of the
Soviet Embassy in Latvia
M. Vetrov

Полпреды сообщают...

¹ The reference is to the 11th meeting of the Baltic Entente foreign ministers in Riga, from 14 to 16 March 1940. The conference did not lead to any military union among the three Baltic countries.

² The reference is to a statement made by the USSR on 20 March 1940 with respect to negotiations concerning a defense union among Finland, Sweden and Norway.

³ This was not true. The matter was not discussed at the conference.

No. 61

Notes by Foreign Ministers V. Munters with respect to an Audience by the Soviet Representative, I. Zotov, with President K. Ulmanis

3 April 1940

On 3 April 1940 from 10:00 to 10:50, the President saw the ambassador of the USSR, Zotov.

The meeting had been requested previously, but it turned out to be a departure meeting. Z[otov] will leave Riga on Saturday (6 April) to return to Moscow and then to a new position in Finland. Zotov asked several specific questions and received responses from the President:

a) We will not turn over the "Royal" hotel in Ventspils to the Soviet armed forces. Zotov accepted this.

b) The Soviet military wants supplementary housing near its base in Liepāja. The President promised to reflect on this matter.

c) With respect to the battery station in Liepāja¹, Zotov's wishes were not clear. Apparently he wants joint usage rights. The President responded that this is an issue to be settled by military officials.

Zotov also spoke of the P[resident]'s speech on 10 February at Šķibe, but only for a brief moment². He thanked the President for the kindness which he enjoyed during his posting here and for the "school" which he attended in Riga. He also thanked the P[resident] for his and the government's support and expressed satisfaction at the good relations between the two countries.

V[ilhelms] M[unters], 3.4.1940.

LVVA, 1474.f., 3. apr., 6.l., p. 159. Original.

¹ See Doc. 62.

² Zotov had interpreted Ulmanis' speech as being secretly unfriendly toward the USSR.

No. 62

Notes by Foreign Ministers V. Munters with respect to a Meeting with the Soviet Representative, I. Zotov

5 April 1940

Notes by the foreign minister concerning the departure visit of the ambassador of the USSR, I. Zotov, on 5 April 1940.

The ambassador expressed honest satisfaction with his audience with the President on 3 April. He repeatedly expressed thanks for the organization of the audience and remarked that its results were received with great satisfaction in Moscow and in military circles both here and abroad.

Among concrete results, Zotov remarked upon:

- 1) The transfer of the Liepāja Red Cross sanatorium this spring;
- 2) The promise to find supplementary facilities for the armed forces in Liepāja.

Zotov added that in this way, the problem of housing the independent workers and their families is being resolved, and that it is especially nice that the new facilities border on the Soviet bases. He asked that only buildings be leased, without the land on which they are built, because if land were leased as well, the cost would be quite high. I responded that because the P[resident] has determined that the issue of military housing should be resolved, we will find a compromise on price.

3) The Soviets have to give up their demand for the "Royal" hotel. Zotov has accepted this.

4) Even though the P[resident] rejected demands that we lease our submarine battery station, and the Soviets have to accept this, the President has nevertheless expressed the view that the possibility of "rassmotreť vopros ob obščem poľzovaňii"¹ should be explored.

Zotov repeatedly expressed his enthusiasm about the open, friendly, simple and businesslike conversation he had with the President.

With respect to new demands being made by the Navy (the Zavjalov memorandum)², Zotov agreed with the foreign minister's recommendation that the demands, which are quite far-reaching and exaggerated, first be reviewed in discussions between Gen. Hartmanis and the Soviet military leadership and that the joint commission tackle the question only afterward.

Zotov announced that the Soviets are changing their membership in the joint commission, in which besides Chichajev³ and Morozov, the Soviets are appointing the commander of their naval force, Captain Trainin. He asked whether we might also appoint a naval representative and whether we might not return to the idea that the presiding official in the commission should be a representative of the military.

I responded that we would be prepared at any time to recommend the return of Gen. Hartmanis in the presiding chair of the commission and that I would be prepared to ask that the military leadership appoint a naval representative to the commission, even though we have not seen any need for this. In that case, however, the Soviets must understand that we will have four representatives on the commission, because we cannot take the Interior Ministry off the panel. Formally, the Interior Ministry representative might be defined as an expert, in order to maintain the principle of parity, but practically he would always be present. Zotov accepted all of this and promised to submit the question to Moscow for resolution.

V[ilhelms] M[unters]

LVVA, 1474.f., 3.apr., 6.l., p. 162. Original.

¹ Review the matter of joint usage.

² The reference is to a demand made by the Soviet military attache in Latvia, A. Zaujalov, that twenty new pieces of land be provided at Mazirbe, Ventspils and Liepāja for use by the Soviet navy.

³ Ivan Chichajev, the first secretary of the Soviet embassy in Latvia and sometimes its acting representative.

No. 63

**Excerpt from the Memoirs of the Counselor
to the German Embassy in the USSR**

In carrying out the mutual obligation which both parties undertook in Paragraph 3 of the agreement to consult with each other, Graf Schulenburg visited Molotov on 7 May (1940), i.e., three days before the German invasion of Belgium and Holland, to inform Molotov of the anticipated action. Molotov clearly stated that the action would be very favorable to the Soviet Union. "The Soviet government", he said, "expresses full understanding of the fact that Germany must defend itself against an attack from the British and French".

[..] On 17 May 1940, Stalin used Molotov as an intermediary to offer the German ambassador "the heartiest congratulations with respect to German military accomplishments" in France. On the same occasion, Molotov made it clear to the ambassador that the Soviet Union would send special emissaries to the Baltic states to oversee the establishment of new governments which would be acceptable to the Soviet government. Five days later, Molotov told us that the Soviet government had decided to retake Besarabia, using force if necessary, and that it also has intentions with respect to Bukovina. The Baltic states, Besarabia and Northern Bukovina will soon be absorbed into the Soviet Union. It was clear that the Soviet government, worried by Germany's rapid successes in France, had decided to broaden and strengthen its positions at a quicker pace, in order to achieve maximum benefits from the agreements which had been reached with Germany on the delineation of spheres of interest. [..]

No. 64

Resolution Concerning Emergency Authority

18 May 1940

The Government Office

No. 48

Riga, Valdemāra ielā 3, apt. 4

To the Foreign Minister The Government Office hereby announces that at its meeting on 17 May, the Cabinet of Ministers resolved the following:

1. If, because of war, diplomatic contacts with Latvia's diplomatic and consular missions in Western Europe are interrupted, emergency authority shall be granted to the Latvian ambassador in London, Kārlis Zariņš.

2. The term of the emergency authority shall be determined by the foreign minister, who shall issue appropriate orders to the ambassador in London and state the missions which are subject to the emergency authority.

3. If for technical reasons it proves impossible for the foreign minister to issue orders to the ambassador in London, the emergency authority shall take effect automatically. The ambassador in London shall test the situation by sending a telegraphic inquiry to the foreign ministry. If a reply is not received within a period of twenty-four hours, the ambassador shall work on the basis of emergency authority until such time as contacts with the foreign minister are restored.

4. The emergency authority granted to the ambassador in London, Kārlis Zariņš, shall apply to all of Latvia's diplomatic and consular missions except the missions in Estonia, Lithuania, Finland, Sweden, Germany and the Soviet Union.

5. If during the time in which his emergency authority is in effect, Ambassador Kārlis Zariņš should die or become incapacitated, the emergency authority shall be transferred to the Latvian ambassador in the United States of America, Alfrēds Bilmanis.

6. The emergency authority confers upon its holder authority to:

a) Defend the interests of Latvia in all countries except Estonia, Lithuania, Finland, Sweden, Germany and the Soviet Union;

b) For this purpose, issue binding orders to all Latvian missions except those in the aforementioned countries;

- c) Use the resources and property of the state which are controlled by the missions;
- d) Suspend ambassadors, and suspend or transfer all other employees of the various missions;
- e) Liquidate missions, except the legation in the United States of America;
- f) Appoint delegates to meetings and conferences;
- g) Under extraordinary circumstances which prohibit the implementation of this authority, to transfer the authority to Ambassador Alfrēds Bilmanis.

Signed

Acting director of the Government Office

R. Bulsons

Acting Department director

B. Roze

I confirm this document

T. Anševics

Director of the Administrative Department

Valters, M. 15. maija apvērsums un ārkārtējās pilnvaras ar pilnvaru tekstu. Stockholm (1951), pp. 46-48.

No. 65

Excerpt from Dr. M. Valters' book, 15. maija apvērsums un ārkārtējās pilnvaras (The May 15 Coup and Emergency Authority)

[..] There is no document which could be designated as containing "emergency authority". There is an order for the foreign minister to issue such a document, but even this order does not exist. There is only an excerpt from the minutes of the respective meeting, which an acting official in the Government Office has signed. The foreign minister is given the right to determine the "term of the emergency authority". Is there any order by the foreign minister to put the emergency authority into effect? The minutes speak to a possible, hypothetical activity, something expected, not executed, not set out in the lawful order of the government. There is no order by the Cabinet of Ministers issued to the foreign minister. Where is the order of the foreign minister to Ambassador Zariņš, especially given the importance of the document?

Even from the most primitive viewpoint, the emergency authority does not really exist, not even as something is-

sued by an illegal government in its all-encompassing power, because the government did not submit even to the juridical order which it itself had set up, sticking to the view that the order was one of mandate, not representational authority, i.e., an order to carry out limited functions, adding that only after the authority is formally documented does it become true authority. Otherwise there would be no end to confusion and crime. We see a copy of the minutes of a Cabinet meeting, a copy which is not even signed, as is generally required of such documents. In international affairs, such formality is of extreme importance, as we shall see...

... The most peculiar aspect is that in Paragraph 6e, the order allows the holder of emergency authority to "liquidate missions", i.e., representative offices, embassies and consulates of the Latvian state. What is the point of this right? Is it the defense of Latvian independence? No, because such a fight would require representation. Perhaps the government was afraid that the missions might stand in the way of Riga's intentions? Paragraph 4 states that the authority granted to Ambassador Kārlis Zariņš applies to all of Latvia's diplomatic and consular missions, except those in Estonia, Lithuania, Finland, Sweden, Germany and the Soviet Union. It can be assumed that this means that Zariņš could not liquidate those missions either. Why? Why could he liquidate other missions? What is at the bottom of this? It is clear that the authority is primarily meant to liquidate, because otherwise it would certainly not speak to the possible liquidation of Latvia's diplomatic and consular missions. Such liquidation could be expected only in two cases: If Latvia were itself to be liquidated, necessitating such an order from the centre. The officials in Riga could have conceived of this possibility only in terms of a discussion about the liquidation of missions. Perhaps there were some discussions for agreement? Perhaps Ambassador Zariņš was supposed to understand on his own, when he would need to liquidate missions, without waiting for any orders from above. Or perhaps he needed to wait for a different liquidation order, one which would emanate not from Riga, but from a point considerably further along?

The government should have done precisely the opposite: It should have ordered that missions absolutely not

be liquidated because of their importance in the battle for Latvia. What could have disposed the Ulmanis regime to think about the liquidation of missions, if not a disposition toward surrender, toward an avoidance of battle? It was only under conditions of hopelessness or preparedness to accept the inevitability of events that the government could have turned to the idea of liquidating missions, unless something even more peculiar was the case: that the government wanted to serve somebody by agreeing in advance to the liquidation of missions. Irrespective of this, however, the government's document knowingly or unknowingly does not set out any positive orders of battle. It does not state that opposition to occupation would be the highest purpose of the emergency authority. There is nothing about the need to defend Latvia in the offices of other countries, because although the document speaks to the sending of delegates to meetings and conferences, it does not set out instructions for such individuals to always defend the independence of the Latvian state. The document has no principles. Everything is left to opportunity and, as we have seen, the tendency to liquidate. Liquidate missions! Make them subject to the will of one individual, the holder of authority? Could the government have done anything more unacceptable and twisted in the situation which was simmering when the "Cabinet of Ministers" adopted this document on 17 May 1940?

Such a document can serve the best principles of defeatism. And that was the true purpose of the 17 May order. That is why there is no responsible signature on the document, which would have been necessary on a formal order, why the government has sought to shirk responsibility for the document. If V. Munters' signature were under the document, it would be easier to understand. More importantly, we must ask why Ulmanis' signature is not under the document, since he was the leader of all policy and who should have been the first to affix his name to this battle document, if indeed it was meant for battle. But it was not. It was meant as to be semi-anonymous and impersonal so that the names of the country's well-known would not be exposed, so that bridges would not be burned, so that in the interests of further talks with the occupant, which could be maneuvered in terms of time, the order was placed no higher than in the minutes of a

meeting. The document was meant to hide the intentions of defeatism and the will to find understanding with Moscow instead of doing battle with it. The government should have created authority which would defend the interests and rights of the state, but instead it created a possibility to surrender and to compromise. The document could not be permitted to disturb direct or indirect negotiations with Moscow. This is why Kārlis Ulmanis and the other ministers stayed in Riga, calling on all Latvians to stay home, and hoped to hold their seats by virtue of Moscow's mercy. It is easy to understand why Ulmanis urged Alfrēds Kalniņš to flee: it was important to cleanse the Cabinet of its worst garbage. The gamble was on the decision to stay and govern instead of starting a new battle for independent Latvia which would be fought on battlegrounds in other countries.

A government which wanted to create a document to protect Latvia and fight for it would have understood what must be contained in such a document, what must be its single, key principle: **the government, knowing that it is being destroyed or wanting to courageously fall without abandoning positions, transfers all of Latvia's governing authority to an independent authority.** All authority. This would be a document which we could now hail as a major step to save the Latvian state. But there is no sign of that. [..]

Valters, op. cit., pp. 9-14.

No. 66

Excerpt from an Article by Edgars Dunsdorfs, "Fragmentary Autobiographical Notes About the Latvian Central Council and the Victims of Aggression"

At a meeting on 17 May 1940, the Cabinet of Ministers determined that "if, because of war, diplomatic contacts with Latvia's diplomatic and consular missions in Western Europe are interrupted, emergency authority shall be granted to the Latvian ambassador in London, Kārlis Zariņš." This one sentence set off much discussion about Ambassador Kārlis Zariņš' "emergency authority".

On the next day (18 May), the Government Office sent a text of the resolution to Foreign Minister Vilhelms Munters. Munters never forwarded it to Zariņš.

What happened afterward is well known. On 16 June 1940, the Latvian government received an ultimatum from the Soviet Union, and on 17 June, the government stepped down. In the new government, which was established on 21 June, the portfolios of prime minister and acting foreign minister were taken over by Augusts Kirhenšteins.

These dramatic events reached their culmination on the night of 13 June 1941, when the Soviet Union carried out the mass deportation of Latvian citizens. On the previous day, Edgars Dunsdorfs had run into an old friend in the streets of Riga, a schoolmate named Anševics who was wearing a leather jacket. Asked about this dress, Anševics responded that he had been interrogated at the KGB and that he sensed that he would soon be taking a lengthy trip. The KGB had accused him of sending the emergency authority resolution to Kārlis Zariņš without Foreign Minister Munters' permission. This conversation was the last that was known of Teodors Anševics. He was lost. Presumably he was deported.

Arhivs: Raksti par latviskām problēmām, Vol. 27, "Brīvības Cīnītāji", Melbourne, 1987, pp. 41-42.

No. 67

A Secret Report by the Commander of the Latvian Army, Gen. K. Berķis

20 May 1940

To all division and unit commanders and to all military institution leaders.

To the commander of the Operations Division of Army Headquarters.

Certain people¹ who believe that the loyal relations which exist between us and the Soviet Union will hamper their own political intentions in our country, have set it as their goal to destroy and worsen these relations. In order to prove that Latvia is not loyal to the Soviet Union and that hatred toward the Soviet Union and its armed forces is being engendered in Latvia society, certain people have

begun to collect data and information about all instances in which a government official, soldier, law enforcement officer, organizational representative or ordinary citizen has expressed contempt for the Soviet Union and its armed forces or has expressed the threat to "even the score at the first opportunity".

In making this fact known, I hereby order all officials and individual soldiers to refrain in official remarks and in everyday, private commerce with others, to maintain the greatest care and reserve in order to avoid any provocation.

General *Berķis*

Army headquarters commander,

General *Rozenšteins*

LVVA, 1474.f., 1. apr., 1272.l., p. 126. Copy.

¹ The reference is probably to Latvia's leftist underground.

No. 68

Excerpt from a Report from the Ambassador to Lithuania, L. Sēja, to Foreign Minister V. Munters

28 May 1940

Confidential

Honored Minister:

On 28 May I visited Foreign Minister Urbšys¹. I was alone, because Ambassador Lattik² went to Tallinn on 25 May and has not yet returned. The minister had just received the sensational news of the Belgian crown's capitulation³, and he was quite disturbed. He had another reason for worry, one which was much more direct. It had to do with the unpleasantness with Moscow, and he gave me full information about this, along with copies of the two documents which are attached to this report⁴. The substance of the issue is as follows:

On 25 May, Molotov summoned Ambassador Natkevičius⁵. After a brief and unpleasant introduction, Molotov read the first of the two documents, handing it to the ambassador afterward. The document speaks for itself, and it came as a complete surprise to the Lithuanians. Urbšis received the document at his summer home near Kaunas on Sunday, 26 May. He immediately returned to

Kaunas, quickly composed a reply, summoned Ambassador Pozdniakov⁶, read the reply to him and then handed over the document.

The Russian note is an astonishing document with heavy and fully unmotivated accusations. There is not one concrete fact in the document, apart from the names of the two soldiers. Pozdniakov admitted in the conversation that the first name, "Nosov", was misspelled and that it should be "Shutov". On Monday (27 May) it was learned that the other soldier, Shmavgovnets, had returned to his unit along with another soldier. Both made amazing allegations about torture and the forced stating of military secrets. The Lithuanians immediately asked that the two soldiers be turned over to Lithuanian authorities in order that they might investigate where the soldiers had been taken, who had interrogated them, and how they had returned to their unit. The Russians have refused to do this, saying that the soldiers are very tired and in poor health.

But even that is not all. On 26 May, the deputy war commissar, Loktionov⁷, arrived in Vilnius in a special airplane. On 27 May he visited the foreign minister in Kaunas, and afterward he went to the respective military unit to begin his investigation. By noon today, nothing more had been heard of him.

The Lithuanians have great difficulty understanding this, because throughout the previous period relations with the Russians had been satisfactory and even smooth. An incident involving a few soldiers would normally be no big deal, and the "Aufmachung"⁸ of this incident is most suspicious: Molotov himself summons the ambassador, the deputy war commissar arrives in Lithuania in his own airplane and goes to see the foreign minister, the Russian note contains heavy accusations and threats. Urbšys is afraid that Moscow is undertaking some broader action under the cover of a vulgar provocation. He feels the action might also eventually affect Latvia and Estonia. The Lithuanian suspicions are not groundless. If the Russians wanted to investigate the desertion of two soldiers or even several events of that type, Pozdniakov would have found the Lithuanian authorities prepared to offer all manner of cooperation. Deserters are not an uncommon thing in the Red Army. There have been instances where Red Army soldiers have tried to hide in farm homes. There was one

occasion where a soldier lived with a farmer for several days before being caught by the police and returned to his unit. Clearly Molotov's and Loktionov's involvement is clearly not needed to resolve matters of this type. This is also the first time that the Russians have brought up the disappearance of individuals soldiers. For this reason, the Lithuanians are afraid that the Russians are using this affair as a prologue to further and more far-reaching demands. [...]

Most respectfully yours,

L. Sēja

Ambassador to Lithuania

LVVA, 2545.f., 17.apr., 76b.l., pp. 354-354a. Original.

¹ Juozas Urbšys, the Lithuanian foreign minister since 5 December 1938.

² J. Lattik, the Estonian ambassador to Lithuania.

³ The reference is to the capitulation by Belgium's Leopold III to Germany on 28 May.

⁴ The documents have not been published.

⁵ L. Natkus-Natkevičius, the Lithuanian ambassador to the USSR.

⁶ N. Pozdniakov, the Soviet representative to Lithuania.

⁷ A. Loktionov, the deputy war commissar of the USSR.

⁸ Literally - the structure or form of the event.

No. 69

A Report from the Ambassador to Lithuania, L. Sēja, to Foreign Minister V. Munters

30 May 1940

Confidential

Honored Minister:

Over the last two or three days, nothing more has been established with respect to the Russian deserters. On 27 May Loktionov also visited the war minister, Gen. Musteikis¹, but there have been no contacts with the Lithuanian authorities since then. Loktionov has spend the last three days driving from one Red Army garrison to another, and he is planning to leave Lithuania tonight or Friday (31 May) morning. It is expected here that before leaving, he will speak with a member of the government.

In the mean time, TASS has let loose its terrible communique. I believe it to be important that the communi-

que was issued on 29 May, when a telegraphed or telephoned report from Loktionov may well have already been in Moscow. It is, indeed, possible, that a report from Loktionov was at the basis of the communique.

The Russians are not cooperating with the Lithuanians in any way to clear up this matter. This morning (30 May) Ambassador Pozdniakov was summoned to the foreign minister's office. He was told orally and in writing that Lithuania is establishing a special commission to investigate the Russian charges. The Russians will be able to appoint representatives and observers to the commission. The foreign minister also repeated his demand that the Russians provide further proof and facts. Pozdniakov said nothing.

The affair has engendered fully understandable worries and concerns in Kaunas. Depression and concern are prevalent among the government, as well. No one doubts that the Russians are preparing to do something bad. Most likely they will present Lithuania with a new set of demands. The Lithuanian ambassador to Moscow, Natkevičius, has returned to Kaunas, but he has had nothing new to report.

Most respectfully yours,

L. Sēja

Ambassador to Lithuania

LVVA, 2575.f., 17.apr., 76b.l., p. 347. Original.

¹ Gen. K. Musteikis, the Lithuanian defense minister since 5 December 1938.

No. 70

A Report from the Ambassador to Lithuania, L. Sēja, to Foreign Minister V. Munters

31 May 1940

Honored Minister:

This morning (31 May), deputy war commissioner Loktionov departed for Moscow. On the evening of 30 May he met in Vilnius with the division commander, Gen. Chernus¹, who also saw him off at the aerodrome. Loktionov promised that the Lithuanian investigatory commission (which is being headed by the Vilnius regional procurator)

will be able to interrogate the Red Army soldiers who have returned to their units. This has not yet happened, however. Otherwise, Loktionov said nothing about the results of his investigation. Ambassador Pozdniakov has not been to the Foreign Ministry this morning, and there is nothing new for the Lithuanians to consider.

People here are still trying to divine the true meaning of the mysterious phrase in the Russian note, "Isčeznovenije eķih vojennosluŗaŗskih organizujetsja nekotorimi ľicami, poľzujuŗcimisja pokroviķeľstvom organov ľitovskavo Praviķelstva"². The Russians have not given even an approximate description of who these persons might be, and which government organs they are talking about. Foreign Minister Urbŗys told me today that he has not the slightest idea about what might be hiding under this mysterious formulation. Analyzing and considering the sentence, one gets the impression that it might be referring to certain privileged foreigners, such as diplomats or military representatives. But it also possible that it may be referring to the Home Guard or the "New Lithuanians"³.

The government feels that after this period of tension, there may be a certain period of detente. In fact, this period has already begun. There is a hope that Loktionov has discovered that local commanders have exaggerated accusations against Lithuania in order to protect themselves in a situation where Red Army soldiers have deserted. This is fully possible, unless the affair is nothing more than a theatre piece which is serving some higher purpose. The Russians will have to give the Lithuanians something, however, because an investigation cannot be done in thin air.

Most respectfully yours,

L. Sēja

Ambassador to Lithuania

LVVA, 2575.f., 17.apr., 76b.l., pp. 335 and 335a. Original.

¹ Gen. Jonas Chernus, the prime minister of Lithuania from 28 March to 21 November 1939; beginning in November 1939, commander of Division VI.

² "The disappearance of the military personnel has been organized by individuals who enjoy the support of organs of the Lithuanian government".

³ "New Lithuania" was the youth organization affiliated to the governing Tautininki party in Lithuania.

No. 71

**An Order issued by the Defense Commissar of
the USSR, S. Timoshenko**

3 June 1940

1. For the purpose of unifying military leadership, on 5 June 1940 the Red Army units which are stationed on the territory of the Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania shall be excluded from the Leningrad, Kalnin and Belarussian military region. The units shall come under my direct control through the services of the dep[uty] defense commissar and second-degree army commander, comrade A.D. Loktionov.

2. For the day-to-day leadership of the units, a command structure shall be established under the supervision of the deputy defense commissar, utilizing the attached list of officers.

3. Order No. 0185 of 27 November 1939 is hereby repealed.

Defense Commissar of the USSR
Soviet Marshal *S. Timoshenko*

Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 339-340.

No. 72

**Excerpt from a Report from the Ambassador
to England, K. Zariņš,
to Foreign Minister V. Munters**

7 June 1940

Secret

Honored Minister:

Yesterday we had the regular meeting of Baltic ambassadors at the office of our Estonian colleague Schmidt¹. We discussed ongoing matters which have been reviewed in reports which I have submitted previously², and therefore I will not now discuss these matters in greater detail.

One matter of importance was the fact that both of my colleagues, especially the Lithuanian ambassador, Balutis³ were distressed at the recent events involving Russia and its behavior. They were particularly concerned about differences between the Soviet Union and Lithuania. Balutis told me the history of the conflict, but you must know these matters better than I do. He was worried about the fact that the

Russians have summoned the Lithuanian premier Merkys to Moscow. Colleague Schmidt was also disgusted at the fact that the Russians are increasing their demands in Estonia. With respect to one island which the Russians have been demanding, the Tallinn government is prepared to yield, because by way of compensation the Russians would then withdraw some of their forces from Paldiski. But the Russians are also demanding lighthouses, and the Estonians do not like this. There are also reports that the Russian activities versus the Finns have recently become more hostile. Schmidt did not know anything precise about this, but he said that he has heard such reports in the Foreign Office.

The question arises: What is behind all of this? With respect to Lithuania, both colleagues believe that Russia, either because of genuine fear of Germany or because of some such pretext, is seeking to increase the size of its garrisons in Lithuania or else to establish a special police force which would see to it that there are no more "kidnappings".

Colleague Balutis said that he has met with people at the local Soviet embassy. They did not know anything, of course, but they told him that they understand that Lithuania could have no interest in starting any action against the Red Army, that there must be a third country (apparently they were referring to Germany) behind it.

Balutis also reported on the visit paid by the Soviet deputy war minister to Kaunas. After spending a few days there, he went to Riga and then to Tallinn, from where he returned to Moscow. Schmidt and I had no information about this.

Colleague Schmidt asked me why Gen. Berķis went to Moscow. I responded that it was because Laidoner had been there earlier. Schmidt asked about negotiations which Berķis held, and I responded that I know nothing about it. It would be good if you, honored minister, could provide me with some information about this¹.

Most respectfully yours,

K. Zariņš

Ambassador to London

LVVA, 2574.f., 3. apr., 3284.l., pp. 1-2. Original.

¹ A. Schmidt (*Torma*), the Estonian ambassador to England.

² Not published.

³ B. Balutis, the Lithuanian ambassador to England.

⁴ This request indicates that Zariņš, the bearer of emergency authority, was fully uninformed about developments in the conflict between Lithuania and the USSR, Latvia's attitude toward the conflict, and the pace of relations between Latvia and the USSR.

No. 73

A Letter from the Ambassador to the USSR, F. Kociņš, to Foreign Minister V. Munters

Moscow, 7 June 1940

Honored Minister:

On 5 June, the deputy foreign affairs commissar, Dekanozov, summoned me to his office and gave me the attached document¹. Dekanozov remarked that the need for naval construction is quite great, but their consular department has not managed to provide for relaxed requirements for their workers to enter Latvia, which they were ordered to do quite some time ago. In the name of the government, Dekanozov asked us to make an exception and issue a collective visa for 300 workers. He ordered Ambassador Derevjanskim to urgently reach agreement with our government on the same terms as have already been reached with Estonia. Dekanozov confirmed that the workers would live in regions to which they are assigned.

Between 5 and 6 June I contacted general secretary Nukša² and asked for his agreement to the issuance of a collective visa. I also asked him to inform me of the fee which should be collected for this service.

On 7 June I received your orders, on the basis of which I issued 10 collective visas for a total of 384 workers. Because there were no instructions concerning fees, I issued the visas *gratis*, keeping the right to request fees later, should the ministry so desire. Each list of visa recipients is marked with the statement that the visa allows its bearer to stay in the territory assigned to the Soviet armed forces until 30 September of this year. Moreover, I have reported to the consular department of the Foreign Affairs Commissariat that each person will need to have identity documents.

Awaiting the arrival of Lithuanian Prime Minister Merkys at the station today, I had the opportunity to meet Dekanozov. I told him that our government has been forthcoming in approving his request.

Please accept, honored minister, the confirmation of my highest respect.

[signed] *F. Kociņš*
Ambassador to the USSR

LVVA, 2570.f., 3. apr., 1254.l., p. 40. Copy.

¹ *Not published.*

² *Mārtiņš Nukša, general secretary of the Latvian Foreign Ministry.*

No. 74

Notes taken by the Director of the Baltic States Department of the Latvian Foreign Ministry, V. Māsens, about Discussions with Lithuanian Foreign Minister J. Urbšys

10 June 1940

A Discussion with the Lithuanian Foreign Minister at the Spilve Aerodrome

The minister arrived from Kaunas in a special airplane. At 12:00 he proceeded to Moscow on a commercial flight.

The minister said that it is still not clear what exactly the Russians want. No requests or suggestions have been received. Discussions with Merkys so far have indicated that the Russians are deeply dissatisfied with Latvia and, incidentally, about mutual cooperation and information among the Baltic states, which the Russians feel is anti-Russian. The various visits by leaders of the three countries have been carefully registered by the Russians. Because the foreign minister is better informed about the various questions, Merkys has requested that the minister come to Moscow to serve as a source of information. Merkys is still in Moscow.

V. Māsens

LVVA, 2574.f., 3. apr., 3291.l., p. 7. Original.

No. 75

Notes by Foreign Minister V. Munters about his Meeting with the Deputy Defense Commissar of the USSR, A. Loktionov, the Soviet Representative, V. Derevjanski, and the Commander of the Second Special Infantry Corps, N. Morozov

Riga, 11 June 1940

The discussion was friendly and lively.

Jokingly, L.¹ said that soldiers love quick and clear action and do not understand diplomatic battles over commas and periods. The foreign minister responded that we had the same situation in Moscow with the arms order: everything was settled with Loktionov, but then the "narkomtorg"² created all manner of "commas" and "percentages". L. said: Yes, we are not blameless.

He promised to be in Latvia for several days in July to do a more thorough inspection. He also promised to accept our invitation to become better acquainted with our land.

He sharply condemned the incidents in Lithuania. There is no evidence of good will there. Stalin has said that the pact must be fulfilled honestly, but the other side has its obligations, too. He explained several incidents in great detail, especially emphasizing that there is no sense in searching for Poles and "dark forces" or "black hands". There is no order there. How can they spend two months looking for a man, only to find a "corpse" who shot himself in the mouth, but the bullet ended up in his heart"³? How can they ask that a man who escaped by crawling through a sewage pipe later tell in which house it was? There's an energetic interior minister there. Let him take some engineers, some plans, and go look for the house. Why should the Russians point it out? How can a driver disappear from a yard which is protected by the Lithuanians when he has supposedly gone only to get his hat? This cannot be called an orderly situation, and therefore order must be established. It is hoped that this process will be successful. There are no problems with Latvia and Estonia.

Derevjanski intervened to say that there are two matters: two more aerodromes, and the order for traffic among the various garrisons. In the winter he had to pass through Riga to go from Liepāja to Ventspils, but now a land route

is possible, and it would be laughable to have to report each trip to the garrison commander.

Morozov spoke little, only murmuring that everything is all right.

Then Loktionov asked about the agreement on telegraphs, telephones and radio and asked that the process be speeded up⁴.

Later, over dinner with Loktionov, I got the sense that he views the possibility of a German-Soviet conflict somewhat disbelievingly. Of course, he said, we are used to being alone with enemies beyond the walls, and we are prepared for all types of possibilities. But Germany has an interest in maintaining good relations with us. The war has weakened Germany and will continue to do so. It will get stuck even deeper, and therefore it is unthinkable that it might turn on the USSR.

The same thought was expressed in a very interesting and well-argued way by Derevjanski, who spoke in a different setting. He analyzed the various possible reasons for a conflict between Germany and the USSR and concluded that none of these is of sufficient significance. In the Balkans, the USSR has announced its interests and has established stability **for the time being**. Italy has been forced to alter its unclear and potentially dangerous policies vis a vis the Balkans. In terms of trade, German is a very interesting factor not only for the USSR, but for the entire world. The Germans and Russians are not separated by any antagonism. The domestic order cannot be a reason for war. Of course, the USSR had to make concessions, keeping their silence, for example, when small nations came under German domination (when the discussion concerned the Czechs, our tone was much different, D.⁵ said). But Russia has not abandoned its basic principles and will not do so.

D. believes that Europe may divide into three large spheres: the Roman, the Germanic, and the Slavic. France and England have only themselves to blame for the current situation. Russia feels no moral obligation to sympathize or even help them.

/Unsigned/

LVVA, 2574.f., 3.apr., 3311.l., pp. 5-7. Original.

⁴ Loktionov.

² *The Soviet foreign trade commissariat. The reference is to difficulties Latvia experienced in purchasing weapons in the Soviet Union.*

³ *Loktionov's description of an incident involving G. Butajev on 12 May 1940.*

⁴ *The reference is to agreements on the rights of the Soviet military to use telephone communications, telegraph services, etc.*

⁵ *Derevjanski.*

No. 76

A Report from the Ambassador to Lithuania, L. Sēja, to Foreign Minister V. Munters

11 June 1940

Honored Minister:

Foreign Minister Urbšys' departure for Moscow on the morning of 10 June came as a great surprise, because on the evening of the previous day (Sunday), nothing was known of this. On the evening of 9 June, Merkys summoned Urbšis to Moscow. It turns out that the second meeting between Merkys and Molotov, which had been planned for Saturday, 8 June, did not take place until Sunday, 9 June. It was after this meeting that Merkys called Urbšis to Moscow.

The second meeting between Merkys and Molotov concerned very different matters than the ones which were considered in the first meeting. This time Molotov wished to discuss Lithuania's relations with Latvia and Estonia. Molotov sees various unclear or even suspicious elements in these relations. As far as Kaunas knows at this time, Molotov spoke of the following things: 1) Conferences among the Baltic foreign ministers have been occurring with greater frequency; 2) Lithuania has signed a convention of a military nature with Latvia and Estonia; 3) Lithuania has appointed a military attache to Tallinn, and vice versa; 4) There have been several meetings between high-ranking military officials; 5) Prime Minister Merkys has published an important article in the Tallinn newspaper *Baltic Times*.

As you can see, the five matters have to do with all three Baltic states. With respect to the question (i.e., the absolutely invented assertion) concerning the military convention, this issue has a history. Back on 3 May Ambassador Pozdniakov began to query the director of the

political department, Turauskas¹ about this matter. Turauskas could only clearly and categorically deny that there is any such convention or even that there had ever been any consideration of such a thing. This did not keep Molotov from presenting the convention as a done deal on 10 June. Merkys was able to easily provide what the Lithuanians believe to be convincing and full replies to all questions, but Molotov was not, alas, convinced. He kept to his accusations and remained dissatisfied. Seeing that Moscow had injected an unexpected element of politics into the negotiations, Merkys decided to summon Urbšys so that the appropriate minister would be at his side. Leaving Kaunas, Urbšys had no idea what would await him in Moscow and for what he would be asked to take responsibility.

With respect to the first (6 June) meeting, Kaunas now has further details. The Russians are claiming that junior officer Butajev was shot by the Lithuanians. In late May in Aļita, there was a pharmacist shooting a revolver in his back yard to scare crows, but the Russians think that he was trying to shoot Red Army personnel who were in the area. In early June the Lithuanians ejected five women from Aļita who had been doing the laundry for the Red Army but whom the police suspected of having engaged in prostitution. The Russians have demanded that the women be returned. These incidents cast vivid light on the nature of the Russian accusations.

At the same time, it is amazing that the Russians are talking about all manner of nonsense, such as the shooting of crows, washerwomen, etc. If they wanted to, they could certainly stage some incident or greater provocation! The lives of a few Red Army soldiers or a serious fire would be a small price to pay. But no! They are not thinking of greater provocations. Instead they are blabbering about dirty laundry.

The trips by Merkys and now Urbšys have considerably agitated the local German representatives. Col. Just² has said that these events are of great interest to the Germans. Today Just spoke of the Russian game with extreme hostility.

The government in Kaunas, as well as Lithuanian society, are very depressed. No one expects anything good to come of the negotiations in Moscow. A fairly visible

gentleman in town today expressed the suspicion that Moscow is trying to engender a few changes in the Lithuanian government. They are particularly dissatisfied with the int[er]ior min[ister], Skučas. But they also don't trust Merkys.

Most respectfully yours,

L. Sēja

Ambassador to Lithuania

LVVA, 2574.f., 3.apr., 3291.l., pp 37-37a. Original.

¹ E. Turauskas, the director of the political department at the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry.

² Col. E. Just, the German military attache in Lithuania.

No. 77

Excerpt from Notes taken by Foreign Minister V. Munters about his Meeting with Lithuanian Prime Minister A. Merkys at the Spilve Airport

12 June 1940, 11:40-12:50

[...] Sighing heavily, Merkys said several times that he is completely exhausted. He had meetings with Molotov until 11:30 last night, after which he drank champagne at the embassy. Reklaitis¹ stayed in Moscow. Mačulis² is traveling with Merkys. The discussion with Molotov took eight hours. The meeting was heavy, unpleasant and incoherent. Molotov is a difficult man. No argumentation, just "goloslovnje utverždenija"³! He paints himself into corners and burns his bridges.

Nothing is clear. Merkys thinks that so far we have seen only the blossoms and that the "fruit" is yet to come. He will immediately fire the head of the security police, and the interior minister will have to go, too. There is dissatisfaction with Baltic cooperation. Russia is not being given the appropriate protocols, it is not receiving information. "Začiem Vam vsjo eto?"⁴

The Russians are very jumpy, bringing up unbelievable or completely forgotten matters. They simply cannot be convinced. The suicide of the agent. That was a GPU man⁵ who maintained (fully official) contacts with Lithuanian agents and met with them several times. Finally he wanted to flee, or possibly lost favor. The Russians demanded his arrest. Inexperienced police officers

were sent. They let the man flee and chased him. Then he shot himself. [...]

Another incident. The Lithuanians began a sweep and arrested several prostitutes. Molotov is complaining that 12 laundresses were taken. When a list of names is demanded, it turns out that three of the washerwomen were among the prostitutes, but the Russians wouldn't take them back. [...]

The Russians have made no military demands. They also have not made direct demands that Baltic cooperation be suspended, but it was clear that they want this. Merkys will not attend Baltic Week and has asked that discussions be limited⁶. Urbšys will stay in Moscow "for at least a month" to observe the atmosphere and will return to Lithuania only if everything is settled.

LVVA, 2575.f., 14. apr., 5.l., pp. 566-567. Original.

¹ Gen. M. Reklaitis, the Lithuanian representative to the Lithuanian-Soviet commission which dealt with matters concerning the Soviet military in Lithuania, its supply lines, etc.

² M. Mačulis, an employee of the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry.

³ "baseless allegations".

⁴ "Why do you need to do this?"

⁵ GPU - the Soviet security service; G. Butajev - a lieutenant in the Red Army.

⁶ Baltic Week, a meeting of cultural and social organizations from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania which began in Tallinn on 15 June 1940 but did not run its course because of the occupation of the Baltic states.

No. 78

A Telephonogram from Capt. Holanders of the Latvian Border Guard, No. A 11-851

15 June 1940, 12:45

To the Commander of the Border Guard Brigade

The following has happened at the headquarters of Unit 1 of the Third Abrene Battalion:

At 3:00 a.m. this morning, 15 June, as the sun was rising, Soviet border guards crossed the border and attacked the building of the second guard at Masļenki, surprising the guards there. As a result, the building was burned down. In the wreckage, the burned bodies of the guard commander's wife and one of the guards were found.

The body of the other guard, shot from behind, was found dressed in underwear approximately 100 meters behind the guard building. The wife of one guard, as well as the 14-year-old son of the commander, were found badly injured. The Red Army captures and took away three other guards. At the place of the incident, the Red Army has left the following material evidence: 20 fired shell casings, one hand grenade, one pair of wire-cutting scissors with which telephone lines were cut approximately 150 meters from the guard building, and one individual packet which has been handled by an injured person, because a trail of blood can be seen going in the direction of the border. At the same time, an attack was also launched against the building of the third guard at Šmaļi. According to an eyewitness, the wife of the guard Ozolnieks, approximately 15 Red Army soldiers attacked, dividing into two groups: one of them went to the area behind the building to seek the guards in their family apartments, while the other captured the guards in the building without opposition. The receiver has been torn from the telephone in the building. The Red Army took away four guards, the wife of one guard, and the miller Smukkalns with his family and employees. Seeing the fire at the second guard building, a shepherd from the Kareļi windmill, Vitoliņš, went to the first guard to make a report. The commander of the guard and two guards hurried to help, but when they arrived at the scene they were captured and taken away across the border. In addition, the commander of the fourth guard, who went to inspect the third guard at approximately 3:20, was also captured.

All told, two guards and one woman were *shot and killed*

one woman and one boy were *injured*

two commanders, nine guards, one woman and, we later learned, 27 civilians, were *taken across the border*.

There was absolutely no reason for the Red Army attack and the accompanying violence. There have been no border conflicts with the border guards of the USSR.

Capt. *Holandars*

Third battalion

LVVA, 2574.f., 2. apr., 7082.l., p. 4. Copy.

A Telegram from the German Ambassador to Latvia, U. von Kotze, to the Foreign Ministry*Riga, 17 June 1940, 13:33**Received 17 June 1940, 17:05*

Munters¹ just received me for a final discussion. He briefly explained the content of the Russian ultimatum² which was distributed by TASS at 7:00 a.m. this morning and of which I believe you are aware. With respect to the Russian accusations in Moscow, the government responded that the maintenance of the Estonian and Latvian defense pact³ cannot be seen as a military conspiracy against the Soviet Union, especially give that when the mutual assistance pact was signed in Moscow, Selter⁴ was clearly told that the Soviet Union does not see the pact as a cause for dissatisfaction. The government also rejected the idea that mutual visits among the military attaches and the various courtesy visits which have been made by military officials were in any way hostile to Russia. With respect to other issues, the government said that it would continue to loyally execute the mutual assistance agreement and would therefore permit the entry and free movement of new Soviet military units. Moreover, in order to facilitate the reorganization of the Cabinet, the government resigned *in toto* on the night of 16 June. Early this morning, the commander of the general headquarters went to Jonišķi⁵ to discuss with Russian tank commanders their desires with respect to movement of the armed forces. As far as Munters knew, motorized units have so far crossed the border only at Zilupe. Today or tomorrow Latvia is expecting the arrival of a Russian delegate⁶ similar to Dekanozov⁷ so that discussions with him or with the local Russian ambassador can begin with respect to the establishment of a new Cabinet.

The President and government have unanimously decided to keep working until the reorganization, in order to save the people from the bitter consequences which were caused by the Lithuanian panic. The Cabinet has been in session since 10:00, discussing emergency security measures to provide for the maintenance of order. Ulmanis and his ministers, said M[unters], always knew that they would have to stand or fall with the regime which was

implemented in May⁸. They will maintain faithful to this concept, no matter what the final consequences.

Kotze

PAAA, R 29895.-214856-214857. Original.

¹ The Latvian foreign minister.

² See Doc. 82. The Russian ultimatum was odious and full of lies. Latvia's accusations against Latvia were foolish inventions.

³ The reference is to a defense union which was established by Latvia and Estonia on 1 November 1923 and extended on 17 February 1934.

⁴ The Estonian foreign minister.

⁵ See Doc. 89.

⁶ The deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, A. Vyshinskii, was sent to Latvia to control the situation until Latvia's annexation.

⁷ The deputy foreign affairs commissar of the USSR, V. Dekanozov, was sent to Lithuania as a special-purposes ambassador. He arrived in Lithuania on 15 June 1940, the first day of the occupation. His first goal was to make sure that Lithuania fulfilled the demands which Moscow had made in its ultimatum.

⁸ The reference is to the authoritarian regime which K. Ulmanis established in Latvia on 15 May 1934.

No. 80

A Telegram from the German Ambassador to Latvia, U. von Kotze, to the Foreign Ministry

Riga, 20 June 1940, 21:07

Received 21 June 1940, 1:40

Negotiations on the establishment of a new government have concluded. The membership of the Cabinet will be published tonight or early tomorrow morning. The President will remain in office. The prime minister and foreign minister will be the social sciences professor Kirhenšteins (b. 1872), who is known as a complex man, an occasional employee of the newspaper *Jaunākās Ziņas*, and completely devoid of any experience which would be suitable for his new jobs. The war minister will be Gen. Dambītis, who some time ago was fired from his job as deputy director of the customs service because of repeated taking of bribes. He is an alcoholic. The interior minister will be Vilis Lācis (b. 1904), a fisherman, harborman and librarian, very leftist. The welfare minister will be Jūlijs

Lācis (b. 1892), who studied social sciences in Paris and is an employee of *JZ*¹. The transportation minister will be Jagars, at one time a member of the council of the Social Democratic party. The army commander will be Gen. Roberts Kļaviņš (b. 1885), formerly the commander of the border guard, retired in 1934 because he was the only general who did not participate in Ulmanis' putsch. The social affairs minister will be the editor in chief of *JZ*, Pēteris Blaus. The justice minister - Juris Pabērzs, who has served as the deputy procurator of Daugavpils. The job of education minister is vacant, as are the jobs of finance minister and trade minister. The deputy interior minister will be Latkovskis, a Latvian who is absolutely unknown.

Further information² will be submitted in writing after the official publication [of the Cabinet membership]. There are no Hebrews in the Cabinet, but there also are no strong personalities, which means that some ministers will be nothing more than front-men for Russian agents and commissars. A very important factor will be the extent to which Ulmanis maintains influence after leaving the premiership. The overall tendency right now is distinctively hostile to Germany. We can only wait and see whether this group will be able to maintain order.

Over the last several nights, large contingents of tanks, anti-tank units and infantry units, have been in evidence on the country's highways and railroads. It is said that the Ventspils line has already been overtaken and that its extension to points beyond Dubisa and reconstruction of the Daugava section have begun. It is certain that Riga, Jelgava, Kuldīga, Daugavpils and Cēsis have been occupied. The number of soldiers cannot be determined. The absence of a military attache, of which I have complained before, is now particularly sorely felt. I would remind you, with respect to Telegram 243 Tallinn³, that here, too, the occupation seems hurried and nervous. Commissar Vyshinskii has reportedly told the Latvians that Eastern Prussia is teeming with soldiers⁴ and that the occupation is needed in order to protect the Baltic states⁵.

PAAA, R 29895.-214832-214833. Original.

¹ The reference is to the newspaper *Jaunākās Ziņas*.

² Further details about the Kirhenšteins government can be found See Doc. 102.

³ The telegram was not published.

⁴ Actually, there were only a few small units of the German armed forces stationed in Eastern Prussia in June 1940. The main German forces were occupied on the western front. This is the precise reason why Berlin was worried about the entry of a large Soviet force into the Baltic states. According to information which was available at the German Foreign Ministry, Moscow planned to concentrate 100 divisions in the Baltic states - 50 in Lithuania, 30 in Latvia and 20 in Estonia. (PAAA, R 104590-379938).

⁵ The claim was knowingly false.

No. 81

A Telegram from the German Ambassador to Latvia, U. von Kotze, to the Foreign Ministry

Riga, 21 June 1940, 22:18

Received 22 June 1940, 2:55

Extremely urgent

Today I called on the Soviet ambassador here, Derevjanski, to discuss the situation which has developed since the entry of the armed forces. At first the Russians were quite icy and mistrustful. There were two Russian secretaries and a translator. On the basis of what Molotov¹ told Graf Schulenburg² about the causes for the incidents here³, I asked whether any particular factors had been noted here which would indicate the presence of an anti-Soviet conspiracy. Derevjanski responded only that his country felt threatened because of the military pact⁴ among its border states and added that the pact could also be turned against Germany. The Soviet Union could no longer tolerate this intrigue, which is supported by England and which is aimed at involving Sweden and at mobilizing Polish protesters to demand the restoration of Poland. The Soviet Union fully destroyed these factors by bringing in its armed forces.

The ambassador, seemingly, did not wish to limit his statement to what had already been told to Latvia in the 16 June note and our conversation threatened to end, I turned the talk to Latvia's domestic situation and asked what consequences there might be in separating the jobs of president and prime minister and what impressions the embassy had gotten of the new government. Derevjanski responded that Ulmanis had personally told him that fur-

ther processes would have to be based on the 1922 Constitution (which, according to the ambassador, has never been repealed) and that holding new elections would not be out of the question. When the ambassador asked my opinion about the new government, I responded that during my relatively brief tenure in Latvia there had been no changes in government and that the new ministers are not known to me. Then the ambassador became a bit more talkative and explained that in his view, the government will prove able to maintain stability and order but that otherwise the regulation of relations between the President and the Cabinet, as well as the way in which constitutional order will be reinstated in the country, are matters entirely in the hands of Latvia, and the Soviet Union will not interfere.

The exchange of views during our 75-minute conversation became more frank. When Derevjanski said that English provocateurs are spreading the news that the Soviet armed forces had entered the Baltic states as a precursor for an attack on Germany and that the Soviets want to use the armed forces of the three countries as cannon fodder, adding that all of these reports are fully untrue, I responded, based on the Fuehrer's statement to the military attache, that other provocateurs have spread the news that our army is being massed in Eastern Prussia with hostile intent vis a vis the Soviet Union. I emphasized on the basis of my government's instructions that there is not a shred of truth to these claims and that the German government has given clear orders that any kind of disturbance of the good relations between German and the Soviet Union must be avoided. These words visibly calmed the ambassador and his colleagues. He stood up and asked us to drink a toast to the friendship between the people of Germany and the Soviet Union. Then he told me that these sly reports are being spread by certain individuals who are connected to the British embassy in Riga.

He asked whether I could give any new information or explanations in this regard, I spontaneously replied that this time I could not but that I would do so if any such material were to come to my attention. This prompted Derevjanski to return to matters which had already been considered and to express much more far-reaching views.

Investigation of the secret Baltic military pact is continuing, and persons who are found to be responsible for

the agreement will be made to answer for their actions. The Soviet government is interested in seeing to it that there is a government in Latvia which has a definitively pro-Soviet position and demonstrates greater support for the mutual assistance pact, doing everything to fulfill its obligations honorably and demonstrating greater understanding of the Soviet Union's various foreign policy commitments and domestic concerns. The Soviet government will pay particular attention to seeing that there is no propaganda in Latvia hostile to Germany and the Soviet Union. The new government will take the necessary steps to make sure this is true. The ambassador added that the Soviets are "seriously oriented" to seeing to it that the right of Germans to emigrate is observed⁵ and guaranteeing the lives and property of the Germans, always making sure that Latvian foreign policy maintains good relations with the Soviet Union and Germany.

Derevjanskis continued by expressing the hope that the occupation has not been the cause of any complaints on my part. He has recommended the immediate return of the German ships and asked me to inform him of any wish so that he might more easily overcome any difficulties which there might be. We confirmed to one another that we will devote greater attention to close contacts between our embassies and do everything possible to maintain active and friendly relations. [...]

PAAA, R 29895-214828-214830. *Original.*

¹ *The Soviet foreign affairs commissar.*

² *The German ambassador to the USSR.*

³ *The reference is to a discussion between V. Molotov and F. V. von der Schulenburg on 18 June 1940.*

⁴ *There was never any secret military agreement among Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania.*

⁵ *Berlin was interested in the transfer of the value of properties abandoned by Baltic Germans to Germany. Before the occupation of Latvia, the two countries did not manage to reach agreement on the transfer procedure.*

Chapter IV

The Kirhenšteins Cabinet: The Occupation Regime

No. 82

**Notes¹ Concerning a Conversation between the
Foreign Affairs Commissar of the USSR,
V. Molotov, and the Latvian Ambassador to the
Soviet Union, F. Kociņš**

Moscow, 16 June 1940

Comrade Molotov summoned the Latvian ambassador, Kociņš, at 14:00 today and announced that as Kociņš could probably surmise, the conversation would concern the work of the Baltic Entente. Molotov read out the Soviet Union's announcement to the Latvian government and then handed it to Kociņš.

Having listened to and accepted the Soviet government's announcement, began to talk about the fact that the Latvian pact with Estonia was ten years old and was well known to everyone. With respect to Lithuania, Kociņš said it had not joined the military union.

Comrade Molotov asked the ambassador whether he really felt that the union was not in contradiction with the Latvian-Soviet mutual assistance pact.

In response, Kociņš murmured that the pact had been established when Poland was still in existence ... and asked comrade Molotov whether the matter might not be settled in some other fashion. He also stated that comrade Molotov is personally well acquainted with Kociņš and knows that he has always stood for good relations with the Soviet Union, etc.

Comrade Molotov responded that he does know Kociņš and has no objection to him personally. He is convinced that not only Kociņš, but others in Latvia as well, are in favor of good relations with the Soviet Union. But the current Latvian government has a hostile attitude toward the Soviet Union. At a time when the government of the Soviet Union is implementing pro-Latvian policies, the Latvian government is doing the opposite.

Kociņš claimed that he had frequently asked comrade Molotov and other individuals at the Foreign Affairs Commissariat whether they could not suggest ways in which the relations between the USSR and Latvia might be improved and that he had never heard any complaints. To this, comrade Molotov responded that what Kociņš had been told dealt largely with everyday questions.

Kociņš again began to say that he sees no basis for the Soviet Union's announcement.

Comrade Molotov responded that the Soviet government has adequate facts at its disposal. The talks which recently took place in Moscow with the Lithuanian prime minister, Merkys, confirmed many things and opened our eyes. We saw that behind the Soviet Union's back, an anti-Soviet military union had been established. The Baltic Entente has been very active, has published its own organ, *Revue Baltique*, in which Merkys himself has written about closer Baltic cooperation.

Kociņš replied that the cooperation is of an economic nature, but comrade Molotov pointed out that the text of the article contains the words "economic cooperation *also*". Lithuania had begun to openly demonstrate its hostility to the Soviet Union (the kidnapping of Soviet military men, etc.). Latvia has also been acting against the Soviet Union's interests, only in a more discreet way.

After several attempts to prove that the Soviet announcement is unjustified, Kociņš began to speak of the specific issues raised in the announcement. He said that the Latvian government was being given too little time to prepare a response. Kociņš wanted to go to Riga and try to serve the interests of both sides. He asked whether the term might not be extended.

In response, comrade Molotov told Kociņš that the announcement is not his (Molotov's) personal statement but that it is an announcement of the Soviet government. He cannot change anything in it.

Then Kociņš asked for more details about the demand that a new government be established.

Comrade Molotov explained that the current government must resign but that the Soviet government would reach agreement with the President. Our representative in Latvia will be given instructions in this respect. Perhaps someone will be sent to Riga from Moscow. It is important that everything be agreed. If the Latvian government will not cooperate, the government of the USSR will take the steps which are indicated in the announcement.

Comrade Molotov continued by expressing astonishment at the behavior of the Latvian government and ambassador. The events in Lithuania were known yesterday,

but the Latvian government and ambassador kept silent, as though it had nothing to do with them.

Kociņš claimed that he learned about these events only in the morning and that the TASS text was received in Riga very late.

Then Kociņš asked comrade Molotov how large an armed forces contingent would be brought into Latvia.

Comrade Molotov responded that he could not provide precise figures but that probably there would be about two corps. Comrade Molotov warned the ambassador that will be only a temporary situation. When the new government is established, further negotiations will be possible.

At the end of the conversation, Kociņš again asked for an extension of the term in which Latvia's government must reply so that Kociņš could travel to Riga in the morning and do something in the interests of both sides.

Comrade Molotov repeated his refusal.

Before leaving, Kociņš announced that yesterday an armed group of individuals crossed the Latvian-Soviet border from the Soviet side and attacked two border guard posts. As a result, several Latvian border guardsmen have been killed, while others were taken away to Soviet territory. A Latvian border guard building was burned, etc.

Kociņš asked comrade Molotov to order an investigation.

Comrade Molotov responded that he will order an investigation into the facts which Kociņš presented.

The conversation ended at 14:23.

Notes taken by S. Kozirev

Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 384-386.

¹ *This is the Soviet version of the discussion. Notes taken by the Latvian ambassador at the same conversation are published in Document No. 87.*

No. 83

The Announcement Issued by the Government of the USSR to the Government of Latvia

16 June 1940

On the basis of facts which are known to the Soviet government, and on the basis of an exchange of views which recently took place in Moscow between the chairman

of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, Molotov, and the prime minister of Lithuania, Merkys, the Soviet government has concluded that the Latvian government has not only failed to dismantle the anti-Soviet military union which was established with Estonia prior to the signing of the Soviet-Latvian mutual assistance agreement, but has broadened the union, bringing Lithuania into it and trying to attract Finland, as well.

Before the signing of the Soviet-Latvian mutual assistance pact in the Fall of 1939, the Soviet government could choose to ignore the existence of this military union, even though its existence was in fact contrary to the terms of the Soviet-Latvian non-aggression pact which had been signed earlier. After the signing of the Soviet-Latvian mutual assistance pact, however, the Soviet government considers an anti-Soviet military union among Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania not only to be impermissible and intolerable, but also to be deeply dangerous and threatening to the security of the Soviet Union's borders.

The Soviet government had assumed that after the conclusion of the Soviet-Latvian mutual assistance pact, Latvia would withdraw from the military union with the other Baltic countries and that the union would thus be dissolved. But Latvia, together with the other Baltic countries, instead chose to renew and broaden the military union. This is evidenced by facts such as the organization of two secret Baltic state conferences in December 1939 and March 1940, to formally establish a broadened military union with Estonia and Lithuania; the strengthening of contacts among the military headquarters of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania, a step which was hidden from the USSR; the establishment of a special press organ of the military Baltic Entente in February 1940, *Revue Baltique*¹, which is published in English, French and German in Tallinn; et al.

These facts prove that the Latvian government has grossly violated the terms of the Soviet-Latvian mutual assistance pact, in which both parties undertake "not to conclude any agreement or participate in any coalition which is aimed against one of the Signatory Parties" (§4 of the agreement).

This gross violation of the Soviet-Latvian mutual assistance pact on the part of the Latvian government has

occurred at a time when the Soviet Union has implemented and is continuing to implement policies which are most favorable and very pro-Latvian in nature. The Soviet Union has promptly carried out all of the obligations which have been placed upon it by the Soviet-Latvian mutual assistance pact.

The Soviet Union finds that this state of affairs can no longer be tolerated.

The government of the USSR declares that the following steps are fully necessary and must be taken without delay:

- 1) A government must immediately be established in Latvia which is ready and willing to provide for an honest implementation of the Soviet-Latvian mutual assistance pact;

- 2) The free entry of the Soviet armed forces must immediately be permitted so that military units might be placed at the most important centers in Latvia to an extent which would provide for the implementation of the Soviet-Latvian mutual assistance pact and which would avert any provocative actions against the Soviet garrison in Latvia.

The Soviet government considers the acceptance of these demands to be an elementary step without which the honest and loyal implementation of the Soviet-Latvian mutual assistance pact will not be possible².

Valdības Vēstnesis, 17 June 1940.

¹ The agreement which was signed in Tallinn on 10 December 1939 provided that the publication of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian cooperation bureau, *Revue Baltique*, would serve to facilitate closer unity among the Baltic countries, a mutual exchange of information, and the spread of information about the Baltic states throughout the world. The second edition of the magazine was prepared for publication but never published. It included several materials about Latvia: an article by V. Munters on developments in Latvian foreign policy; a piece by A. Zalts on the repatriation of Germans from Latvia; an article by O. Nonācs about the exchange of spiritual values; one by J. Vītolīņš on contemporary Latvian music; and one by J. Kadilis on Latvian literature. 1940 god v Estonii: Dokumenti i materialī. Tallinn: Olion (1989), pp. 100-101.

² The Soviet announcement was published in *Izvestija* as a TASS report on 17 June 1940. The Latvian Telegraph Agency picked

up, translated and distributed the material in Latvian. It was published in *Valdības Vēstnesis* on 17 June and by other newspapers on subsequent days. The TASS report did not include the last paragraph of the announcement, which stated: "The Soviet government expects the response of the Latvian government by 11:00 p.m. on 16 June. The failure of the Latvian government to provide a response within this timeframe will be considered to be a refusal to comply with the demands of the Soviet Union". (Translated from the Russian and taken from a publication of the document in *Polpredi soobščajut ...*, p. 387). In place of the missing paragraph, TASS wrote: "Yesterday Ambassador Kociņš delivered a response in which the Latvian government announced its agreement with the demands of the Soviet Union".

No. 84

Notes Concerning a Conversation Between the Foreign Affairs Commissar of the USSR, V. Molotov, and the Latvian Ambassador, F. Kociņš

Moscow, 16 June 1940

The Latvian ambassador Kociņš arrived in my office at 19:45 and reported that he had contacted Riga, delivered the announcement of the Soviet Union to his government, and received the following reply:

1. The government of Latvia is prepared to provide free entry for the Soviet armed forces, but because of a festival¹, there are a great many people in the Lonkaši region, and they will be there until late at night. The Lat[vian] gov[ernment] fears that the concentration of people might lead to undesirable incidents between the Soviet [military] units which will enter Latvia and participants in the festival. For that reason, the Latvian government asks that the entry of the Soviet military into Latvia be postponed until the morning of 17 June.

The Latvian government also asks that the military designate the roads by which its armed forces will travel.

2. Because not all members of the Latvian government are in Riga at this time, and there is not an adequate quorum to take a decision on the resignation of the current government and the assembling of a new one, the Latvian government asks for permission to report that a quorum will be assembled before 8:00 p.m.

The president of the Republic of Latvia asks that he be informed of the individual with whom he should undertake contacts to begin the process of appointing a new government.

3. The government of Latvia asks that the Soviet announcement not be published in the press, because the ultimatum might leave a bad impression. It would be useful from the perspective of relations between the two countries if the announcement were not published.

In his response, comrade Molotov stated that the entry of the Soviet military into Latvia could be begun between 3:00 and 4:00 a.m. tomorrow, 17 June, so the festival will not interfere with the entry.

With respect to the roads which will be taken by the Soviet military, comrade Molotov and Kociņš agreed that the two sides would appoint representatives to undertake contacts on this matter. The two sides agreed to exchange the names of their representatives within an hour or two.

Comrade Molotov reported to Kociņš that the Soviet government would deliver a special announcement to the Latvian government so that local authorities and residents can be advised not to create any misunderstandings during the entry of the Soviet armed forces into Latvia.

With respect to the resignation of the government, comrade Molotov stated that because a quorum would be assembled at 8:00 p.m., Kociņš will have time to get a final response before the expiration of the deadline.

With respect to the president's request that he be informed of the individual with whom he should undertake contacts in order to begin the process of establishing a new government, the name of the respective individual will be reported later.

Comrade Molotov rejected the request that the Soviet government announcement not be published. Kociņš began to ask comrade Molotov to postpone the publication for a certain time. Comrade Molotov asked how long the Latvian government would like to delay the publication, but Kociņš did not respond, saying that the government did not provide him with a specific term.

Comrade Molotov promised the ambassador that he would report to his government the request that the publication not be published, but he added that he could

not promise that the matter would be resolved in a positive manner, because the announcement cannot be kept secret.

The conversation was noted by *Kozirev*

Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 390-391.

¹ *The Latgale Song Festival was held on 16 June 1940 in Daugavpils. According to press reports, "the number of audience members at the festival is thought to be 100,000, while the number of choir signers is said to be 10,000". (Valdības Vēstnesis, 17 June 1940).*

No. 85

Protocol No. 40

Meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers

16 June 1940

Present:

Prime Minister	Dr. K. Ulmanis
Foreign Minister	V. Munters
Interior Minister	K. Veidnieks
War Minister	Gen. K. Berķis
Transportation Minister	A. Kāposts
Justice Minister	H. Apsīts
Trade and Industry Minister	J. Blumbergs
Minutes taken by the acting director of the Government Office,	R. Bulsons.

The meeting was begun at 19:00.

1) Foreign Minister V. Munters reported on the ultimatum which the chairman of the Council of Commissars of the USSR submitted to the Latvian ambassador to Moscow on 16 June 1940 at 14:00 (13:00 Latvian time).

2) The Cabinet decided to accept the Soviet government's demand concerning the entry of supplementary military units into Latvia¹.

3) The Cabinet decided to announce to the President the resignation of the Cabinet of Ministers and to consider this decision to be immediately reported to President Kārlis Ulmanis.

The meeting was concluded at 22:00.

Prime Minister *K. Ulmanis*

Acting director of the Government Office *R. Bulsons*

LVA, 270.f., 1. apr., 2.l., p. 84; also Šneidere, I. and Žvinklis, A. (ed.). Latvijas Republikas Ministru kabineta sēžu protokoli: 1940. gada 16. jūnijs - 19. jūlijs (Protocols of the Meetings of

the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia, June 16 - July 19 1940). Riga: Zinātne (1991), p. 9.

¹The report by the Latvian Telegraph Agency stated the following: "After the 16 June announcement by the Soviet government was received, the government immediately met in emergency session under the leadership of the President, Dr. Kārlis Ulmanis. The government decided to report to the Soviet government that in the same spirit of trust with which the government has heretofore executed the mutual assistance pact, it now agrees to the demand of the Soviet government that units of the Soviet armed forces be admitted to Latvia". (Valdības Vēstnesis, 17 June 1940).

No. 86

Notes Concerning a Conversation Between the Foreign Affairs Commissar of the USSR, V. Molotov, and the Latvian Ambassador, F. Kociņš

Moscow, 16 June 1940

Kociņš came to my office at 22:40 and on orders from his government reported that the entire Cabinet of Ministers (6 individuals), except two members of the Cabinet who had not yet returned to Riga¹, has stepped down. Thus Kociņš officially reported to comrade Molotov that the Soviet Union's demands with respect to the government have been accepted.

Kociņš further stated that he had been asked to learn the name of the individual with whom the President should undertake contacts in order to begin the process of selecting a new government.

Comrade Molotov responded that tomorrow (i.e., 17 June), comrade Vyshinskii², the deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, will leave for Riga. Together with the authorized representative, comrade Derevjanski, he will carry out negotiations with the President concerning the new government.

Kociņš reaffirmed the Latvian government's decision to freely admit the Soviet armed forces into Latvia. Moreover, Kociņš reported that the Latvian side has appointed the aide to the commander of the Latvian military headquarters, Col. Ūdentiņš³, to maintain contacts with the command structure of the Soviet armed forces.

Kociņš asked that the border not be crossed earlier than 9:00 a.m., because preparations for the arrival of the Soviet armed forces would require some time.

Comrade Molotov stated that he would provide information about the time of the border crossing, as well the regions at which the Soviet armed forces would cross the border, separately.

The authorized representative of the Soviet side will be Gen. Pavlov⁴.

Kociņš asked for a decision on the matter of whether the Soviet government's announcement would be published.

Comrade Molotov responded that he had forwarded the ambassador's request to the Soviet government, which decided not to publish the ultimatum contained in the announcement.

Kociņš asked that the Soviet government issue a communique in which it would simply be stated that on the basis of a proposal made by the Soviet government, the Latvian government has agreed to an increase in the number of Soviet troops stationed in Latvia.

Comrade Molotov asked: What about the government?

Kociņš responded that as the second point it could be mentioned that the Latvian government has resigned.

Comrade Molotov noted that the facts which are cited in the announcement cannot be ignored, and for that reason, the announcement will be published, but the last (ultimatum) section will be omitted. At the end of the announcement, it will be reported that the Latvian government has accepted the demands which are made in the Soviet government's announcement. The ambassador's proposal that the announcement not be published is unacceptable, because that would mean hiding the essence of the matter from society, and the reasons behind the current events would then be unclear. This would be most unfavorable, because it could lead to a variety of interpretations when the facts are quite clear: the reason for the actions is a military union. The only question is why such a union was necessary, why Lithuania had to be dragged into it, etc.

Kociņš again tried to prove that the Latvian government has had friendly relations with the USSR.

Comrade Molotov responded that of course there are individuals in Latvia who have a better attitude toward

the USSR. For example, you had a general Balodis, and he had a good attitude toward the USSR, but he was removed. And what is the purpose of all these secret conferences, the traveling by headquarters officials, the establishment of a special Baltic Entente publication, the dragging of Lithuania into the military union, etc.?

Speaking on behalf of the Latvian government, Kociņš asserted that Lithuania is not in the union.

Comrade Molotov pointed out to the ambassador that he speaks that which his government tells him to speak, but we do not trust the government. You declare that which your government has ordered you to declare. You must do this, but events must be viewed with open eyes. The attitude of the Latvian government toward the USSR was not quite honest. We became certain of this during the recent talks in Moscow with Merkys, the Lithuanian prime minister.

Kociņš once again returned to his earlier announcement, which he expressed to comrade Molotov during the day: that in talks with comrade Molotov and comrade Dekanozov⁵ he had always asked whether there are no desires with respect to relations between the two states. He never heard any complaints.

Comrade Molotov responded that the current situation has to do with current events.

At the end of the discussion, the two sides agreed that Kociņš will be summoned again so that he might be informed of the steps which the Soviet government will take with respect to the crossing of the Latvian border by the Soviet armed forces.

The conversation was noted by *Kozirev*

Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 391-392.

¹*In fact six ministers were in Daugavpils and did not participate in the Cabinet meeting.*

²*Andrei Vyshinskii (1883-1954), the chief procurator against the so-called opposition in the Soviet Union in the 1930s. From 1939 to 1944 he was the deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR. From 1940 he served as the deputy foreign affairs commissar (minister) of the USSR, and from 1949 to 1953, he was the foreign minister of the USSR.*

³*Oto Ūdentiņš (1892-1988), commander of the operative division of the Latvian army headquarters and aide to the headquarters*

commander from 1934 to 1940. In December 1940 he was commissioned as a major general in the Red Army.

⁴ Dmitri Pavlov (1897-1941), commander of the Belarussian Military Region in June 1940, colonel general.

⁵ Vladimir Dekanozov (1898-1953), deputy foreign affairs commissar of the USSR in 1940.

No. 87

A Report by the Latvian Ambassador to the Soviet Union, F. Kociņš

On 16 June of this year, at 13:00, as I was reporting to the director of the Baltic states department of the foreign affairs commissariat, Lisjak, about the results of our border guard's investigation into the events of the night from 15 to 16 June in the Masļenki region, Molotov's secretary Kozirev asked me to the telephone and informed me that Mr. Molotov would expect me at the Kremlin at 14:00. When I arrived at the Kremlin, the foreign commissar, in the presence of the secretary Kozirev, read the attached ultimatum to me, adding that he would expect our government's response by 11:00¹, or else steps would be taken. Molotov informed me that our government must resign and that negotiations with the President on the appointment of a new government would be conducted either by Ambassador Derevjanski or by a specially authorized representative. The entry of the armed forces (approximately two corps) will happen immediately, but it will be a temporary thing. Having read the ultimatum, I responded that as far as I know, Lithuania has not joined the Latvian-Estonian military agreement. I also pointed out that just a few days ago, in connection with Gen. Berķis' visit², I had asked the foreign commissar whether he might have any requests or desires which I could communicate to our government, but I was told that relations between our two countries are good. I twice asked Molotov to extend the deadline of the ultimatum so that I could fly to Riga and avert any possible misunderstanding. Molotov maintained that the response must be given before the declared deadline.

At 16:00 I managed to get a telephone connection with Foreign Minister Munters. I read the ultimatum to him. The secretary, Mr. Alberts, was also present. At 19:45 I arrived in Molotov's office in the Kremlin and gave him

the following reply, as provided by Foreign Minister Munters:

The government of Latvia, unable to recognize as justified the motivations which prompted the government of the Soviet Union to issue an ultimatum to the Latvian government, declares that it has always honestly fulfilled and will continue to fulfill the terms of the 5 October 1939 mutual assistance agreement. The government of Latvia is prepared to ensure the free entry of the Soviet Union's armed forces, but in order that this occur in an orderly manner, the government would urgently request that information be filed with respect to the roads which at least the first military units will take, and the approximate size of these units. The government of Latvia would ask that it be noted that the Latgale song festival is taking place in Daugavpils today. Some 100,000 people from all over Latgale are at the festival, and most of them will return home by road and by railroad at night, when the concert has ended. In order to avoid disorder and accidents, the government of Latvia would ask that the entry of the armed forces be postponed at least until tomorrow. Then we could send out contact officers to learn the wishes of the armed forces of the Soviet Union. With respect to the other demand, that a new government be established which would be ready and able to implement the mutual assistance pact, the President has called a meeting of the government for today. Given that today is Sunday and that some ministers are in Daugavpils, the Cabinet meeting will be possible in the evening. The decision of the government will be announced later. The government of Latvia requests that the ultimatum not be published at this time, as this would create an atmosphere which would not correspond to the friendly attitude of the Latvian government vis a vis the Soviet Union. If the government does resign today, the President will urgently wish to know with whom he should undertake contacts with respect to the establishment of the new government - the ambassador of the Soviet Union, or another authorized individual.

Having listened to our government's response, Molotov explained that they do not trust the current government, which has shunted aside individuals who were known to the Soviet Union and were sympathetic to it. Tonight he will tell me the name of the person who will conduct negotiations with the President with respect to the establish-

ment of the government. He also asked that we report the name of the military representative who will be on the border representing our side. He will inform us of the Red Army representative. With respect to our government's wish that the ultimatum not be published, he promised to discuss the matter but felt that the end to the conflict must be reported. I responded that there has been no conflict. We have honestly implemented the mutual assistance pact, and we must live not only for today, but also in the interests of the maintenance of good relations in the future. We agreed that after the finally reply is received from the government, which might occur approximately two hours hence, I will would visit Molotov again.

At 22:30 Molotov received me at the Kremlin for a third time. I officially reported that our government has accepted both of the demands made by the Soviet Union. Six ministers, a majority, have submitted their resignations to the President. There is no doubt that the other ministers will follow suit tonight, thus it can be said that the government has resigned. [...] In my discussion with Molotov I asked him not to place guards at the state's buildings and institutions, as was done in Lithuania, because we ourselves guarantee order and peace in the country. Molotov responded that this will be dependent on the position which we take. At 1:30 a.m. on 17 June of this year, I visited Molotov for the last time. I received the attached announcement and, at approximately 3:00 a.m. Moscow time, I delivered it to Mr. Munters. On 17 June of this year, I went to the train station with Molotov's deputy, Vyshinskii, who has been assigned by the Soviet government to go to Riga and carry out talks with the President concerning the establishment of a new government. The general secretary of the foreign affairs commissariat, Soboljev, and the director of the Baltic states department, Lisjak, both of whom I met at the station, confirmed to me that the entry of the armed forces into Latvia is taking place in a most orderly manner.

[...] I would add that since 17 June of this year, I have had no further discussions with Molotov.

21 June 1940

F. Kociņš

Ambassador to the USSR

Архив Внешней Политики Российской Федерации, 38-d.f., 2.apr., 95.l., pp. 154-155. Original.

¹ Meaning 23:00 on 16 June, Moscow time.

² The war minister and military commander of the Republic of Latvia, Gen. Krišjānis Berķis, made an official visit to Moscow from 2 to 12 June 1940. During the visit, the Latvian delegation was received by V. Molotov, among others.

No. 88

A Telegram From the Authorized Representative of the USSR in Latvia, Vladimir Derevjanski, to the Foreign Affairs Commissariat of the USSR

16 June 1940

Received by telephone in Moscow on 17 June 1940 at 00:10.

Munters' requests:

1) That we postpone the entry of our armed forces into Latvia until 10:00 a.m. 17 June Moscow time, because a song festival is taking place in Latvia (Daugavpils). This is a national festival which as many as 100,000 people attended. These people, traveling home tonight in their wagons, will congest the roads in Latgale, and many may well be drunk. The authorities will have problems ensuring the necessary order for the movement of the Soviet armed forces.

2) He asked that the note submitted by Moscow not be published and that we limit ourselves with a communique stating that the Soviet government believed it necessary to increase the size of its military contingent and that the Latvian government agreed. Munters said that in order to maintain friendly relations between the governments of the USSR and Latvia, this type of communique would be necessary.

Derevjanski

Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 393-394.

No. 89

A Protocol of Agreement Between Representatives of the Soviet Military Command and the Latvian Military Command

17 June 1940

On behalf of the Soviet side, the colonel general of the tank division, comrade Pavlov; and on behalf of the Latvian side, colonel Ūdentīņš.

On 17 June 1940, the two sides agreed to the following terms¹:

1.

The Soviet armed forces will be allowed to establish themselves in the following Latvian regions:

- 1) Cēsis (Wenden)² - Valmiera;
- 2) Riga - Jelgava - Bauska;
- 3) Tukums - Talsi;
- 4) Ventspils (Windau) - Kuldīga (Goldingen) - the border of the country from Piķeļi to the sea;
- 5) Jaunjelgava (Friedrichstadt) - Madliena (on the Russian map listed as "k Litve");
- 6) Birži (Buschhof) - Jēkabpils (Jakobstadt) - station Jaunkalsnava (st. Novo-Kalsenav);
- 7) Višķi (Dubni) - Ilūkste - the border of the country with Lithuania from Novoaleksandrovska (Zarasai) region - Jozefova;
- 8) Dricēni - Baranaja - Ludza (Ljutsin) - Rēzekne;
- 9) Ape (Hoppenhof) - station Gulbene (Alt-Gulbene) - Balvi (Bolovsk) only - Alūksne (Marienburg), including the lake.

2.

The stationing of the armed forces outside of the regions which are specified in the agreement and supplementary agreement signed by the governments of the USSR and Latvia is to be considered a temporary measure and shall be reviewed by a special commission.

3.

The Soviet armed forces shall have the right to receive unexamined and unhampered rail shipments from the USSR and from Lithuania, following the views of the Latvian government and without hindering normal rail traffic.

4.

The Soviet [military] units shall have the right to use Latvia's telephone and telegraph network according to the regular order. In order to provide for communications among the most important Soviet military garrisons in Latvia, direct lines will be provided where possible.

5.

The Soviet military command shall have the right to hire workers from among the population of Latvia, utilizing the appropriate Latvian administrative institutions,

for the purpose of constructing and maintaining aerodromes and airfields.

6.

The supply commanders of the Soviet military (no lower than at the division level) shall have the right to purchase all necessary foodstuffs and fodder from resources which are available in Latvia and to expect the respective administrative institutions to facilitate this right.

7.

The matter of the Naval forces of the USSR was not considered; a separate agreement shall be reached. The protocol was hand-written in two copies on two pages in the Russian language and signed.

For the Soviet side,
Tank division colonel general *Pavlov*

For the Latvian side,
Colonel *Ūdentiņš*

Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 395-397.

¹ A meeting between Latvia's representatives (the commander of the operative division of headquarters, Col. O. Ūdentiņš, the commander of the operative division, Lt. Col. J. Upītis, the commander of the service division of headquarters, Capt. A. Krimuldēns, et. al.) and representatives of the Red Army took place on the morning of 17 June 1940 at Jonišķi in Lithuania. Meeting on 18 June, the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia approved, according to its protocols, "the 17 June 1940 protocol between the representative of the Latvian army and the representative of the army of the USSR with respect to the stationing of the Soviet armed forces in Latvia". (LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 2.l., p. 87.)

² Next to the Latvian place names in the protocol, the Russians occasionally wrote the largely Germanic place names which had been used during the days of the Russian Empire. These have been left intact in this translation.

No. 90

News Media Information Concerning Steps Taken by the Interior Ministry to Preserve Order During the Entry of the Red Army

17 June 1940

The Soviet armed forces began to enter Riga yesterday around 12:00 midday and went to various places in

the city. In the morning, when businesses and institutions were at work, the city streets were not very crowded, but in the afternoon large numbers of the curious gathered at several points, thus considerably hampering the movement of the armed forces through the streets. Several dark elements tried to take advantage of this convergence of people. Despite their small numbers, these elements created excitement among the people and, mixing in with the crowd, tried to provoke the people to disorder and even conflict. The appearance of such elements and the undisciplined behavior of the crowd eventually led to a decision by the police to scatter the crowds. This succeeded only after considerable effort in which units of the armed forces and the fire fighting department were involved.

The behavior of the people left a very unfavorable impression upon the Soviet armed forces. The command of the armed forces asked our institutions to advert any further interference with the movement of the armed forces.

Because of this, the interior minister has issued very stringent rules to completely ban large-scale meetings and to declare that the residents of Riga may not be on the streets in the late evening and night-time hours.

From now on, those who disturb the movement of the armed forces will be dealt with in the most severe manner. All residents of Riga are warned to refrain from unacceptable curiosity and obtrusion with respect to the Soviet armed forces. Such behavior will not be tolerated and will engender serious counteractions by the security institutions; moreover it casts a shadow across our city's sense of self-discipline, which reflects on the reputation of the country and its people.

An Order for the Maintenance of Peace and Order

Interior Minister K. Veidnieks, on the basis of §3.1. of the law on order and security in the state, has issued the following order:

1. **In the interests of maintaining peace and order in society, until further notice I hereby bar private individuals in Riga from leaving their places of residence between 22:00 and 04:00.**

2. **I also bar private individuals in Riga from openly gathering in the streets, squares and parks in any meeting involving more than 4 individuals.**

3. Until further notice I order that institutions where alcoholic beverages are sold, including shops, restaurants, taverns and other locations be closed, and also that all institutions where weapons are sold be closed.

With a second order, the minister has stated:

Until further notice, I hereby bar private persons who have the right to possess weapons to carry such weapons outside their homes; this does not apply to individuals whose weapons are listed in their employment certificate.

Persons found guilty of violating these orders shall be fined under the administrative order with a monetary fine not to exceed 1,000 lats or a prison sentence of 3 months, or both.

The interior minister has authorized prefects, regional chairmen and the chairman of the railroad police to apply sanctions against violators. Both orders have already taken effect.

Jaunākās Ziņas, 18 June 1940

No. 91

A Press Report Concerning a Radio Address by President K. Ulmanis

17 June 1940

At 22:15 yesterday, 17 June, the President of the country, Dr. K. Ulmanis addressed the people during a recess in the Cabinet of Ministers meeting. He said the following¹:

"Citizens!

The events of the last 24 hours have agitated all of us, and thus I feel it to be my duty, now as at important moments in the past, to tell you what the government is thinking and doing at this time.

Since this morning, the Soviet armed forces have been entering our country. This is occurring with the government's knowledge and agreement, these being based on the friendly relations which persist between Latvia and the Soviet Union. I would ask, therefore, that the residents of our country view the military units which are entering our country with a spirit of friendship. At the same time, you must know that the movement of the armed forces must be unhindered, and you can help this process

by limiting unnecessary curiosity and by refraining from any disturbance of the public order.

This morning you heard that the entire government has offered its resignation to me and that I have ordered the ministers to keep their posts until a new government is assembled. The first goal for all of us is to stay in our places and to maintain the unity of spirit and will to work which have characterized us to this point. We must continue to serve the ideal which we hold high and holy - the interests of Latvia and our people.

Inevitably, the events which are taking place at this time will bring a certain element of excitement and disturbance into the heretofore peaceful rhythm of our lives. But these are transitory events which we will overcome in a matter of a few days. At this time I would ask you to demonstrate through your thoughts, your deeds, and your stand, the strength of the soul which has been created by the golden years of the restored Latvian state. Then I will be certain that everything that is happening now and that is yet to happen will be beneficial to the future of our state and people and to our good and friendly relations with our great eastern neighbor, the Soviet Union.

That is the most important goal which we have at this time. It stands above the daily details of our lives, and we will all devote our best will and our best efforts to this goal in the days to come.

This time requires that a great many practical issues be resolved, and resolved rapidly. Even now I am speaking to you during a recess in a meeting of the government where we are considering immediate issues. I am certain that you will understand the orders which the government has issued and will continue to issue, even if they are stringent or even fierce in some occasions. Please obey these orders conscientiously, because they have no other purpose than your own peace and well-being. May you all be led by a sense of obligation and unrelenting work.

My heart is with you, and I sense that your hearts are beating in friendly response. Let us go forward and carry out our duty. I will stay in my place. You must stay in yours."

Valdības Vēstnesis, 18 June 1940

¹ "On the evening of 17 June, President Ulmanis received permission to deliver a brief address on the Riga radio".

Bērziņš, A. *Labie gadi: Pirms un pēc 15. maija* (The Good Years - Before and After May 15). New York: Grāmatu Draugs (1973), p. 294.

No. 92

An Announcement by the Embassy of the USSR, Distributed by the Latvian Telegraph Agency

18 June 1940

The embassy of the USSR in Riga has reported: "In yesterday's newspapers, there was a report under the headline 'Steps Toward Maintaining Order as the Soviet Military Enters Riga'. Among other things, the article said that the behavior of the public left a very unfavorable impression on the Soviet armed forces and that their commanders have asked the appropriate Latvian institutions to avert any further disturbance of the movement of the armed forces.

The embassy of the USSR states that the command structures of the Soviet armed forces have not made any such requests to the Latvian institutions and that this report does not correspond to the truth in any way.

The residents of Riga have not hampered the movement of the armed forces, and the commanders of the Soviet armed forces are fully satisfied with the heartfelt greetings and congratulations which residents offered."

Valdības Vēstnesis, 19 June 1940

No. 93

Authority Issued to A. Vyshinskii by the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR

17 June 1940

The Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics declares that with this [document] it authorizes citizen Andrei Januarevich Vyshinskii to conduct negotiations with the President of the Republic of Latvia with respect to matters raised in the memorandum (predstavlenie) which the government of the USSR submitted to the Latvian government on 16 June of this year.

Chairman of the Presidium

of the Supreme Council of the USSR *M. Kalinin*
Moscow, 17 June 1940

Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 399.

No. 94

Information Reported by the Latvian Telegraph Agency About the Arrival of A. Vyshinskii in Riga

18 June 1940

Riga, 18 June. This evening the deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, A.J. Vyshinskii, arrived in Riga via rail from Moscow. On behalf of the President, he was greeted at the station by adjutant Col. M. Lūkins and Foreign Minister V. Munters. Also on the scene was the entire staff of the Soviet embassy, led by Ambassador V. K. Derevjanski, as well as leading officers from all branches of the Soviet garrison. On the same evening, the deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, A.J. Vyshinskii, arrived at the palace for a meeting with President Dr. Kārlis Ulmanis.

Valdības Vēstnesis, 19 June 1940

No. 95

Telegram from the Latvian Ambassador to England, K. Zariņš, to the Foreign Ministry on 18 June 1940

The press [and] radio are reporting [about] Russian demands issued to the Balt[ic] states. Telegraph the situation. 3786. Latvian minister.

LVVA, 2574.f., 4.apr., 7499.l., p. 8.

The document is marked: No. 720. Received 1940.18.VI 4:40.

No. 96

Telegram from the Authorized Representative of the USSR to Latvia, V. Derevjanski, to the Foreign Affairs Commissariat of the USSR

18 June 1940

Our note and the Latvian government's response to it were reported on the radio on 17 June at noon and were published in the evening newspapers. Around 1:00 p.m., advance guard tank units began to arrive in Riga. They quickly occupied the city and its most important points. The authorities had not expected so early an arrival, nor the rapid operations of our forces. At 12:30 Ulmanis was

still calmly driving around the city streets¹. The stationing of our [military] units was reported by comrade Loktionov², who used his own line of communication. The residents offered our armed forces a warm welcome. Several shouts were heard: "Thank you for freeing us from the regime of the dogs! Down with the inciters of war!" and so forth. There were also cries of "hurrah" to honor the USSR, the Red Army, and comrade Stalin. The tanks were surrounded by crowds of people. The Red Army soldiers were hugged and kissed, and they received flowers. In some places people tried to organize demonstrations. Red flags were raised. There were conflicts with the police as a result of which 30 police officers and as many residents were injured. I am verifying these reports. An especially large demonstration occurred after the working day was over, at 20:00. It was a spontaneous gathering. The Latvian authorities tried to bring out the armed forces and tanks to oppose the demonstration, but we demanded that these be removed. Our command took steps to bring order to the city. It was enough for our commanders to ask the residents to maintain peace and order, and within 30 minutes there was complete order. At 11:00 p.m., the city was quiet. The night passed calmly. Our command structures and I have asked the Latvian authorities to remove from Riga several artillery units which they brought in from various camps after our armed forces arrived, supposedly to maintain order. We saw virtually no uniformed home guardsmen, but in the Latgale region of the city, a strengthened guard consisting of home guardsmen and political officers was posted. We have asked that in the case of demonstrations or disorder, the army not be used to quell them. There have been no reports of arrests in people's homes on the night from 17 to 18 June. According to reports from Rezekne, the residents of Latgale greeted the arrival of the Red Army units with particular joy. There were shouts of congratulations and red flags. At first the authorities place no obstacles in the path of this process, but after a while the police began to oppress the expressions of joy and to arrest several individuals. There were conflicts with the police and home guard in Riga, but there were no shots. Today, on 18 June, people are expecting the establishment of a new government and the institution of a new regime in the country. Political prisoners will be released. There is much activity in the city.

There are runs on stores to purchase goods and food. We have reports of armed conflicts around the edges of the city and in working-class neighborhoods. All businesses and institutions, including banks and the telephone and telegraph services, are functioning normally. Last night we permitted radio broadcasts under the condition that from now on, programming will be approved by us, and that moreover, no reports which are disloyal vis a vis the USSR and the Red Army will be permitted. This morning we permitted the restoration of normal operations at the port. We asked that a special order be issued barring the acceptance of Soviet money (sovznaki) in return for the local currency or as payment for goods in stores. This was done immediately. We also demanded that a special institution be established to supply our [military] units with everything that they need. Such an institution has been established under the leadership of Gen. Hartmanis. The president and government are fulfilling their functions at this time.

Derevjanski

Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 400-401.

¹*The Latvian press reported the following information: "On Monday afternoon [17 June], around 16:00, President Kārlis Ulmanis went for a drive through the streets of the city. The president was accompanied by his adjutant, Col[onel] M. Lūkins, and his secretary, J. Rudums. [...] Driving slowly in an open car, the president observed movements in the city's streets. The excursion proceeded down Marijas street to Matīsa street and then along Brīvības street and the boulevards, back to the palace. During the president's trip, people hailed him, and the cry "Long live the president!" was often heard. (Rīts, 19 June 1940.)*

²*Aleksandr Loktionov (1893-1941), deputy defense commissar of the USSR, general; after inspecting Soviet military bases in Lithuania and Estonia, he arrived in Riga on 10 June 1940.*

No. 97

A Report from the Commander of the Riga Regional Division of the Political Police,

J. Vinters

17-19 June 1940

I can report the following with respect to events and observations in the capital city of Riga on 17, 18 and 19 June of this year:

Two red flags were found hanging in the farther neighborhoods of the city on 17 June. There were no inscriptions. A note was attached to the door of the National Theater which read: "Our heads were cloven here".

At 8:30 on 18 June of this year, at the sawmill of the "Latvijas koks" company at Melderu iela 3 in Vecmīlgrāvis, an employee of the sawmill, Ansis Kadiķis, res[ident] at Emmas iela No. 26, arrived and called on the workers to stop working, to obey him on grounds that he is a representative of the central committee, and to march to Riga, because other workers were supposedly already doing so. In addition to Kadiķis, this incitement was also carried out by Jānis Melnalksnis, res[ident] Stabu iela 19, and Aleksandrs Paemanis, res[ident] in the Mangaļi region, the Kajaks home. They threatened workers with repressions should they not comply. The director of the sawmill, Gaiķis, told the men not to hinder work. The three workers attacked Gaiķis. Vladimirs and Arvīds Paemanis, res[ident] in the Mangaļi region, the Kajaks home, detained the administration of the sawmill and prohibited it from calling the police. Yielding to the incitement, approximately 400 workers suspended work. An investigation of the guilty parties has begun. Aleksandrs, Arvīds and Vladimirs Paemanis have been arrested. Jānis Melnalksnis has fled and is avoiding arrest.

The workers of the evening shift at "Latvijas koks" arrived as one, and work continued without any further disturbance.

On 18 June of this year, we observed the largest factories (Vairogs, VEF, Ērenpreiss, the Riga Wool Factory, Feldhun, Kuznecov, Kvadrāts, the Šmits cement factory, the Ilguciems glass factory, Latvijas kokvilna, the super-phosphate factory, Rīgas manufaktūra, Juglas manufaktūra, Rīgas audums, Neofēnikss, and other factories). No work disturbances were noted, and all workers arrived for duty.

In the more lively places in the city, including the stations, the pontoon bridge, the prefectures, the Post Office, Union Square, and other areas, citizens behaved in a quiet and orderly manner. There were no disturbances. The same was true on 19 June of this year, when work at factories and stores proceeded in a normal fashion.

At approximately 12:00 noon on 18 June of this year, we received a report from the company "Bekona eksperts" that among workers who are performing construction work (there are approximately 100 workers), agitation is occurring with

the aim of stopping work. The agitation started on the afternoon of 17 June and was particularly active yesterday morning. The agitators were six construction workers. Work was not suspended and has continued normally.

On 18 June, eight communist proclamations were found in the city which read "Comrades, working people of Latvia".

At 11:40, the Russian destroyer "Minsk" berthed in the Daugava, opposite the palace.

At 12:05, the tanks which were stationed at the Post Office, the prefecture and the station left some mined areas and departed away from the city.

According to information which we have received, several Russian officers have said, in remarking upon the conflicts between the police and the crowds on 17.VI., that the Latvian police are very tolerant.

On 17 June there were agitations aimed at interrupting work prematurely at the bicycle factory "Latvello". Work was ended one hour earlier. The main agitators were someone named Shmushkovich, a nansenite¹ named Volskis, and a man named Sirotkins. The next day the three were heard discussing the events at Station Square (i.e., the conflict between the crowd and the police).

On 18 June, the workers of the Kozlovska glass factory in Pārdaugava, numbering 75, stopped work at 10:00 a.m. in order to watch the armed forces of the USSR enter Riga. The workers of the evening shift all came to work, and work continued without any interruption.

Work was stopped at the paint factory "Tempo" where, incidentally, 14 Jews work, because the factory master did not turn up for work on 18.VI. As a result of this, the other workers were forced to stop working. This morning work at the factory was proceeding normally.

On 18.VI., an unknown individual appeared at the steamship "Konsul Heinz", which is docked in the customs territory of the Riga port and asked workers to stop unloading the steamship. He added that the workers should be celebrating. The workers abandoned their work. Work was also partially interrupted at the Latvian steamship "Skrunda" around 14:30, but later work was restarted.

At 18:00 on 18.VI., a number of trucks bearing Russian soldiers departed from Pārdaugava and eventually arrived at Čiekurkalns. There are numerous Soviet aircraft at the aerodrome.

There has been no crowding of people at the locations where the Russian armed forces are stationed (the aerodrome, Union Square, the Lubāna highway, Ķišežera street, the Šmerlis region, Čiekurkalns), and there have been no incidents.

19 June 1940

/J. Vinters/

Commander of the Riga Regional Division
of the Political Police

LVVA, 3235.f., 1/6 apr., 711.l., p. 37.

¹ "Nansentites" was a word used to describe stateless individuals who had been stripped of their citizenship in one country and had not obtained any other. A bureau to handle refugee and prisoner-of-war matters was established at the League of Nations and named after its leader, F. Nansen (1861-1930). The documents which were issued to stateless individuals were called "Nansen's passports".

No. 98

A Report from the Prefect of Daugavpils, J. Krīgens, to the Director of the Interior Ministry's Security Police, A. Austrums

Confidential. Personal.

Daugavpils, 20 June 1940

No. S 30.

On 19 June, Russian army trucks laden with soldiers and goods continued to move through Daugavpils on 19 June, coming from Grīva and heading toward Straupa. Heavy artillery was taken through the city in the night. This caused damage to several streets.

Russian officers in the city searched for office space and for furniture needed by the division headquarters and its commanding staff.

Our institutions were forthcoming in this respect. The hospital, for example, provided tables and beds for a war hospital in Stropi.

During the night, a telephone cable was installed at the Stropi camp to connect it to the local telephone central. During the search for space, the officers requested a police escort. In the escort's automobile, the searchers visited headquarters, the railroad station, and several schools. Some of the Russian officers asked whether people have

been arrested in connection with the entry of the Russian military. They visited the apartments of several individuals who have been arrested for disturbing the peace. Upon meeting several police officers who were escorting a prisoner, they asked to be told the reasons for the arrest. When they were told the reason, they said: "Go ahead and take him, but don't hit him, or it will go badly with you".

At the Stropi bus station, Russian soldiers detained a policeman and a home guardsman who were waiting for the bus. They were taken to the duty officer, who said that because the bus stop is near a place where the soldiers are stationed, police officers are not allowed to be there.

In the Stropi forest, on the road near the song festival stage, the deputy commander of the third district, Ronis, was detained. He had driven up to the location in question to inspect the post. He was told that police and home guard units may not be on the road and that it is also not accessible to police officers and home guardsmen who have been assigned to guard the festival stage.

With respect to issues concerning disturbance of the peace, we have learned that on 17 June several individuals called on the Russian soldiers to help them overthrow the police and the home guardsmen. The soldiers told them that they have not come to defend their own interests, not to destroy anything, and that they are thankful to the Latvian government for its permission for the military to enter. If the home guardsmen and police wish to defend their own interests and settle accounts with anyone, then they are free to do as they will.

There was peace and order in the city. Stores and businesses operated without any disturbance.

Yesterday we were told that on the night of 19 June there was a public meeting in the Stropi forest, but evidence which we have gathered suggests that there was no meeting.

During the afternoon there were rumors among the city's Jews that there would be attacks on stores overnight so that the Russian army would be prompted to participate in maintaining order in the city and to take over administrative authority. Nothing of the type happened.

We have issued 14 protocols for disturbing the peace.

J. Krīgens

O. Markevics

Prefect

Office manager

LVA, 270.f, 1. apr., 340.l., p. 4. Original.

No. 99

Conclusions of the Committee to Investigate the Soviet Attack Against Units 2 and 3 of the Third Abrene Battalion of the Latvian Border Guard on 15 June 1940

No later than 20 June 1940

Summary

The investigations committee¹, having reviewed the scene of the incident and having interviewed local residents, has determined the following:

On the night to 15 June of this year, an attack was waged against Units 2 and 3 of the Third Abrene Battalion. There was shooting at Unit 2 (Masļenki) between the attackers and the border guards who were on duty. Hand grenades were also thrown. Four persons were killed in the battle: guardsmen Macītis, Cimuška and Beizaks, as well as the wife of the guard commander, Hermīne Puriņa. Two individuals were injured: the son of the guard commander, Voldis Puriņš, and the wife of guardsman Krieviņš, Lidija Krieviņš. Voldis Puriņš later died at the Rēzekne Red Cross hospital. The unit's building and another structure were burned down. Telephone lines from Unit 2 were cut. Found in the vicinity of Unit 2 were several spent shell casings of a type not used by the Latvian armed forces, as well as seven hand grenades and a gas mask with Russian-language lettering. At a curve in the river which marks the national boundary, footprints were found which indicate that the river was forded in both directions. The attackers took away border guards from Unit 2, as well as other border guards who tried to help their colleagues. Also taken were several civilians - family members of border guardsmen and residents of neighboring homes.

The injured woman, Lidija Krieviņš, reported that on the night to 15 June a hand grenade was thrown into her apartment at approximately 3:00 a.m. The explosion badly injured her. Afterward the door to the home was broken open, and three Red Army soldiers bearing weapons entered. They took away her husband, the border guardsman, as well as her 12-year-old son Arturs.

Voldis Puriņš, who was shot and injured, reported immediately after the attack that he had been sleeping in the guard building and had been awakened by the sound

of shots. He saw the building burning and fled with his mother. At the woodpile he came across a Red Army soldier who shot him. He saw 20-25 Red Army soldiers at the Unit 2 building. They went toward the river, taking along several individuals (testimony from criminal investigator Reinvalds of the Abrene region police department, as well as surgeons' assistant Ostrovska, and the commander of Unit 1, Capt. Eriks Paegle).

Altogether, five guardsmen and 11 civilians were taken away from Unit 2 and the surrounding area (testimony from Capt. Paegle).

On the same night, an attack was also waged against Unit 3 at Šmaļi. Four guns were missing from the unit building, one window was taken out, and the telephone receiver was torn off. Telephone lines near the building were cut.

The wife of guardsman Ozolnieks, Anna Ozolnieks, reported that at approximately 3:30 a.m. on 15 June she was awakened by knocking on her window. There were approximately 20 Soviet border guardsmen at the unit building. They had captured several Latvian border guardsmen, as well as several area residents. These people were taken away. A Russian border guardsman armed with a gun came into Mrs. Ozolnieks' apartment and demanded any weapons, as well as her husband. He was not, however, at home.

Nikolajs Semjonovs reported that he saw three Red Army soldiers take his father to the Unit 3 guard building, where many Red Army soldiers and Latvian border guards were assembled. All of those who were gathered at the Unit 3 building were taken away by the Red Army soldiers.

Five border guardsmen and 16 civilians were taken away from Unit 3 and its surroundings.

Altogether, from Units 2 and 3, as well as from their surrounding areas, 10 border guardsmen and 27 civilians were taken.

Commission chairman: *Gen. Bolšteins*²

Members: (two illegible signatures)

LVVA, 2574.f., 2.apr., 7082.l., p. 29. Original.

¹The investigation of the events on the night of 14-15 June was carried out by a commission which was established by the interior minister and headed by Gen. L. Bolšteins. The Cabinet of Ministers considered the matter on 20 June 1940. A protocol of the meeting states the following:

[.] 5. In connection with the detention of ten border guardsmen on the Latvian-Soviet border on 15 June, the Interior Ministry is permitted to pay half of the salary which the guardsmen would receive during their absence to the dependents of the respective guardsmen; the other half shall be paid to the guardsmen upon their return. With respect to those border guardsmen who have no dependents, the Ministry shall pay their full salary upon their return.

6) The Interior Ministry is permitted to take resources from the contingency fund in the amount of Ls 1047.51, to pay support payments to the father of the slain border guardsman Cimoška (the equivalent of six months of his son's salary, or Ls 698.34) and to the father of the slain border guardsman Macītis (the equivalent of three months of his son's salary or Ls 349.17). (LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 2.l., p. 90.)

²Ludvigs Bolšteins (1889-1940), general, commander of the Latvian border guard brigade. On 21 June 1940, he committed suicide in his office. As was later reported: "Terrible news reached the City of Riga in these dreadful days when the foundations of the Latvian state were crumbled. The commander of the Latvian border guards, Gen. Bolšteins, shot himself in his office. On his desk he left a piece of paper which read: 'I cannot destroy that which I have spent my life building...'" (Breikšs, J., "Republikai bojā ejot", *Latuju Ziņas*, 14 April 1948). The arrested general J. Balodis, during interrogation on 7 August 1941, testified: "I was told that the commander of the border guard, General Bolšteins, was very depressed about this, and on the day of his suicide, three notes were found. I would like to speak of the one which is deserving of the greatest attention: "With the hands of those people who built beautiful Latvia, she is now being destroyed. I cannot bear this, and thus I am departing for another world." (Ronis, I. "Kārlis Ulmanis Latvijas brīvvalsts likteņa stundās un viņa Golgātas ceļš", an essay in *Kārlis Ulmanis trīmdā un cietumā*, op. cit. Footnote 84 of the Introduction, p. 150.

No. 100

Observations by the Embassy of the USSR

After 18 June 1940

Excerpts from the Protocol of the Interrogation of J. Fridrihsons-Skrauja 9 December 1940

[.] Systematic tapping of the telephone line Riga-Maskava afforded us the opportunity to learn from a conversation held by the TASS correspondent with Moscow that the Soviet armed forces would enter Lithuania on 16 June.

As a result, we were able to destroy several documents which we did not wish to see in the hands of the Soviet authorities. [...]

After the arrival of the representative of the government of the USSR, Vyshinskii, in Riga, President Ulmanis issued an order which I received from the commander of the presidential guard, Leitlands-Lielkrasts. I was ordered to organize a system to observe the Soviet representational headquarters to keep track of Latvian state officials or other individuals who visited the building. Ulmanis apparently was interested in learning who would be assigned the task of forming the new Cabinet of Ministers.

I stationed officer Puravs at the representational headquarters. Soon he reported that Prof. Kirhenšteins and Gen. Dambītis had arrived at the Soviet office. I immediately made this fact known to the president.

Archive of the Procurator's Office of the Republic of Latvia, Case No. 1576, Vol. 1, pp. 112-113.

No. 101

Telephonogram from A. Vyshinskii to the Foreign Affairs Commissariat of the USSR

20 June 1940

15:10 - 16:00

Comrade Smorodinov: Smorodinov here.

Comrade Vyshinskii: Please report the following to Vjacheslav Mihailovich [Molotov]: At 11:00 a.m. this morning, comrade Derevjanski and I visited Ulmanis, who told us that he has no objection to the list of proposed Cabinet members which we submitted to him, nor does he have any amendments to offer to the list. He will not insist on his recommendation concerning Blumbergs¹ if we object to it.

I answered that I believe this matter, as well as the issue of other vacancies in the Cabinet, should be resolved in a separate discussion.

A thorough investigation of Breikšs² has turned up nothing negative about him. There are objections from the Latgale group³, who feel that he is a nationalist and that he has behaved poorly vis a vis the Latgalians, but they are not insisting that Breikšs be rejected. They are only expressing their doubts about whether Breikšs can be trusted not to cause disharmony in the Cabinet.

We believe that it would be useful to have a member of the "Democratic Center" group in the Cabinet. If Breikšs is rejected, we will have no one from the group, but certain contradictions concerning the main question of the pro-Soviet line are advantageous.

The publication of the new Cabinet has been set for 20:00 this evening (i.e., 21:00 Moscow time). If it is necessary to eliminate Breikšs from the list, please inform me immediately so that I can take the necessary steps. Also, please give a rapid reply on the matter of Blumbergs. We will submit the other questions via the "VCh"⁴, which is being restored at the embassy.

We can report that a major demonstration is expected between 14:00 and 16:00 in Rīga⁵. Rumors are afoot in the city that the home guard will stage an armed response. Our office has taken the necessary steps. That is all. I shall wait for a reply. Vyshinskii. Derevjanski.

Smorodinov: Smorodinov here. Vjacheslav Mihailovich would ask you to confirm that you are speaking of an individual named Blumbergs. He has no such name on his list.

Vyshinskii: I am responding. I spoke of Blumbergs in a ciphered telegram which I sent at 5:30 this morning, 20 June. The telegram has detailed information about my visit to Ulmanis last night and my discussions with him concerning the new Cabinet.

Blumbergs is the minister for trade and industry in the current government and is also acting finance minister. Blumbergs is highly regarded as an economist and cooperative expert. He is a long-time worker in the cooperative system and a good expert. He is considered an important authority in trade and industry circles. Politically he is colorless. Several progressive elements in society have recommended that he be kept in the new Cabinet. We have not given Ulmanis a response on this matter, although we have said that we seek to replace the entire Cabinet, possibly with a few exceptions.

Our view of Blumbergs is that it would be useful to keep him in the new cabinet, because we have no alternative candidates at this time. We are searching. We will wait for instructions.

Smorodinov: To comrade Vyshinskii. Vjacheslav Mihailovich asked me to tell you that he will give you a response later and that we will call you.

¹ Jānis Blumbergs (1886-1941), agronomist, minister in several governments of the Republic of Latvia; minister for trade and industry from October 1939. He resigned on 16 June 1940 (see Doc. 149), but for several months afterward he continued to give consultations to the new government. He participated in meetings called by Prime Minister A. Kirhenšteins on 28 and 29 June (LVA 1051.f., 1a.apr., 1.l., pp. 1, 3 and 12). He was repressed in 1941.

² Jānis Breikšs (1887-1965), attorney, parliamentary deputy from the Democratic Center from 1925 to 1934. In the list of new government members which A. Vyshinskii submitted to K. Ulmanis and which Ulmanis took along with him into exile (it was taken away from him along with other documents when he was arrested), Breikšs was listed as agriculture minister (see Kārlis Ulmanis trimdā un..., op. cit., p. 242). In memoirs composed in exile, J. Breikšs in great detail described the way in which A. Vyshinskii and V. Derevjanski tried to persuade him to become agriculture minister in the new Cabinet. In a meeting with A. Kirhenšteins, Breikšs rejected the offer (Breikšs, J. "Republikai bojā ejot", Latvju Ziņas, 7 and 11 February 1948).

³ J. Pabērzs, V. Latkovskis et al.

⁴ "VCh" or "Visokochastotnii" in Russian referred to a high-frequency line which was more difficult to monitor.

⁵ There was no demonstration on 20 June.

No. 102
The First Meeting of
the New Cabinet of Ministers
Protocol No. 45

21 June 1940

Present:

President

Dr. Kārlis Ulmanis

Prime Minister and acting

Foreign Minister

Prof. A. Kirhenšteins

Interior Minister

V. Lācis

War Minister

Gen. R. Dambītis

Social Affairs Minister

P. Blaus

Transportation Minister

J. Jagars

Welfare Minister

J. Lācis

Justice Minister

J. Pabērzs

Deputy Interior Minister

V. Latkovskis

Minutes taken by the acting

director of the Government Office, R. Bulsons

The meeting was begun at 10:15

On opening the first meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers, President Kārlis Ulmanis delivered the following address:

"Because on 16 June the full Cabinet of Ministers submitted to me its resignation, I invited Prof. Dr. A. Kirhenšteins¹ to take the position of prime minister and to establish a Cabinet with the following member: as war minister, General Dambītis², as interior minister, V. Lācis³, as social affairs minister, P. Blaus⁴, as welfare minister and acting education minister, J. Lācis⁵, as justice minister and acting finance minister, J. Pabērzs⁶, as traffic minister, J. Jagars⁷, as deputy interior minister and director of the political police department, V. Latkovskis⁸, and as the commander of the armed forces, General Kļaviņš⁹.

Having received the agreement of the prime minister and the members of the Cabinet, I hereby proclaim the government to be established and prepared to fulfill its duties. I wish you success in resolving the complicated issues of the day. These include maintenance of order and security, provision of the circumstances needed to continue normal working conditions, and careful maintenance of good and friendly relations with our neighboring states, especially with our good friend, the great neighbor to the East, the Soviet Union. I also ask you to loyally cooperate in stationing the units of the armed forces of the Soviet Union which are in our country and in helping them to establish their lives here.

The prime minister, Prof. A. Kirhenšteins, responded to the president:

"Mr. President! In the name of the Cabinet and myself, I thank you for your good wishes. We will try to do well in discharging the heavy obligations which we have undertaken at this difficult time. We thank you for your work. We have long known of your concern for the people's welfare, education and health. Especially the "Draudzīgais Aicinājums"¹⁰ has been of importance in raising the standard of the people's education. You have called young people to work, and you have taught them to work, especially in rural areas. The network of "Mazpulki"¹¹ covers our entire country with hard-working young people. In this difficult time, you have facilitated good relations with other countries, especially with our great neighbor, the Soviet Union. We promise to work on Latvia's behalf, to continue, per-

haps with different methods, the work which you, Mr. President, and the previous government had begun"¹².

The meeting was concluded at 10:25.

President *K. Ulmanis*
Prime Minister *A. Kirhenšteins*
Acting director of the Government Office *R. Bulsons*

LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 2.l., p. 91.; also *Protocols of the Latvian Cabinet of Ministers*, p. 28.

¹ *Augusts Kirhenšteins* (1872-1963), microbiologist, active in social affairs. As a participant in the Russian Revolution in 1906, he was forced to emigrate to Switzerland. He returned to Latvia in the fall of 1917. He was a docent at the University of Latvia beginning in 1919 (he was named professor in 1923). He was active in an association whose purpose was to facilitate better cultural relations between Latvia and the USSR, and he was a frequent contributor to the newspaper *Jaunākās Ziņas*. From 21 June to 21 July 1940 he was prime minister and acting foreign minister; from 21 July to 25 August he also served as president of the country. From 1940 to 1952 he was the chairman of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR.

² *Roberts Dambītis* (1881-1957), general in the Army of the Republic of Latvia (1935), chief deputy commander of the Army headquarters. Retired from the Army in November 1939. Upon the liquidation of the post of war minister on 27 September 1940, he served as a member of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

³ *Vilis Lācis* (1904-1966), one of the most popular authors in Latvia in the 1930s. From 1938 to 1940 he worked at the newspaper *Jaunākās Ziņas*. From 25 August 1940 to 27 November 1959, he was chairman of the Council of People's Commissars (Ministers) of the Latvian SSR.

⁴ *Pēteris Blaus* (1900-1971), journalist, active in social affairs. From 1928-1939, he was the commander of Company 3 of the Riga Home Guard's communications battalion. From 1937 to 1940 he served as editor of *Jaunākās Ziņas*. From August 1940 to January 1943 he was secretary of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR. He was repressed in 1943, but rehabilitated in 1956.

⁵ *Jūlijs Rihards Lācis* (1892-1941), writer and editor. Beginning in 1921, he worked in a variety of publications owned by the publisher *Antons Benjamiņš* - he was Paris correspondent for *Jaunākās Ziņas*, and editor-in-chief of the magazine *Atpūta* from 1937 to 1940. He was arrested on 8 January 1941 and died in Siberia on 15 December of the same year.

⁶ *Juris Pabērzs (1891-1961), attorney, politician, editor. Member of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia from 1926 to 1931, again in 1934. He was deputy chairman of the Daugavpils regional court from December 1931 to March 1934 and from May 1934 to June 1940. Beginning in October 1940, he was chairman of the Courts Council of the Justice commissariat. From 1944 he worked as an attorney and legal consultant.*

⁷ *Jānis Jagars (1894-1970), engineer, active in social affairs. Long-time deputy from the Social Democratic party in the Riga City Council, deputy mayor of Riga from 1931-1934. After the coup of 15 May 1934, he was placed in a Liepāja concentration camp. Later he headed his own engineering bureau. He took a post in the Kirhenšteins government without the agreement of the Latvian Social Democratic Party, or "on his own responsibility" (Kalniņš, B. *Latvijas Sociāldemokrātijas piecdesmit gadi*, 2d edition, Stockholm: Memento (1993), p. 197). After the war he worked in the Architecture and Construction Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Latvian SSR.*

⁸ *Vikentījs Latkovskis (1899-1983), teacher, active in social affairs. In his unpublished memoirs he admitted collaboration with Soviet espionage services beginning in 1921 (LVA, PA-200.f., 9.apr., 703.l., pp. 27-40). He served in various high-ranking offices in the Soviet government until 1971.*

⁹ *Roberts Kļaviņš (1885-1941), general in the Army of the Republic of Latvia (1931). He was retired from duty after the 1934 coup. In the late 1930s he served as an aide to an attorney. Beginning in August 1940 he was commander of the 24th Corps of the Red Army. He was arrested on 22 June 1941 in Moscow and sentenced to death on 29 July. The sentence was carried out on 16 October.*

¹⁰ *"Draudzīgais aicinājums" (literally - "Friendly invitation"), a tradition established by President Kārlis Ulmanis in 1935. On 28 January of each year, Latvians were invited to donate books, artwork, and other objects to their schools.*

¹¹ *"Mazpulki", a youth organization established in 1929 to facilitate the involvement of young people in agricultural work in Latvia. It was disbanded in 1940.*

¹² *Ulmanis' speech was reported in full in the press, but Kirhenšteins' remarks were edited to the following: "Thank you for your wishes concerning our future work and for the work which the president and the previous Cabinet did in facilitating the welfare, culture and education of the people. Of especial importance in the facilitation of the people's education was the "Draudzīgais Aicinājums", and of especial importance in teaching young people to work were the "mazpulki". I promise in the name of the entire Cabinet to devote all necessary attentions to improving the material and spiritual well-being of the Latvian people and to protecting a free and independent Latvia". (Valdības Vēstnesis, 22 June 1940.)*

**A Declaration by the Government of the
Republic of Latvia¹**

21 June 1940

Having undertaken the task of fulfilling the high obligations of its office, the government hereby proclaims the following to the people of the Republic of Latvia:

The old government has fallen. It was not just to everyone, it did not wish to understand the interests of the people, it failed to provide for the honest fulfillment of the mutual assistance agreement which was concluded with the Soviet Union on 5 October 1939, and it secretly concluded a military union with the former governments of Estonia and Lithuania².

The new government believes it to be its obligation to facilitate and promote the material and spiritual welfare of the people, to provide the people with their rights and with freedom, and to ensure the interests of the state and all its citizens regardless of their wealth, faith, education or nationality.

In keeping with these purposes, the government of the Republic of Latvia hereby proclaims amnesty for all who have battled for freedom and for the well-being of our people but who were stripped of their freedom by the former government because of their political and democratic convictions³.

The new government believes that its first task is to ensure that the mutual assistance agreement between Latvia and the Soviet Union which was signed on 5 October 1939 be fulfilled honestly and that based on this agreement, a close union between Latvia and the Soviet Union be established, using all resources to avert any disturbance during the fulfilling of this important national task.

The fact that the armed forces of our friend, the Soviet Union, are stationed on the territory of the Republic of Latvia has been greeted with joy and sincerity by the people. This is the best indicator of the true friendship which exists between our people and these forces. It is also proof of the friendly relations which our great neighbor, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, has with our fatherland.

The government is firmly and irreversibly convinced that the friendship between the people of Latvia and the peoples of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will grow and pros-

per and that only in this way will we be able to ensure the further development and flourishing of our fatherland.

The government is firmly convinced that the irreversible friendship between the people of the great Soviet Union and the people of the Republic of Latvia will be a powerful force to ensure the independence of the Latvian state, mutual security, and peaceful and successful cooperation between both countries.

The government's guiding principle in foreign policy matters will be the establishment of peaceful and friendly relations with all countries, but especially with the Soviet Union.

The government will take care to see that the provisions of the Latvian Constitution are fully carried out in keeping with the true wishes of the people.

The government calls on the people of the Republic of Latvia to join together in common cause on behalf of our beloved fatherland, Latvia.

Riga, 21 June 1940.

A. Kirhenšteins, Prime Minister

Gen. R. Dambītis, War Minister

V. Lācis, Interior Minister

P. Blaus, Social Affairs Minister

J. Lācis, Welfare Minister

J. Pabērzs, Justice Minister

J. Jagars, Transportation Minister

V. Latkovskis, Deputy Interior Minister

Valdības Vēstnesis, 22 June 1940.

¹In the minutes of the Cabinet meeting of 21 June 1940 (Protocol No. 46), it states: "The prime minister read the proposed text of the government declaration. Members of the Cabinet approved it." (LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 2.l., p. 92.)

²In the minutes of the Cabinet meeting of 29 June 1940 (Protocol No. 53), it states: "On the recommendation of the prime minister and acting foreign minister, the Cabinet decided to ask that the President issue the following proclamation: 'On the basis of mutual agreement with the government of Estonia, we hereby declare that as of 1 July, the agreement of 1 November 1923 establishing a defense union between the Republics of Latvia and Estonia, as well as the agreement of 17 February 1934 establishing a union between the Latvia and Estonia, are annulled'". (LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 2.l., p. 100.) The minutes of the Cabinet meeting of 1 July 1940 (Protocol No. 54), it states: "On the recommendation

of the prime minister and acting foreign minister; the Cabinet decided to ask that the President issue the following proclamation: 'On the basis of mutual agreement with the governments of Estonia and Lithuania, we hereby proclaim that as of 3 July 1940, the Agreement of understanding and cooperation which was signed by Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia on 12 September 1934 is hereby annulled'". (LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 2.l., p. 101.)

³The Cabinet of Ministers adopted a law on amnesty on 21 June 1940. It was proclaimed by President Ulmanis on the same day and took effect at 13:00. (Valdības Vēstnesis, 21 June 1940.)

No. 104

A Report by the Justice Ministry on the Number of Political Prisoners in Latvian Prisons¹

Riga, 19 June 1940

Prisons	Political			§10, law on order and security ³	Total
	§71 ²	Political "Perkonkrusts"	Impris. after expir. of sentence		
Riga Central Prison	73	7	8	68	145
Riga Term Prison	20	-	2	7	29
Juvenile Prison	10	-	-	6	16
Cēsis Prison	5	-	-	-	5
Valmiera Prison/Labor Camp	-	-	-	-	-
Madona Prison	3	-	-	-	3
Alūksne Prison	-	-	-	-	-
Jelgava Prison	14	-	-	2	16
Jēkabpils Prison	-	-	-	-	-
Tukums Prison	-	-	-	-	-
Ventspils Prison	-	-	-	-	-
Liepāja Prison	-	-	-	-	-
Daugavpils Prison	12	-	-	17	29
Rēzekne Prison	2	-	-	4	6
TOTAL	139	7	10	104	260

Published on the basis of Kārlis Ulmanis trimdā..., op. cit., p. 240.

¹ K. Ulmanis took this document into exile. On the bottom edge of the document, there is a notation in pencil: "Total number of prisoners on 1.VI.40 - 3,738. 19.VI P.R. [initials]".

² Paragraph 71 of the law on sentencing stated: "Anyone who has participated in an association established for the purpose of committing a crime as defined in §69 shall be sentenced to forced labor for a period not to exceed eight years, or to a re-education program". §69, in turn, stated: "Anyone who has used violence with the purpose of:

1) Changing the established order in Latvia;

2) Overthrow the president, parliament or cabinet of Latvia or to take away from them the functions which are assigned to them by the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia;

3) Cause some portion of Latvia to secede from the country;

shall be sentenced to a life term of forced labor or to a specific time at forced labor" (Valdības Vēstnesis, 28 April 1933).

³ Paragraph 10 of the law on order and security (11 February 1938) provided that the interior minister, with the agreement of the war minister, could keep individuals deemed to be harmful to the security of the state or to its economic interests imprisoned for a period of six months. Upon the expiration of the term, it could be extended. This form of imprisonment could also be used in the case of individuals who had been ordered to leave Latvia but who had not yet departed.

No. 105

Demands Issued by the Latvian Communist Party to the New Government

21 June 1940

The Communist Party of Latvia, speaking on behalf of all the working people of Latvia, hereby issues the following demands to the new government:

In order to provide for full freedom, independence and national sovereignty of Latvia, the peoples of Latvia must maintain close and friendly political, economic and cultural cooperation with the Soviet Union.

A popularly elected representational body must be established through a general, equal, secret and direct vote (traitors to the state shall not have suffrage).

A new constitution must be developed.

Full freedom of organization, association, press, speech, thought, religion and labor strike must be ensured.

An army and militia must be established the purpose of which is not to oppress the people but to defend the democratic order and, in the event of an attack, to fight with the Red Army in defense of democratic Latvia.

The home guard organization must be disarmed and liquidated.

The state must take control of the large private banks and large industrial factories (the matter of nationalizing large factories shall be left to the popularly elected parliament).

Small business, craftsmen, fishermen, and rural and city property owners of low standing must be supported.

The Labor Central¹ and all of its orders must be liquidated. Everything possible must be done to eliminate unemployment.

An eight-hour working day must be implemented in all factories. Provisions must be made for the working hours of clerks and servants. Workers and clerks must be given annual paid vacation of two weeks to one month in duration. The welfare of working people who reach retirement age or face unemployment must be ensured. The greatest of attention must be devoted to improving the health of the people. The mother and child must be fully protected.

The properties of enemies to the people and the state must be confiscated. The properties of large-scale farmers, who live on properties which are nearly baronial in scope, must also be confiscated. Such farmers must be left with land and buildings which are commensurate with the average farm size. Confiscated land must be distributed among those who have no land or who have very little land and work it themselves. The land, livestock and inventory of working farmers must not be touched, and their rights must not be limited. Farmers must not be forced to collectivize against their will. Small-scale farmers must be given amnesty from unpaid taxes and bank debts. Bankruptcy auctions must be eliminated, and the destruction of farms must be halted.

The state's administrative, judicial, educational and school institutions must be democratized. City and rural local governments must also be democratized, giving them greater rights of self-determination and electing local governments in the same manner as applies to the national representative body.

The people's educational and cultural efforts must be supported and facilitated. Any limitations which hamper the children of workers, craftsmen or farmers from attending school must be eliminated. All levels of education, from primary school through university, must be provided at no cost. The university must be democratized. Students must be issued scholarships. Theaters, clubs and other artistic and cultural institutions must be supported. The cultural illiterates and profligates who were placed in these institutions by the Ulmanis regime must be dismissed. Leadership of the institutions must be turned over to the cultural workers themselves.

All limitations on non-Latvian peoples must be eliminated. Each nationality must be granted the right to use its own national language in schools, theaters, the news media, meetings, religious events, etc.

The Latvian Communist Party must be legalized.

These are the major demands of the working people in democratic Latvia. All other matters shall be considered by the popularly elected parliament, observing the demands of each class, group, profession and nationality.

Riga, 21 June 1940

Central Committee of the Latvian Communist Party

Ciņa, 22 June 1940. In later documents (Sociālistiskās revolūcijas uzvara Latvijā 1940. gadā: Dokumenti un materiāli (The Victory of the Socialist Revolution in Latvia in 1940: Documents and Materials). Riga: Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the Latvian SSR (1963), pp. 51-52; et al), editors have appended the title "Demands of the LCP to the People's Government of Latvia" to the document.

¹ *The Latvian Labor Central was established on 4 May 1939, when the Cabinet of Ministers adopted a law on "provision of employment and placement of the labor force" (Valdības Vēstnesis, 5 May 1939). One of the key purposes set out in the law was "to direct the working energies of the people in a way which provides and balances production in all areas of labor". On 23 June 1940, the Cabinet of Ministers ordered Welfare Minister J. Lācis to prepare a proposal on the liquidation of the Labor Central (LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 2.l., p. 94).*

**Press Information Concerning the Transfer
of the War Ministry***21 June 1940*

The Foreign Ministry was taken over by the new prime minister, Prof. Dr. A. Kirhenšteins, at 9:20 yesterday. He will temporarily carry out the duties of foreign minister. The transfer order was signed by the prime minister, Prof. Dr. A. Kirhenšteins, and the former foreign minister, V. Munters.

At the War Ministry, the former war minister and army commander, Gen. Berķis, transferred his authority to the new war minister, General Dambītis, and the new army commander, General Kļaviņš. The staff commander of the army, General Rozenšteins, and his staff were present for the transfer of leadership at the War Ministry.

In transferring his authority, General Berķis, stated the following:

"For more than 20 years we have worked in common cause, we have shared in joy and in sorrow. Mutual trust has governed our relations, and we have been led by one call: everything for our fatherland, Latvia. Now the time has come for me to say farewell to you. I call on all of you to continue your work with the same love and trust, which is of particular importance in these difficult times. I am convinced that under the leadership of the new war minister, General Dambītis, and the new army commander, General Kļaviņš, you will be successful in this effort. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all of you for your trust and cooperation, and I ask that you devote the same trust to your future commanders. Then we will be able to take a firm stand for our army and will be able to gaze into the eternal future of Latvia. I would also note that the supreme commander of our army, President Dr. Kārlis Ulmanis, is staying in his position and that his thoughts and efforts will always be devoted to our army. I wish you all good success in your difficult and responsible work".

In taking over authority, the new war minister, General Dambītis, said:

"I have undertaken the obligations of the war minister in this difficult and complicated time. I ask you to help me so that our army can better execute its duties and so that we can help to improve and increase the army's battle abilities.

The most important task before us at this time is to implement the mutual assistance pact between Latvia and the Soviet Union not only in form but also in essence and content and to establish good and friendly relations between both allied armies. I ask you to work hard and faithfully, and then we will surely achieve success and accomplishment. The most difficult matters are easily resolved when good relations are maintained. But if relations are not good, then even the smallest incident can lead to great complications.

When I have become better acquainted with the prevailing situation and have met with the commander of the army and the staff commander, I will issue further orders. [..]"

Valdības Vēstnesis, 22 June 1940

No. 107

Report by the Director of the Security Police, A. Austrums, to Interior Minister V. Lācis Concerning the Situation in the Country

21 June 1940, approximately 12:00

The situation today.

In Riga these days, several marches from factories have been organized. There have been several incidents in which the workers themselves are not the driving force behind these marches; instead, unauthorized individuals have appeared at the factories, calling on workers to stop their work and to participate in a march (this has happened in factories including VEF, Ķuze, Ērenpreiss, Lenta, et al). There is a march from both prisons (5,000-7,000 people) which has been moving along Marijas street and then Matīsa street. They have arrived at the Vidzeme Market and are stopped there at this time. There have been no incidents during this assembly. Armed vehicles of the military of the USSR are patrolling at intersections along the route of the march.

Some elements have tried to take advantage of these complex times to visit the offices of several suburban police departments and to demand the addresses of police officials. In instances where such addresses have not been supplied, the workers have been threatened.

On the night from 20 to 21 June, several youths tried to break into the restaurant "Klostera pagrabs" by sawing through the door jambs. There were several marches in Liepāja on 20 June which were not obstructed by the police in any way. After the marches dispersed, however, an unruly group of young people numbering 200-300 broke into the Post Office, disarmed our army guards, and for a time interrupted telephone service. Then they headed for the prefecture, but there they were met by a military unit of the Soviet armed forces, and the youths did not succeed in breaking into the prefecture. Then they visited the city government building and home guard building. At the city government building, they broke a few windows and raised several Soviet flags. Soviet soldiers arrived at this location, too, and locked the doors.

On 21 June, some young people gathered anew and engaged in various unruliness, including riding in taxicabs without paying, stealing gasoline, and, it is reported, breaking into apartments in a search for weapons. The editorial offices of the newspaper *Kurzemes Vārds* have been taken over by what are said to be communist elements. This morning the newspaper was published under its old name but with communist-based content.

Our flag and the Soviet flag were raised at the city government building and the prefecture building, but our flag was torn down at the city government. The situation in Liepāja is very serious, because the police have neither the resources nor the force to battle this wandering mob. It can be expected that once darkness falls, the situation will get worse. The prefect has asked that the Soviet armed forces help in dispersing the mob, but he was told that such tasks do not fall within the purview of the armed forces and that their only task is to provide for order during public meetings.

The Soviet armed forces have begun to guard the office building of the Liepāja-Aizpute regional director. They are not letting workers into the building, however, so work has been suspended.

In the rest of the country the situation is normal, but there are signs that various forms of disorder might erupt in other places, because the police have been banned from using force. There also are rumors afoot that police officers have been injured (24 in Riga, 3 in Liepāja),

so it may prove impossible to stop these potential cases of disorder.

Rīga, 21 June 1940

Director of the Security Police, *Austrums*

[Pencil-written notes on the document]:

What is to be done in Liepāja?

Police working - ?

General Bolšteins' suicide

Passport department - foreign passports - issue or not?

How many Germans are leaving - statistics.

LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 340.l., p. 3. Original. The document was published by Ojārs Niedre in Latvijas Vēsture, No. 2, 1994, pp. 53-58.

No. 108

Report by the Director of the Security Police, J. Fridrihsons, to Interior Minister V. Lācis

21 June 1940

To the Honorable Interior Minister

Report

I am honored to report the following facts about the Security Police:

The department is made up of two divisions - the Political Police and the Criminal Police.

There are 206 employees in the Political Police. The division is made up of two sub-divisions (investigations and agency), and is divided into nine regions.

There are 155 clerks in the criminal division, which is divided into four regions. There are also 55 criminal inspectors who work in various police units and rural divisions.

Beginning on 17 June, in connection with the latest events in Latvia, clerks from both divisions have been engaged in monitoring the situation and observing the attitude of residents vis a vis the armed forces of the USSR.

On 17 June, a clerk of the political police and a criminal investigator visited the businessman Neiburgs¹ to investigate the reasons behind a strike at his factory. It proved that the businessman himself was at fault, because he was paying less money than is paid at Soviet businesses. When Neiburgs was ordered to pay an appropriate salary, he refused.

The entry of the Sovi[et] Russian armed forces into Latvia was greeted with joy by the people, but there were also destructive elements in Daugavpils, Riga and elsewhere who sought to use the gatherings for their own evil purposes. In Riga, the windows of the Sīpols weapons store were broken. Representatives of the criminal police arrested the guilty parties on the next day.

In the Rēzekne region, in the city of Kārsava, several home guardsmen were disarmed by Domīņiks Kaupužs and others. The police detained several of these individuals, but after the circumstances of the event were cleared up, most of them were freed.

On 19 and 20 June there were workers' marches in Liepāja. On 19 June they generally passed peacefully, but on 20 June the demonstrators disarmed several soldiers and used their weapons to vandalize the Post Office and to shoot at police officers and the Liepāja region police headquarters. When the Russian armed forces arrived at the scene, the situation calmed down somewhat, but telephone contacts to the region have been cut at this time, and it is impossible to know what is happening there.

Recent events have led to certain worries among clerks and some residents, but when they see the resolute response of Soviet soldiers, they calm down.

21 June 1940

J. Fridrihsons

Security Police Department Director

LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 340.l., p. 1. Original.

¹The businessman Ludvigs Neiburgs was engaged in supplying Soviet military bases with goods.

No. 109

Order No. 16 from the Army Commander

Soldiers!

As I take over my new job, my first request to each and every one of you is to calmly continue doing the work which you have been assigned. Each officer, instructor and soldier must understand that the political circumstances under which half of Europe is burning in the flames of war dictate to us that we must devote all efforts and good will to carry out the obligations which have been placed upon us by the mutual assistance agreement with the Soviet

Union. Thanks to this agreement, we have been protected from the war, and only this agreement will be able to keep us from the war in the future. My second request, therefore, is for each official and all soldiers to keep their positions and to carry out their obligations in a way which only deepens and strengthens the cooperation and mutual trust which we have established with the soldiers of the Soviet Union who have come here as our allies.

I am convinced that in this way we will best serve our fatherland.

Army commander, General Kļaviņš.

Copy is correct:

Commander of the Administrative Division of army Headquarters, Col. Vipulis

LVVA, 1474.f., 1.apr., 3485.l., p. 56. Printed.

No. 110

Information from the Latvian Ambassador, F. Kociņš, to A. Kirhenšteins Concerning the Submission of the Results of the Investigation to the Official Representative of the USSR

Moscow, 21 June 1940

Honored Minister,

Under an order issued by the former foreign minister, Mr. Munters, on 16 June I asked for a meeting with the deputy foreign affairs commissar, Dekanozov. It proved that Dekanozov had gone to Kaunas. For this reason I instead visited the director of the Baltic states department, Lisjak. On orders from the government, I submitted to him the results of the investigation which was carried out by our border guard:

On the night from 15 to 16 June, at approximately 3:00 a.m., with the sun rising, armed individuals crossed into Latvia from the Soviet Union and attacked the border guard facility at Maslenci¹, burning it down. The badly burned bodies of the wife of the guard commander and one guard were found. Not far from the unit building, the body of another guardsman was found. He had been shot in the back. The wife of a guardsman and her 14-year-old son were badly injured. Three guardsmen were taken

away. Material evidence such as a hand grenade, shell casings, etc., was found.

At the same time, there was also an attack against another border guard unit at Smaigi². 15 attackers were observed.

As a result:

2 guards and the wife of 1 guard were shot and killed,
1 woman and 1 child were injured,

2 guard commanders, 9 guards, 1 woman and, according to current information, 27 local civilians were taken away.

An investigatory commission headed by General Bolšteins visited the sites to determine in greater detail what had happened there.

The agreement on border incidents does not cover incidents of this magnitude. Therefore, the government of Latvia has asked that authorized representatives be designated to investigate the incident and to transmit the results of the investigation in Moscow or Riga.

Director Lisjak noted this request and promised to convey it to Molotov, adding that he had known nothing of the incident.

When I visited Molotov on the same day, I also informed him of the event³. Molotov said that if his people were guilty, they will be harshly punished.

The Foreign Affairs Commissariat has not given me any information about steps which have been taken. Please report to me whether any information has been received from the Soviet ambassador in Riga.

Please accept, honored minister, my highest confirmations of respect.

To the honored
Foreign Minister,
Riga

F. Kociņš
Ambassador to the USSR

LVVA, 2574.f., 2. apr., 7082.l., p. 32. Original.

¹[Sic.] - it should be Masļenki.

²[Sic.] - it should be Šmaiļi.

³The Soviet record of this meeting is contained in Document No.

**A Telegram from the Authorized
Representatives of the Government of the USSR
in Latvia, A. Vyshinskii and V. Derevjanski, to
the Foreign Affairs Commissariat of the USSR**

22 June 1940. Received 12:20

1. Activity among the population is increasing daily. Demands are being issued at meetings, demonstrations and in leaflets, in which the people are calling for soviet authority, the incorporation of Latvia into the USSR, the legalization of the Communist Party, the removal of Ulmanis from office, and the prosecution of the old government. These demands were expressed particularly vividly in a demonstration in Riga today. The demonstration began in the morning, when political prisoners numbering 153 were released. After the end of the demonstration, some 4,000-5,000 individuals gathered at Ulmanis' palace, demanding that the state flag be taken down. They tried to break into the palace. We were telephoned with a request for assistance. We ordered the military command to take the necessary defensive steps and called on the gathered individuals to go home. They did so. Full order was restored to the city in a short time.

2. The ministers of the new government spent the day receiving cases and reports from department heads, learning more about the situation in their institutions and the work they will do there.

3. The local authorities in Liepāja have been stymied. The police have fled, and order is being maintained only by our armed forces. Workers have taken over the editorial offices of the newspaper *Kurzemes Vārds* and are publishing a newspaper called *Komunisti*. There have been no reported incidents.

4. The new ministers have not been provided with trustworthy assistants. We are helping them to choose new personnel, but it would be necessary to send 10-15 individuals from Moscow to help the ministers in the various ministries.

5. We are choosing people to head editorial offices and various state institutions.

6. In order to avert any confrontation between armed civilians and the home guard, we believe that the home

guard must be disarmed and liquidated. This could happen by incorporating the home guardsmen into the army reserve and subjecting them to the appropriate regime, or by liquidating the organization altogether. We believe the latter option would be more appropriate. Please issue instructions concerning the following matters:

1) Legalizing the Social Democratic Party and other parties of the bourgeois democratic system, as well as legalizing the Communist Party and helping it to begin operations. It is clear that serious help will be needed from the USSR in terms of people and resources.

2) Organizing local government elections and all the events associated with this, including review of the elections law to make it more democratic. If you believe it to be necessary, we will submit concrete recommendations. This matter has already been raised in several instances.

3) The possible merging of the communist and social democratic parties, an idea which is particularly being promoted by the social democrats who apparently are trying to take advantage of the moment to serve their own interests. We doubt whether this step would be advisable. Please submit the necessary instructions via the Comintern.

Vyshinskii, Derevjanski

Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 419-420.

No. 112

Involvement of Latvian Communists in Political Processes

Protocol of a Meeting of the Secretariat¹ of the Central Committee of the Latvian Communist Party

22 June 1940

1. Com. Spure² reports.

a) Candidates for the various ministerial posts must be promoted.

The secretariat recommends:

Priede³ as industry minister;

Tabaks⁴ as state comptroller;

Vanags⁵ as agriculture minister;

Buševics⁶ as finance minister;

Plēsums⁷.

b) The matter of merging the communist and soc. parties⁸.

Consideration of this matter was postponed pending information from the appropriate institutions.

c) The editor of *Cīņa* must be appointed.

Com. Jablonskis was appointed editor. Comrades from the Socialist Workers and Farmers Party will be asked to work on the paper.

d) Publication of the newspaper in Russian⁹.

The Rīga committee is authorized to publish a daily newspaper, "Proletarskaja Pravda", as well as a Latvian-language paper, "Rīgas Lielinieks".

e) Publication of a theoretical journal.

Efforts will be made to establish a theoretical journal for the party in the near term.

f) Election of a Riga worker-deputy council¹⁰.

Election of a Riga worker-deputy council to support the current government of Latvia will be organized.

g) A member of the central committee, com. Gulbis¹¹, was appointed treasurer of the LCP CC.

h) Party members must help to strengthen the state's institutions.

j) Concerning com. Kurlis¹².

The allegations which have been made against com. Kurlis must be investigated. For the time being com. Kurlis will remain in the post which he holds.

Chairman: *Kalnberziņš*¹³

Secretary: *O. Auguste*¹⁴

LVA, PA - 101.f., 1.apr., 7.l., p. 1. Original. Published by Ilga Gore (Grava) in *Padomju Latvijas Komunisti*, No. 1, 1989, pp. 83-85.

¹ This meeting of the Central Committee (which was elected by the 26th conference of the Latvian Communist Party in February 1939) established a secretariat, which was made up of J. Kalnbērziņš, Ž. Spure, A. Jablonskis and O. Auguste. The secretariat operated until October 1940.

² Žanis Spure (1901-1943), professional Communist Party functionary. In a descriptive report published by the executive committee of the Communist Internationale, he was described thus: "Žanis Spure, son of Kristaps, was born in 1901 in Rīga, Latvia. Latvian. Soviet citizen. Working family. Gardener, later party worker. National Communist (Bolshevik) Party (NC(B)P)

member since 1920. Through 1914, attended school during the winter, worked as a shepherd during the summer. [...] After the fall of the Soviet government (1919) was unemployed, then worked in a paint factory, "Dumf". Joined a labor union in 1919 and the Communist Party in May 1920. Worked as a courier for the criminal police for a few months in 1920 with the knowledge of the party. Arrested in 1920, 1921 and 1922. In 1923, as part of an exchange of political prisoners, arrived in the USSR. Began to work as a gardener in the No. 1 Children's Hospital. From 1925 to 1932 was active in the Labor (Red) Internationale, in the international contacts section. In 1928 he was expelled from the NC(B)P because a court convicted him of excessive use of force in self-defense and sentenced him to one year at forced labor (he had shot a man in the streets of Moscow). The central executive committee of the party repealed the punishment, and he was reinstated in the NC(B)P in 1932. Spure was sent to study at the RMTKU [The J. Marhlevski Western People's Communist University], from which he was graduated in 1935. He then was sent to serve the party in a country [Latvia] where he was active in the party leadership. (LVA, PA - 54.f., 1.apr., 8950.l., p. 143). From April 1940 until amnesty he was in prison.

³ Nikolajs Priede, engineer. From 1939 worked at the "Aldaris" factory. Deputy finance minister from 4 to 23 July 1940.

⁴ Arnolds Tabaks (1907-1982), economist. From 1928 to 1939 he worked at the Latvian Railroad and was active in the illegal communist movement in the 1930s. From April 1940 until amnesty he was under arrest. From 5 July to 24 August 1940, he was state comptroller, later finance commissar (minister) of the Latvian SSR.

⁵ Jānis Vanags (1907-1986), economist. After being graduated from the Agricultural Department of the University of Latvia in 1936, he directed a teaching farm at Pūre. In 1925 he became active in the illegal communist movement. From 4 July he was agricultural commissar, later he served for many years as agricultural commissar (minister) of the Latvian SSR, rector of the Latvian Agricultural Academy, and professor.

⁶ Ansis Buševics (1878-1942), lawyer and politician, representative of the first generation of Latvia's social democrat movement. In the Republic of Latvia he was a leader of the Latvian Social Democratic Workers Party, a deputy in Parliament (1922-1934) and a minister (1923). In the late 1930s he was an attorney and one of the leaders of the illegal Latvian Socialist Workers and Farmers Party. The party dissolved in July 1940, and Buševics joined the Communist Party. He was appointed head of the elections commission for the new parliamentary elections. Later he worked in the justice commissariat of the Latvian SSR. He died during wartime evacuation.

- ⁷ Pēteris Plēsums (1895-1968), professional Communist Party worker. In a report filed on him at the personnel division of the executive committee of the Communist Internationale on 20 December 1939, it says: "Pēteris Plēsums, son of Pēteris, was born in 1895 in Kurzeme province, Friedrichsstadt region, Ilzenberga (Rīte) civil parish. Latvian, Soviet citizen [...] Member of the NC(B)P since 1917. [...] Arrested by the Latvian police in 1932. Currently in the Riga Central Prison [...]" (LVA, PA - 54.f., 1.apr., 7478.l., p. 27). After the amnesty of political prisoners on 21 June 1940, he worked in various party posts.
- ⁸ The decision to dissolve the Latvian Socialist Workers and Farmers Party and to merge its members with the Latvian Communist Party was taken at the party's second congress in March 1940. The decision was acted upon on 3 July 1940, when the central committee of the party took the appropriate decisions. The Communist Party, however, took only a few members of the party, as well as other leftist organizations.
- ⁹ The daily Proletarskaja pravda was published from 23 June 1940 to 26 June 1941. The Latvian-language Rīgas lielinieks was illegally published in March 1940 but not later.
- ¹⁰ On 27 November 1940, the presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR decreed that acting executive committees be established in Riga and other cities. The first local soviet elections took place only on 18 January 1948.
- ¹¹ Olga Auguste (Gulbis) (1896-1973). Sent into Latvia from the USSR in 1935 to conduct illegal activities. From July 1939 until amnesty she was under arrest. From 1940 to 1959 she was a high-ranking official in the presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR.
- ¹² Pēteris Roberts Kurlis (1910-1942), leader of the illegal Latvian Association of Youth Workers. In the late 1930s he became an informer for the political police. He was arrested in July 1940 after J. Fridrihsons-Skrauja, under interrogation, provided information about Kurlis and other political police agents to the Soviet authorities (Archive of the Procurator of the Republic of Latvia, Case No. 1576, Vol. 1, pp. 19, 106 and 107). P. Kurlis died in prison in May 1942.
- ¹³ Jānis Kalnbērziņš (1893-1986), professional Communist Party worker, long-time leader of the Latvian Communist Party. A report on him issued by the personnel division of the executive committee of the Communist Internationale on 19 July 1940 characterizes him thus: "Jānis Kalnbērziņš, son of Eduards, a/k/a Zaķis, Ausainis, Vecais, was born in 1893 in Vidzeme province. Latvian, worker, citizen of the USSR. Member of the NC(B)P from April 1917. Party work: active since 1917. Carried out agitation and propaganda work. Worked in Soviet Latvia as emissary of the Riga Political Department in 1919.

Also in 1919, volunteered for the Red Army, serving through 1921. From 1922 to 1925 studied at the Western People's Communist University. In 1925, was sent to Latvia for underground work. Served as instructor at the central committee of the Latvian Communist Party and member of the central committee. Was discovered by the authorities several times, returned to Moscow with the permission of the central committee. In 1928-1929 continued studies at the Communist University. [...] In 1937 was sent to Latvia for underground work and was taken into the leadership of the Latvian Communist Party. The secretary of the central committee of the LCP, comrade Deglavs, offered the following reference for Kalnbērziņš in 1939: 'I have known him for 17 years. He is an honest and faithful member of the party. Energetic and insistent. Does not complain, does not panic in complicated situations. Well-educated in Marxism. For this reason, we can expect more from him in the political arena. He is a wonderful worker under the leadership of a powerful comrade, but he has a hard time conducting operations himself. I feel that it is necessary to keep him in the leadership of the party. He is one of the best individuals for the new leadership'. Kalnbērziņš' wife, Ilze Ziemele (Saulite), daughter of Pēteris, worked in the newspaper Prometejs in Moscow. She is currently under arrest".

¹⁴ See Footnote No.11.

No. 113

An Explanation from the Telegraph Agency of the USSR (TASS) Concerning the Presence of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Baltic States

22 June 1940

Moscow, 22.VI. TASS has published the following explanation: "Recently, in connection with the entry of the Soviet armed forces into the territories of the Baltic states, rumors have begun circulating with greater emphasis to the effect that 100 or even 150 Soviet divisions have now been massed on the Lithuanian-German Border; that this concentration of forces has been engendered by Soviet dissatisfaction with German military gains in the West; that it reflects worsening relations between the Soviets and Germans and that the idea is to put pressure on Germany. Various versions of these rumors have been published nearly every day in the American, Japanese, British, French, Turkish and Swedish press.

TASS is authorized to explain that all of these rumors, the senselessness of which is clearly evident, are fully untrue. The fact is that in the Baltic states there are not 100, not 150, but no more than 18-20 divisions. Moreover, these are concentrated not on the Lithuanian-German border, but rather throughout various regions of the three Baltic republics. The goal of the armed presence is not to put pressure on Germany, but rather to guarantee the implementation of mutual assistance pacts between the USSR and these countries.

Leading Soviet circles believe that the purpose of those who seek to spread these stupid rumors is to cast a shadow on Soviet and German relations. [..]"

Jaunākās Ziņas, 25 June 1940

No. 114

A Decision by the Government Concerning the Mandatory Turning Over of Weapons and Other Matters.

Meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers

Protocol No. 48

23 June 1940

Present:

Prime Minister and acting Foreign Minister

Prof. A. Kirhenšteins

Interior Minister

V. Lācis

War Minister

Gen. R. Dambītis

Social Affairs Minister

P. Blaus

Transportation Minister

J. Jagars

Welfare Minister and acting

Education Minister

J. Lācis

Justice Minister and acting

Finance Minister

J. Pabērzs

Deputy Interior Minister

V. Latkovskis

Minutes taken by the acting

director of the Government Office, R. Bulsons

The meeting was begun at 14:10.

1) The Ministers ordered the welfare minister to submit to the Cabinet a proposal concerning the liquidation of the Latvian Labor Central and its merging with the Welfare Ministry.

The meeting was recessed at 16:30 and re-started at 19:15.

2) The Minister repealed:

1/ A ruling by the Cabinet of Ministers on 28 April 1939 (prot[ocol] No. 23, §7) to strip Fēlikss Cielēns¹ of his citizenship.

2/ A ruling by the Cabinet of Ministers on 2 November 1939 (prot[ocol] No. 67, §22) to strip Ansis Rudevics² of his citizenship.

3) The Ministers adopted the following decision:

To strengthen security in society and to avoid any disturbances of order in the country, the Cabinet of Ministers hereby orders the following:

1. The Home Guard organization and its members, as well as all citizens, must turn in all manner of weapons, except hunting rifles and small-caliber guns, within three days after this decision takes effect, in the manner which will be provided in instructions to be issued along with this order.

The war minister, in conjunction with the interior minister, has the right to permit owners of weapons which are of museum quality or sentimental value to keep such weapons.

This order does not apply to service individuals who have weapons listed in their service certificates.

2. The interior minister may punish those who fail to obey this order by a prison sentence of no more than one year and a monetary fine of no more than 5,000 lats, or both. The same punishment shall apply to individuals who knowingly damage weapons which are to be turned in.

3. Instructions to apply this order shall be issued by the war minister in conjunction with the social affairs and interior ministers³. The order shall take effect on the day of its proclamation.

4) The Ministers, acting on a recommendation by the interior minister, relieved the director of the Police Department, Augusts Austrums, of his duties, at his own request.

The meeting was concluded at 20:30.

Prime Minister, Prof. Dr. A. Kirhenšteins

Acting director of the Government Office, R. Bulsons

LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 2.l., p. 94. Fragments published in *Sociālistiskās Revolūcijas uzvara Latvijā...*, op. cit. (see Footnote in Document 172), pp. 21-22.

¹ *Fēlikss Cielēns (1888-1964), attorney, politician, diplomat. One of the leading members of the Latvian Social Democratic Workers Party. Latvian ambassador to Paris, Madrid and Lisbon in 1933 and 1934. Political emigre after the coup of 15 May 1934. Returned to Latvia in July 1940. On 26 July 1940, the Cabinet of Ministers decided to "permit the Foreign Ministry to take [Swiss francs] 500 to cover expenses associated with the repatriation of F. Cielēns and his family" (LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 2.l., p. 133). On returning to Latvia, Cielēns worked in the council which supervised publishing houses and typographers. He fled to Sweden in 1944.*

² *Ansis Rudevics (1890-1974), social democratic politician. Expelled from Latvia in February 1938, returned on 2 July 1940.*

³ *On 23 June 1940, the war minister, social affairs minister and interior minister signed an instruction which set out in great detail the order whereby home guardsmen and other individuals and other citizens would turn in their weapons. (LVVA, 1307.f., 1.apr., 158.l., p. 23. Original; Valdības Vēstnesis, 25 June 1940.)*

No. 115

Information from the Latvian Telegraph Agency Concerning Orders Issued by the Interior Minister to the Police

24 June 1940

Interior Minister Vilis Lācis has issued the following orders to prefects, regional commanders and the commanders of the railroad police:

Reports have been received that in some rural areas, as well as in cities, officials and private persons have been visited by armed individuals who have presented themselves as weapons inspectors and proceeded to search for weapons. I wish to stress that weapons are not to be turned over to private individuals. Owners of weapons must assert their authority by seeking the support of the local Red Army commander and by following his orders.

Meetings and marches are permitted, but organizers must submit the name of the individual who will be responsible for the respective meeting or march, as well as the names of those who will maintain order at the event. In order to avert any incidents, the police should generally avoid active participation in maintaining order and should instead ask the commander of the local Soviet armed forces garrison to station his men to maintain or-

der and to accompany marches and meetings. If there is no Soviet military unit in the respective place, then the police must maintain order at marches and meetings, calling on soldiers from the local garrison to assist if necessary. Where possible, the regional chairman or prefect must ask the respective local government leader to inform the marchers or meeting participants of the government's declaration, asking them to maintain peace and order, and informing residents that activity aimed against the current government will be vigorously opposed.

Valdības Vēstnesis, 26 June 1940.

No. 116

Information from the Newspaper Jaunākās Ziņas : "The Prime Minister Grants Audience to Diplomatic Corps"

26 June 1940

Prime Minister and acting Foreign Minister Prof. Dr. A. Kirhenšteins today granted an audience at the Foreign Ministry to the foreign ambassadors who are accredited to Latvia. The reception lasted from 10:00 to 13:00. Each member of the diplomatic corps spent 10 minutes with the prime minister. First the prime minister saw the acting dean of the diplomatic corps, the Belgian ambassador, Baron F. de Selys-Fanson. Later, in order of length of accreditation, there followed the Finnish ambassador E. Palin, the Swedish ambassador B. Johanson, the Italian ambassador D. Rogeri, Estonia - H. Rebane, Britain - Ch. Orde, United States of America - J. Cooper Wiley, Germany - U. Kotze, The Netherlands - L. de Decker, Japan - Shojiro Ohtaka, Lithuania - P. Dailide, France - H. Guaran. Spain, Denmark, Romania, Switzerland and the Holy See were represented by their charges d'affaires. On Friday at 12:00, Prime Minister Prof. Dr. A. Kirhenšteins will grant an audience to the consular corps¹.

Jaunākās Ziņas, 26 June 1940.

¹ On 28 June 1940, Kirhenšteins received 15 foreign consuls.

No. 117

**Request to Turn Over Buildings to
the Red Army**

To the Vice-Director of the Latvian Credit Bank,
Mr. J. Mieziš
Commander of communications office¹
No. 2122, Riga.

28 June 1940

Please issue an order to evacuate and clean out the building in Riga at Raiņa boulevard 27 by 5 July of this year.

The building will be turned over to the armed forces of the USSR.

General

Special Assignments Officer, Captain

/illegible signature/

LVVA, 1474.f., 3.apr., 8.l., p. 134. Original.

¹ On 18 June 1940, in order to "organize and facilitate cooperation with the units of the Soviet armed forces which are in Latvia", the Cabinet of Ministers established a communications office attached to the commander of the army. The first commander of the office was Gen. M. Hartmanis. (LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 2.l., p. 87). Mārtiņš Hartmanis (1882-?), general in the Latvian army (from 1929). From February 1934 to October 1939, commander of army headquarters, then appointed special assignments officer and chairman of the commission to oversee implementation of the military aspects of the Latvian-Soviet mutual assistance pact. Retired from the army in October 1940, arrested in December and deported to the USSR.

No. 118

**Protocol of a Meeting of the Secretariat of the
Central Committee of the LCP**

30 June 1940

Present: comrades Zaķis¹, Spure, Jablonskis, Gulbis².

Issue

Decision

1. Governance of party property

1. Comrade Betlers³ is authorized to govern the building in Zvaigžņu street. The building is to be listed in the property fund of the party.

2. Salaries and personnel⁴ 2. Three paid secretaries shall be hired as CC staff with a salary of 400 lats monthly (this sum is to be taken from the CC budget), as well as a clerical director for the CC

CC member	Ls 400
CC clerical secretary	200
CC clerk	200
CC typist	150
CC commandant	200
CC courier	100
CC maid	100
CC maid	100

Director, party information bureau (Pass) 120

CC divisional directors

Women's	300
Agit-prop	300
Press	300
Agricultural	300
Industry	300
Party organization	300

[.] The Labor Youth Association shall be given resources to pay for two staff members:

Secretary general	350
Editor	350

Other Labor Youth Association staffers must be paid by the organization itself.

3. Joining the medical insurance system⁵ 3. CC employees shall be enrolled in the Riga Central insurance system.

4. Re CC member, comrade Kārlis 4. Com. Zaķis is ordered to reach agreement with com. Kārlis.

5. Appointment of divisional directors 5. The director of the CC agitation and propaganda division shall be com. Nurža⁶; the director of the agriculture division shall be com. Salnis⁷; the first secretary of the Latgale regional committee shall be Neilands⁸; the second secretary of

the Vidiena [regional committee] shall be Arv. Kalniņš⁹; the second secretary of the Ventspils [regional committee] shall be com. Rūsis¹⁰; the second secretary of the Daugavpils [regional committee] shall be com. Bundulis¹¹; the second secretary of the Maliena [regional committee] shall be com. Pliesmanis¹²; the second secretary of the Zemgale [regional committee] shall be com. Plāters¹³; with respect to the women's division, com. Zaķis is ordered to meet with com. Dzelve, Peterse and Zaļkalne to determine in which division they might be given work.

6. Donations sheets 6. Sheets to record donations shall be prepared and printed. Lists shall henceforth be issued under a number, with the signature of the secretary general and with a seal.
7. Party membership affairs 7. A commission to handle party membership affairs is established: Com. Zaķis, chairman; Com. Gailis¹⁴, secretary; Com. Gulbis, member.
8. New members 8. New members shall be accepted into the party through the cell system, confirmation to be received from regional committees. New members must have the recommendation of two existing members and must serve for six months before being accepted as full members.
9. Elections to the Riga 9. Com. Spure is ordered to learn worker-deputy soviets the elections system.
10. Issuance of accounting and cashier instructions for the CC 10. Com. Tabaks is ordered to develop these.
11. Request from commandant for door guards 11. Com. Gustsons¹⁵ is authorized to hire individuals from the Riga regions (3-4 individuals from each

- region).
12. CC archive 12. Com. Gulbis is ordered to find an individual to handle this.
 13. Newspaper subscriptions for the CC 13. The commandant is to subscribe to newspapers from the Soviet Union, as well as to *Ciņa* and *Proletarskaja Pravda* for the CC. The distributors of *Ciņa* and other party and youth newspapers are ordered to provide free copies to soldiers and prisoners.
 14. New city board 14. The appropriate recommendation will be made to the Interior Ministry. Com. Rozenburgs will be sanctioned as chairman of the Audit Committee.
 15. New board for insurance system 15. Com. Spure shall review newly elected board members.
 16. Reports that some businessmen are halting operations 16. Factory committees shall check this through the Ministry of Industry, coordinating with the party and labor union leadership.
 17. Documents 17. Documents will be issued to CC members.
 18. Post Office account 18. An account for the LCP CC shall be established with the signatures of Kalnbērziņš (Zaķis) and Auguste (Gulbis). For the Rīga committee, the account shall bear the signatures of com. Spure and com. Pēte.
 19. Training institute for CC instructors and propagandists 19. Com. Spure is ordered to organize this.
 20. Rural labor unions 20. Com. Salnis is ordered to organize labor unions in rural areas.
 21. Mass meetings 21. Such meetings are necessary. An LCP declaration is needed. Com. Spure will write one.
 22. Legal organizations; The socialdemocrat line is prevailing at insurance system board elections; we hear 22. We must work harder and be more alert. We must use our press to intensify the battle against elements which are hostile to us.

reports of Trotskyite activity

23. "Mazpulki"¹⁶ 23. Recommend the liquidation of this and other reactionary organizations.
24. Organization of CC cells 24. Com. Gulbis is ordered to convene a party membership meeting to elect a party organizer.
25. Report from Riga committee concerning factory committee elections et al. Elections in factories went well. Party regional committees have been ordered to maintain contacts with factory committees. Groups to study party history have been organized. 25. Received.
26. Activities in the army. No directive exists on this. Soldier committees are being established. 26. Monitor.
27. Ministries are asking for personnel. Agriculture minister, deputy welfare minister, foreign minister. CP members cannot work in government and report to Ulmanis. The mood of the people is ugly. 27. Monitor.
28. Estonia has adopted a law permitting fighters from the Spanish Revolution to return to L[atvia]. 28. Ask government for permission to return¹⁷.
29. Home guard building¹⁸ to be declared "Red Army building" 29. Celebrate with demonstrations.
- [..]

Chairman *Kalnberziņš*

Secretary *Auguste*

LVA, PA-101.f., 1.apr., 7.l., pp. 7-8. Published by *Ilga Gore (Grava)* in *Padomju Latvijas Komunisti*, No. 8, 1989, pp. 76-81.

¹ *J. Kalnberziņš.*

² *O. Auguste.*

³ *Pauls Betlers (1883-1969), active in social democratic movement since 1904. Director of the company "Daile un Darbs" from 1920-1929. Head of the LCP publishing house from 1940 to 1941.*

⁴ *The average hourly wage in Latvia in July 1940 was 95 santimi (0.95 lats) for a skilled male worker; 59 santimi for a skilled*

- female worker; 76 santīmi for an unskilled male worker; 46 santīmi for an unskilled female worker (Monthly bulletin issued by the Economic Statistics Council of the Latvian SSR, No. 9/10, October 1940, p. 551.)
- ⁵ Latvia had a system of what were known as "slimo kases" - insurance-based institutions which provided subscribers and their family members with medical care and financial support. The system was in place from December 1920 through December 1940.
- ⁶ Alfrēds Nurža (1905-1943), worker, leading member of illegal Communist Party and Red Assistance organization. Fell at the front lines.
- ⁷ Jānis Salnis (1883-1960), worker, active in leftist labor unions and communist underground. Salaried LCP employee from 1940 to 1941. Employed by the Agriculture Ministry of the Latvian SSR after the war.
- ⁸ Roberts Neilands (1899-1941), Communist Party worker, arrested and tried for anti-state activity in 1924, expelled to the USSR. Sent to Latvia for underground work in 1931. Imprisoned from 1932 until the amnesty of political prisoners on 21 June 1940. Killed during bombardment of Moscow.
- ⁹ Arvīds Kalniņš (1904-1942), Communist Party activist. Emigrated to USSR in 1926, returned to Latvia illegally in 1931. Imprisoned from 1932 to 1940. Fell at the front lines.
- ¹⁰ Ieva Paldiņa (Rūsiņš) (1896). Sent to Latvia from the USSR in 1925 for illegal activity Imprisoned from 1930 to 1939. Social insurance minister of the Latvian SSR from 1943 to 1961.
- ¹¹ Milda Dzērvīte (Birkenfelde, Bundule) (1903-1978), sent to Latvia in 1928 to lead the illegal communist youth organization in Latvia. Imprisoned in the term prison from 1929 to 1939. First secretary of the Jēkabpils regional committee of the LCP from 1940 to 1941.
- ¹² Ieva Pliesmane (1897-1964), active in leftist labor unions and the illegal communist movement in the 1920s. Imprisoned from 1930 to 1934. Illegally emigrated to the USSR in 1935. One year later was sent to Latvia for underground activity. Salaried LCP worker after June 1940.
- ¹³ Kārlis Plāters (1899-1949), party and economic worker in the USSR. Sent to Latvia for illegal activity in 1935. Arrested and sentenced to forced labor in November 1935. Salaried LCP worker after amnesty in 1940.
- ¹⁴ Kārlis Gailis (1903-1973), laborer. Active in leftist labor unions and the illegal communist movement in Latvia. Arrested several times. Salaried LCP and soviet worker after amnesty on 21 June 1940.
- ¹⁵ Jānis Gustsons (1906), sailor, harbor worker. Joined illegal LCP in 1937. Salaried LCP worker from June-July 1940, forestry commissar of the Latvian SSR from August 1940.

¹⁶ *Mazpulki* - an organization established in 1929 on the initiative of the Latvian Farmers Union; youth rural organization with 40,083 members in 1939. Liquidated by the LCP CC on 2 August 1940.

¹⁷ Citizens of Latvia who were active in the Spanish civil war returned to Latvia in February and May of 1941.

¹⁸ During the 15 May 1934 coup, a building at Bruņinieku street 29 where the central committee of the Latvian Social Democratic Workers Party and several other social democratic and workers organizations were housed was occupied and later turned into the Home Guard building.

No. 119

Protocol of a Meeting in the Foreign Ministry Conference Room¹ on 1 July 1940

1 July 1940

The meeting was headed by the prime minister and foreign minister, Prof. Dr. A. Kirhenšteins.

Present: War Minister Gen. R. Dambītis, Acting State Comptroller P. Vanags², the ambassador to Moscow, F. Kociņš, the general secretary of the Foreign Ministry, M. Nukša, the commander of the communications office, Gen. M. Hartmanis, the director of the political department of the Foreign Ministry, A. Stegmanis³, the director of the agreements department of the Foreign Ministry, A. Kampe⁴, the chairman of the Soviet garrison supply committee, agronomist J. Krīsbergs⁵, the director of the Railroads commission, J. Stakle⁶, the director of the Agricultural Ministry, P. Grāvis⁷, the director of the Postal and Telegraph Department, O. Matisons⁸, Col. Lakstīgala⁹ of the army procurement division, the commercial director of the Railroad, M. Jakobsons¹⁰, the director of the economic agreements department of the Foreign Ministry, K. Kalniņš¹¹, the director of the Eastern department of the Foreign Ministry, A. Langins¹², and Capt. Gailītis of army headquarters.

The director of the political department of the Foreign Ministry, A. Stegmanis, reported on various issues which have arisen with the USSR since the signing of the mutual assistance pact on 5 October 1939. In October and November 1939, a joint commission under the leadership of General M. Hartmanis and Soviet Navy Commissar Isakov signed several technical agreements. The commission is still formally in existence.

Subsequently, matters with the USSR have been handled by the army headquarters, the Soviet garrison supply committee, the joint commission which was set up in the secret protocol to the agreement, as well as various other institutions with an interest in the matter. Since 17 June 1940, matters have also been handled by the communications office which has been attached to the army headquarters. Prior to 17 June 1940, six agreements were signed with representatives of the USSR. Negotiations on several other agreements were also held.

During the rule of the previous government, matters involving the USSR were not handled satisfactorily. This was partly because there was no unified leadership of the Soviet armed forces stationed in Latvia and also because the Soviet side avoided settling issues through the joint commission which was set up in the confidential protocol¹³. A shortcoming on our side was the fact that there was no military representative on the joint commission, as well as the fact that in the absence of activity on the part of the commission, matters were handled by several institutions, departments, divisions, etc.

Director A. Stegmanis proposed on behalf of the Foreign Ministry that a new interdepartmental institution be established, one which would be made up of responsible and competent individuals and which would handle all matters and be directly answerable to the head of government.

The prime minister agreed that work has not proceeded in a coordinated and satisfactory manner to this point, which means that reorganization is necessary.

Director A. Kampe suggested that leadership of the process should remain in the hands of the government and specifically the head of government. The institution which is to be established should be an executive institution.

General M. Hartmanis recommended that practical matters be separated from juridical and diplomatic matters. These should be handled by separate organs. The Soviet side should provide a unified leadership system whereby all matters would be handled through a specific center.

Ambassador F. Kociņš reported that the Foreign Affairs Commissariat has admitted in discussions that the Soviets

must bear a certain amount of blame for the fact that some issues have not been resolved. We must do everything possible to resolve issues quickly.

The minister of war, General R. Dambītis, pointed out that the current situation does not permit any delay in responding to Soviet requests. This means that an institution is needed to handle the practical resolution of matters. A second organ to handle juridical matters could be created later. Soviet requests should be centralized so that it is clear which requests are coming with the agreement of the Soviet government. The Cabinet of Ministers must be informed about all outstanding matters.

The chairman of the Soviet garrison supply commission, agronomist J. Krīšbergs, reported on negotiations with the Soviet trade representative, who asked that in the future supply matters be handled through him, in a system of trade, and that crediting opportunities be arranged for him. The organization of supply agreements is proceeding normally.

Negotiations on buildings to be turned over to the Soviet armed forces and plots of land to be leased have led to an agreement.

The director of the Postal and Telegraph Department, O. Matisons, reported on the situation in the area of communications. Latvian telecommunications lines do not have much in the way of reserve space, and they are currently being used very intensively by the Soviet armed forces. The department is trying to reserve free lines for government use.

Because lines in neighboring countries are weaker than ours, the Soviet armed forces in neighboring countries frequently route communications through our territory, which burdens our lines even more. If the question of stringing new lines were to arise, it would have to be noted that the department has little in the way of materials.

A centralized Soviet organ in this area would be advisable so that all requests would be coordinated and parts of the country would not be forced to live without communications.

There are no problems in postal matters. The agreement on special correspondence is in force.

The Soviet agencies are paying their May telephone bill in a normal fashion.

Director J. Stakle reported on military transport issues and the situation on the railroad. The governing board of the railroad has designed a transportation plan, and it is proceeding without problems. Traffic matters are being handled in conjunction with the transportation commissariat of the USSR.

The agreement on courier wagons (for postal deliveries) is in force. The Soviets have suggested that the number of individuals accompanying the wagons be increased from 4 to 5.

Local Soviet demands concerning special equipment and other facilities are being handled through the communications office. Recently Soviet soldiers have been trying to undertake direct communications with the railroad. This is inconvenient.

Tariff matters are being handled under the agreement on special transport, and there have been no problems in accounting.

Future developments in the situation may require supplementary railroad equipment.

Acting State Comptroller P. Vanags pointed out that the communications office and the garrison supply committee must handle practical matters. These two organs must have a centralized office with one or more individuals to handle juridical and international matters.

The extent to which the Soviet armed forces are consuming goods must be noted, and our foreign trade must be organized on this basis.

The matter of expanding the garrison supply committee must be considered.

The war minister, General R. Dambītis, said that there should be at least approximations of the supply needs of the Soviet armed forces, and these approximations must be developed without delay.

Agronomist J. Krīšbergs reported that there are data concerning consumption at the Soviet garrisons to this point. The system is regulated by the trade representative of the USSR, who also handles financial matters.

The committee could easily be expanded without much in the way of additional government resources.

The prime minister suggested that workers from the Latvian Agricultural Chamber, which is about to be liquidated, might be used to expand the committee. He

asked whether significant amounts of our goods are not being brought out of Latvia.

Agronomist J. Krīšbergs responded that purchases by Soviet soldiers do not amount to much in monetary terms. There may be problems with meat in terms of supplies to the garrisons, because farmers have been slaughtering livestock due to the drought, which may lead to a shortage of meat in the winter.

M. Jakobsons pointed out that there may be difficulties in settling accounts with the neighboring Baltic countries in terms of tickets and transport, because direct and transit traffic may intensify now.

Ambassador F. Kociņš returned to the matter of settling issues with the USSR: The Soviet military's demands must be understood and quickly resolved. The individual who handles these matters must have a name in the Cabinet of Ministers, and he must not lose the initiative in this respect.

Director A. Kampe pointed out that in late April and early May, Latvia reached an oral agreement with the USSR to the effect that the leadership of the joint commission would be handed over to a military individual.

The war minister, General R. Dambītis, recommended the following system for settling issues with the USSR:

- 1) Maintain institutions to deal with practical issues;
- 2) Ask the Soviet ambassador to designate a specific organ through which the most important requests would be channeled;
- 3) Ask that requests be filed in advance;
- 4) Small-scale matters should be handled locally.

The war minister said that there should not be a separate, centralized organ, because the government itself would serve as this organ.

The prime minister adjourned the meeting.

Minutes taken by A. Langins

LVA, 1051.f., 1a.apr., 1.l., pp. 21-26. Original. The document was published by *Ojārs Niedre in Latvijas Vēsture*, No. 2, 1994, pp. 49-51.

¹ Kirhenšteins held meetings of this type on 28 and 29 June and 1 and 5 July of 1940 to meet with experienced workers of the old government apparatus (LVA, 1051.f., 1a.apr., 1.l., pp. 1-27).

- ² Pēteris Vanags (1883-1948), chairman of the second department of the State Control Office in the late 1930s.
- ³ Arturs Stegmanis (1902-1987), director of the political department of the Foreign Ministry from March 1938 to 20 August 1940. On that date he was arrested and deported to Moscow. He was imprisoned until 1956.
- ⁴ Andrejs Kampe (1905-1942), served in various posts in the Foreign Ministry beginning in 1927. From September 1938 to August 1940 was director of the agreements department. He was arrested on 18 October 1940 and deported to the USSR. On 16 March 1942 he was sentenced to death.
- ⁵ Jānis Krīšbergs, senior agronomist at the Ministry of Agriculture in the late 1930s.
- ⁶ Jānis Voldemārs Stakle (1895-1984), construction engineer. From December 1935 to July 1940, director of the Latvian Railroad. Went into exile in 1944.
- ⁷ Pēteris Grāvis, departmental director in the Ministry of Agriculture beginning in 1920.
- ⁸ Oto Matisons (1893-1942), divisional director of the Postal and Telegraph Department of the Ministry of Communications, director of the department from February 1939 to August 1940. Deported on 14 June 1941, sentenced to death on 17 May 1942.
- ⁹ Jēkabs Lakstīgala, served in the Latvian army beginning in 1919.
- ¹⁰ Mārtiņš Jākobsons, long-time worker in the commercial department of the Latvian Railroad.
- ¹¹ Kārlis Kalniņš (1902-1967), employed as an overseas diplomat in the Latvian Foreign Service, director of the economic agreements department of the Foreign Ministry. Went into exile in 1944.
- ¹² Arnolds Langins, acting director of the Eastern department of the Foreign Ministry beginning in 1940.
- ¹³ See Doc. 39.

No. 120

Protocol of a Meeting of the LCP CC Secretariat

2 July 1940

Present: J. Kalnbērziņš, Spure, Jablonskis, Kurlis, Auguste.

Issue	Decision
Comrade Spure reported that our people have become ministers: Tabaks as state controller, Vanags as agriculture minister, Karlsons ¹ as finance and industry minister,	Noted.

- Priede as deputy finance minister. We've been asked to find a deputy labor minister.
- Unification of the Communist and Socialistic parties. Rejected. Members of the former Socialistic Party should be admitted individually².
- Upcoming parliamentary elections. Begin elections campaign, keeping in mind the right wing of social democracy. Lists of workers, farmers and labor intelligentsia must be assembled. Representatives from the army will have to be proposed. A working people's bloc platform must be written (Com. Spure will do this). A campaign on electing the new Parliament must be begun in our newspapers.
4. Pre-election campaign budget Find the necessary resources.
5. Establishment of a workers guard, 500 strong, to help the police in guarding businesses and meetings. Order party regional committees to establish a workers guard.
6. Re the army. Spure reports that communications have been established in nearly all army units. Everyone is waiting for the opportunity to establish cells and committees. Currently activity is still illegal and is faced with terrorist threats. Report in *Ciņa* that cells and committees can be established, but soldiers must not interfere with the orders of commanders. The army can establish joint cells between the party and youth.
7. The national flag. Report in *Ciņa* that the national flag must not be trod underfoot³.
8. Re party education. A network to study party history must be established. Com. Spure recom- Organize a store to distribute party literature. Find money to publish 50,000 copies of a short

- mends publishing a short course on party history, 100,000 copies.
9. Re cinema. Establishment of shareholders association and participation for profit. Order com. Jablonskis to negotiate with the appropriate institutions on this matter.
10. Com. Kurlis reports on youth matters. Youth meetings urging participants to join the Komsomol have been held throughout the land. Nine mass meetings were held in Riga, 19 in the provinces. Foundations were laid throughout the country. The regional network must be coordinated with the party organization. Bourgeois youth organizations must be taken over. Consider publication of a daily newspaper for young people.
- Communications with businesses are not good. No precise data on how many members have been admitted. 14 youth regions established in Riga.
11. CC office. Secretaries must be freed of petty tasks. Women's branch must be established. Need to find employees for the CC and the agitprop division of the Riga committee.
12. Re deputy clerical secretary. Secretaries must do their work: go among the masses, discuss matters, think about reserves, be more forthcoming in proposing people. Establish a list of individuals. Create appropriate working conditions for the second secretary of the CC, free him of petty decisions.
13. General situation in the country. Early indecisiveness has been settled. There were a few strikes which were liquidated after explanations. Certain sabotage has been noted. The issue must be raised in *Cīņa*. The 5th Column is appearing, we must be alert. Pērkonkrusts¹ has begun to publish leaflets, Noted.

demonstrations are taking place at the monument⁵. Guards must be posted at the memorial, public visits banned. Trotskyites must be arrested.

14. Anti-Semitism has been noted. Explanatory work must be broadened⁶.

15. Confidentiality must be observed at work; each worker knows only what he needs to know.

Chairman: *Kalnberziņš*

Secretary: *Auguste*

LVA, PA-101.f., 1.apr., 7.l., pp. 10-12. Document published by Ilga Gore (Grava) in *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, No. 1 (1991), pp. 118-120.

¹ *Kārlis Karlsons* (1907-1962), chemist. Senior engineer at Brocēni cement factory from 1938 to 1940. Active in illegal LCP beginning in mid-1930s. Finance minister from 4 July to 24 August 1940, then commissar for light industry in the Latvian SSR. After the war worked at the Institute of Chemistry of the Academy of Sciences of the Latvian SSR.

² In June and July, 13 members of the Latvian Socialist Workers and Farmers Party were admitted to the LCP, including party leaders A. Rudevics and A. Buševics (LVA, PA-101.f., 2.apr., 87.l., pp. 6-9). In the archives there are requests for membership from 85 former social democrats and members of other leftist organizations (including several prominent politicians). (LVA, PA-101.f., 2.apr., 17.l.) Most of these individuals were rejected, and those who submitted requests were often deported or otherwise persecuted by the Soviet authorities.

³ On 3 July 1940, Ciņa published the following text: "The Latvian national flag must not be scorned. We have heard of several incidents when individuals have torn down the Latvian state flag and scorned it. Such activities must be harshly condemned, because the national flag must not be violated. It can be used together with the working-class red flag."

⁴ The Latvian organization "Pērkonkrusts" was established in 1932. Parliament decided to ban it on 17 March 1933, and in December of the same year the organization was liquidated. The organization continued illegal operations and was the most nationally radical group in opposition to the Ulmanis regime.

⁵ The reference is to the Latvian Freedom Monument in Riga.

⁶ On 2 July 1940, *Cīņa* ran an editorial called "The Horns of Anti-Semitism must be Broken". *Proletarskaja Pravda* ran an article by M. Šacs-Aņins on chauvinism.

No. 121

Appointment of Communists Dispatched from Moscow to Important Government Posts in Latvia

July-August 1940

A list of comrades submitted to the LCP CC by the Red Army Political Division¹:

1. Vladimirs Miške², son of Kārlis, member of the NC(B)P since 1911 (editor of *Cīņa*). Deputy education minister and dean of the Department of Marxism and Leninism at the University of Latvia. Leave.

2. Pēteris Valeskalns³, son of Ivan. Member of the NC(B)P since 1917 (deputy education commissar), deputy of the former education minister. Leave.

3. Pāvels Vītols, son of Miķelis. Member of the NC(B)P since 1928 (director of electric station). Commissar of the Ķegums electric station. Leave.

4. Jānis Paškevics⁴, son of Dominiks. Member of the NC(B)P since 1924 (rector of the state university).

5. Vilis Meijers⁵, son of Krišs. Member of the NC(B)P since 1918 (director of large factory). Commissar for electronic industry. Leave.

6. Kārlis Grīnvalds, son of Ivans. Member of the NC(B)P since 1918 (editor of the newspaper *Rīts*). Employed in the Literature Division of the Latvian SSR. Leave.

7. Eduards Silmanis, son of Jānis. Not party member (employee of Education Commissariat). Drinks, raises disturbances. Replace.

8. Eduards Leitmanis⁶, son of Mārtiņš. Member of the NC(B)P since 1919 (political leader of division). Former deputy finance minister. Leave.

9. Jēkabs Kaktiņš, son of Pēteris. Member of the NC(B)P since 1919 (factory director). Leave.

10. Elmārs Kerre⁷, son of Pēteris. Member of the NC(B)P since 1918 (employed in Education Commissariat). Employed in the Interior Commissariat. Leave.

11. Eduards Liberts⁸, son of Juris. Member of the NC(B)P since 1932 (secretary of the CC of the youth association). Leave.

12. Alfrēds Domburs⁹, son of Jānis. Member of the NC(B)P since 1925 (factory director). *Leave.*

13. Pēteris Zvejnieks, son of Pēteris. Member of the NC(B)P since 1905 (*use LCP CC*). [*Director of the Lifestyle Department of the newspaper Cīņa*]. *Leave.*

14. Ādolfs Apsītis, son of Pēteris. Member of the NC(B)P since 1931 (*deputy director of Rīga Radio*). *Heavy drinker. Replace.*

15. Kārlis Dreimanis¹⁰, son of Bērtulis. Member of the NC(B)P since 1918 (*assistant to army procurement director*). *Employed in Red Army corps. Leave.*

16. Ivans Zemeszirgs, son of Dāvids. Member of the NC(B)P since 1919 (personnel director in commissariat). *Factory director. Leave.*

17. Jānis Lauva, son of Jānis. Member of the NC(B)P since 1932 (political leader in department). *Heavy drinker. Replace.*

18. Jānis Avotiņš¹¹, son of Georgs. Member of the NC(B)P since 1918. (Director of agitprop division of LCP CC). *Leave.*

19. Mārtiņš Zaķis¹², son of Pēteris. Member of the NC(B)P since 1932 (factory director). *Leave.*

20. Kārlis Sakss¹³, son of Andrejs. Member of the NC(B)P since 1918 (Forestry Commissariat). *Leave.*

21. Rūdolfs Blaus¹⁴, son of Ivans. Member of the NC(B)P since 1905 (deputy agriculture commissar). *Employed in Agriculture Commissariat. Leave.*

22. Jānis Baumanis, son of Jēkabs. Member of the NC(B)P since 1918 (director of the Culture Department of Cīņa). *Leave.*

23. Augusts Paipala, son of Juris. Member of the NC(B)P since 1919 (factory director). *Replace.*

24. Alberts Lakstiņš, son of Fricis. Member of the NC(B)P since 1932 (director of furniture factory). *Poor worker, replace.*

25. Otto Sproģis, son of Jānis. Member of the NC(B)P since 1917 (Education Commissariat). *Trade ministry. Poor worker, replace.*

26. Ulrihs Bucēns, son of Hanss. Member of the NC(B)P since 1917 (director of museums division of Education Ministry). *Education Commissariat. Leave.*

27. Jānis Kārklīņš, son of Jānis. Comsomol member (CC of Comsomol). *Staff of Latvian Comsomol. Leave.*

28. Jānis Vimba, son of Artūrs. Member of the NC(B)P since 1918 (technical division commander). *Personnel director of Local Industry Commissariat. Leave.*

29. Fricis Dombrovskis¹⁵, son of Osips. Member of the NC(B)P since 1917 (instructor in the fundamentals of Marxism and Leninism, department director). *Leave.*

30. Alfrēds Runce, son of Fridrihs. Member of the NC(B)P since 1925 (deputy chairman of Riga City housing division). *Leave.*

31. K.J. Pugo¹⁶ (director of propaganda division of Riga city [party] committee). *Leave.*

LVA, PA - 101.f., 2.apr., 108.l., pp. 72. - 73.

¹ In October 1939 and June 1940, along with the Red Army, a certain number of "mobilized reservists" was flooded into Latvia. These were party and economic workers of Latvian origin. The basic text was supplemented with hand-written notes (perhaps in September 1940), noting the current post of the individual and marking either the word "leave" (*ostavit*) or "replace" (*otkomandirovat*). In this document, the hand-written notes are in italics.

² Vladimirs Miške (1895-1972), appointed one of the leaders of Cīņa in early July 1940. Later a long-term dean of the Department of Marxism and Leninism at the University of Latvia, as well as deputy director of the Institute of Party History.

³ Pēteris Valeskalns (1899-1987), appointed deputy education minister on 26 July 1940, became education commissar after the repression of J. Lācis in 1941.

⁴ Jānis Paškevics, appointed acting rector of the University of Latvia on 29 July 1940. Dismissed by the Council of Commissars of the Latvian SSR on 13 February 1941.

⁵ Vilis Meijers, worked in Leningrad factories as an engineer and electrician. Deputy food industry commissar of the Latvian SSR beginning in September 1940, served in other high-ranking posts.

⁶ Eduards Leitmanis (1899-1971), appointed deputy finance minister on 29 July 1940.

⁷ Elmārs Kerre, appointed counselor to the militia department of the Latvian Interior Ministry on 3 August 1940, later served in the state security apparatus.

⁸ Eduards Libertis (1909-1981), worked in the apparatus of the LCP CC beginning on 14 July 1940. After the establishment of the Latvian Comsol in August 1940, was appointed its first secretary, later served in various party and soviet posts.

- ⁹ *Alfrēds Domburs* headed the process of nationalization in the metals industry in 1940, later served as deputy commissar of local industry in the Latvian SSR.
- ¹⁰ An order issued to the army on 30 July 1940 by President A. Kirhenšteins states: "I hereby appoint Red Army Captain *Kārlis Dreimanis* (3rd-grade intendant) to service in the procurement division of the military and appoint him assistant to the director of the division".
- ¹¹ *Jānis Avotiņš* (1898-1986), active in the Pan-Russian emergency committee during the civil war, later instructor in the political department of the Red Army, professional in the NC(B)P ideological apparatus. In July 1940 began work in the apparatus of the LCP CC (LVA, PA-101.f., 1.apr., 60.l., pp. 267-268).
- ¹² *Mārtiņš Zaķis* (1909-1988), director of the technical department of the Light Industry Commissariat of the Latvian SSR in 1940. Popular as the author *Krieviņš* after 1940. In an autobiographical novel, *Pasveicini Daugavu* (Give My Greetings to the Daugava River), he tells of how he served in the Red Army, including service at Soviet military bases before 17 June 1940.
- ¹³ *Kārlis Sakss* (1897-1987), "arrived in Latvia in 1940 as part of the Red Army" (*Latvijas Mazā enciklopēdija*, Rīga (1970), Vol. 3, p. 273). Worked as deputy forestry commissar in 1940.
- ¹⁴ *Rūdolfs Blaus* (1887-1965), appointed deputy agricultural minister on 29 July 1940.
- ¹⁵ *Fricis Dombrovskis*, said at the 9th congress of the LCP on 19 December 1940 that during the civil war he had worked in the emergency commission of the Nizni province and had been drafted into the Red Army in 1940. Beginning on 13 July worked in the LCP CC (LVA, PA-101.f., 1.apr., 60.l., pp. 270-271).
- ¹⁶ *Kārlis Pugo* (1896-1955). Informed delegates to the 9th Congress of the LCP that he had been drafted into the Red Army in 1939 and had served through 1940 (LVA, PA-101.f., 1.apr., 60.l., p. 272). Beginning in July 1940 was director of agitprop for the Riga city committee of the LCP, later its secretary.

Chapter V

Parliamentary Elections and the Annexation of Latvia

Under the decision taken by the former government of Latvia, the functions of Parliament were turned over to the Cabinet of Ministers.

The government of the Democratic Republic of Latvia, believing it to be its obligation to ensure the Latvian people with the opportunity to freely express their will in that time when at the present time have arisen in our fatherland in the way of building and governing the state, and recognizing that there can be no delay in these most important matters, decides to carry out parliamentary elections under the rules of paragraph 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, such elections to be general equal district, secret and proportional.

To set the date of the parliamentary elections on 15 July 1918.

No. 122
**The Kirhenšteins Government's Decision on
Parliamentary Elections**

**Protocol No. 56
Meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers**

4 July 1940

Present:

Prime Minister and	
Acting Foreign Minister	Prof. Dr. A. Kirhenšteins
Finance Minister	K. Karlsons
Interior Minister	V. Lācis
Education Minister	Prof. P. Lejiņš
War Minister	Gen. R. Dambītis
Social Affairs Minister	P. Blaus
Transportation Minister	J. Jagars
Welfare Minister	J. Lācis
Justice Minister	J. Pabērzs
Agriculture Minister	J. Vanags
Deputy Interior Minister	V. Latkovskis
Acting State Comptroller	P. Vanags
Deputy Finance Minister	N. Priede
Minutes taken by the acting director of the Government Office,	R. Bulsons

The meeting began at 19:20.

[...] 12) The Ministers adopted the following decision:

Under the decision taken by the former government on 18 May 1934, in violation of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, the functions of Parliament were turned over to the Cabinet of Ministers.

The government of the Democratic Republic of Latvia, believing it to be its obligation to ensure the Latvian people with the opportunity to freely express their will in matters which at the present time have arisen in our fatherland in the areas of building and governing the state, and recognizing that there can be no delay in these most important matters, decides:

1. To carry out parliamentary elections under the rules of Paragraph 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, such elections to be general, equal, direct, secret and proportional.

2. To set the dates of the parliamentary elections on 14 and 15 July 1940.

3. To adopt an elections law and immediately implement it.

13) The Ministers adopted the law on Parliamentary elections¹.

[..] 20) In connection with the adoption of the law on parliamentary elections, the Ministers decided to send the following telegrams of thanks and congratulations:

1) To the great leader of the people of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and of all the working people of the world, Josif Visarionovich Stalin:

"The government of the Democratic Republic of Latvia has on this date adopted a law on parliamentary elections. After six years of unlawfulness and oppression, this restores to the Latvian people their freedom and their right to determine their own fate and the ability in true friendship to cooperate with the great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and its people. At this great historic moment, the government of the Republic of Latvia, in the name of the people of Latvia, send you, the genial leader of the working people of the world, thanks for restored freedom and justice.

Long live friendship between Latvia and the USSR, long live the close and irreversible union between the Republic of Latvia, long live the leader and best friend of the working people, Josif Visarionovich Stalin!"

[..] The meeting was concluded at 21:40.

Prime Minister, *Prof. A. Kirhenšteins*
Acting Director of the Government Office,
R. Bulsons

LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 2.l., pp. 103 and 104. Minutes of the Meetings of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia, pp. 51-55.

¹The elections law adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers (LVVA, 1303.f., 1.apr., 54.l., pp. 29-34, typed, original) was published in the official *Valdības Vēstnesis* on 5 July 1940 above the signatures of Prime Minister A. Kirhenšteins, Justice Minister J. Pabērzs and Interior Minister V. Lācis. Under the accepted order, the law was proclaimed by President K. Ulmanis. The law contained 44 paragraphs and formally was very much like the parliamentary law which was adopted by the Constitutional Convention of the Republic of Latvia in June 1922, as amended by Parliament on 9 June 1925 and 5 June 1928 (58 paragraphs).

During the days of the democratic Republic of Latvia, however, the law was that elections "must be proclaimed in Valdības Vēstnesis at least 40 days before the day of the election" (§30) and that "...there must be at least thirty days between the last day on which candidate lists are registered and the first day of the elections" (§16). The 1940 elections, by comparison, were proclaimed on 4 July, candidate lists were registered only until 10 July, and the elections were held on 14 July. The procedure for submitting candidate lists was simplified, as were those paragraphs of the law which spoke to the order whereby multiple candidate lists could be submitted. §21 did say that "the Central Elections Commission shall number candidate lists in the order of their submission". The norm was maintained that "after the vote is cast, the chairman of the elections commission or his deputy marks in the voter's passport that the holder of the passport has participated in the elections" (§37 and §22), but in 1940, people were allowed to present their temporary identification documents instead of a passport, and the law said that "the elections commission shall make a special lists of those voters and their passport numbers who have received candidate lists" (§26.2). In 1940, not only was the principle of amendable lists rejected, but voters were barred from crossing out any candidate or writing in any supplemental name (§38).

No. 123

Minutes from a Meeting of the Regional Secretaries of the Riga Committee of the Latvian Communist Party (LKP)

4 July 1940

Nine regional secretaries participated.

Agenda:

1. Parliamentary elections.
2. Demonstrations.
3. Evaluation of the election of committees in factories.
4. The workers' council.
5. Correspondence.
6. Other.
7. Tomorrow's slogan.

1. Com. Spure reported that in connection with an order by the Internationale and the decision of the Secretariat, parliamentary elections must take place quite soon. The elections will be held on the basis of the first Constitution. All later limitations have been repealed. The elections will be organized quickly, as the elections will take place on 14 and 15 July. The elections campaign will begin tomorrow, on 5 July.

[..] Parties, except the Com[munist] Par[ty] are not legal, and they will not be able to legalize within two weeks. The results will be dependent on our work and abilities. Regions must keep in mind that the apparatus which participated in the election of factory committees must be broadened and supplemented. Work must be concentrated on the regions.

Latvia is divided into five elections districts: 21 cand[idates] in Riga, 27 in Latg[ale], 22 in Vidzeme, 15 in Kurzeme and 15 in Zemgale.

[..] 5.VII Demonstration

Slogan: Vote for the bloc of workers, farmers and working intelligentsia. The demonstration is being planned in connection with the rights which have been won with respect to the elections.

There will be a short elections meeting at each business. Factory workers are to be mobilized. The slogan in this work: "Working people's bloc". Latvia, the Soviet Union. Do not fear the slogan "Soviet Latvia". The demonstration will be at 6:00. Shifts should not leave work. The slogan "Long live the bloc of workers, farmers and working intelligentsia". [..]

The chairman of the demonstration - Putniņš. Regional secretaries - column representatives.

In the workers guard - 500 people. Register according to type of weapon. Military organization (non-party members are permissible).

3. Workers' deputy council - demand postponed. [..]

LVA, PA-102.f., 1.apr., 5.l., pp. 8-9. Original. Handwritten.

Published by Ilga Gore (Grava) in *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta žurnāls*, 1991, No. 1, pp. 121-122.

No. 124

Excerpts from an Address by A. Vyshinskii to a Demonstration at the Soviet Embassy in Riga

5 July 1940

Citizens of the free Republic of Latvia, dear comrades:

This day is one of the greatest days in the history of the freedom of Latvia's people. Only 14 days have passed since the day when the old, plutocratic regime which was hostile to Latvia, the Latvian people and the Latvian

government, was replaced by a new government, which today has issued a resolution on parliamentary elections and a new, democratic elections law.

[..] During these days, a new and enormous step has been taken along the road to a true popular government, toward the establishment of a state which is worthy of the great Latvian people. This step is not the last in the historical road of Latvia, and the people will have to take several more steps to achieve new happiness, new and true joy for the working people, the sons and daughters of independent Latvia, in a close, inviolable and for many centuries irreversible union with the Soviet nation [..].

The goal for workers, farmers and the working intelligentsia, the goal of all honest patriots of Latvia is to organize the will of the people under the leadership of the Communist Party and to be able in a manly and revolutionary way which follows the example of your Eastern brothers who have already freed themselves from the yoke of the exploiter, to state your mighty will [..].

I call on you to remember that a nation obtains happiness and freedom only in battle, in a bitter battle with its enemies. I ask you to remember that the enemy is not the one who speaks foolishness, but rather the people who are able to practically carry out their bitter and dark reactionary intentions. [..]

I wish to speak as freely as some of the demonstrators have done. I wish to warn you that we stand before you as representatives of the Soviet Union. We understand the importance of the historical moment which the Latvian state is enjoying along with its friends in the Soviet Union. We shall never permit your minds and heads to be twisted by some senseless fantasy. On 16 June of this year, the Soviet government presented the old Latvian government with an ultimatum, demanding the organization of a government which openly and honestly would be able and ready to fulfill the terms of the pact which exists between Latvia and the USSR. The Latvian government, which survived until 20 June, accepted the Soviet ultimatum. As you know, under the demands of the USSR, on 20 June, in full concert with the Soviet government and fully and precisely in keeping with the note of the Soviet government, a new Latvian government was organized. We call on you to hail this government as your government. Hurrah!

I believe it necessary to remind you of these things, not forgetting the great responsibility which lies on the shoulders of each Soviet and Latvian citizen who stands before these momentous events. [...]

Some would try to sow mistrust in the next Parliament. Comrades, you must know that the Parliament will be such as the Latvian people will establish it, that only the people have the right not only to determine the membership of the next Parliament, but also to determine the further development of all political matters. [...]

Away with the provocateurs who are sowing dissatisfaction in your midst, who seek to break us apart, who spread all manner of rumor and who seek to wreck our faith in the new government and in our common effort to build a stable and unshakeable union between Latvia and the Soviet state. Go now as one to the elections, and vote, each of you, for the Latvian working people's bloc! [...]

From "Proletarskaja Pravda" (The Truth of the Proletariat), the Russian-language newspaper of the Latvian Communist Party, 6 July 1940. The paper was published in Riga from June 1940 to June 1941. The text of Vyshinskii's speech was not fully published in any Latvian-language newspaper.

No. 125

The Campaign Platform of the Latvian Working People's Bloc

6 July 1940

For peace, for bread, for the freedom of the people!

Citizens of the free Republic of Latvia!

On 14 and 15 July of this year, in keeping with a resolution by the government of the Republic of Latvia, a new Parliament will be elected throughout our land, the highest organ of authority in the Latvian state which must be governed by the will of the entire Latvian people.

For many years the Latvian people suffered at the hands of the old government, holding no rights, suffering an illegitimate system. The old government dissolved the representatives of the people who had been lawfully elected in keeping with the Constitution of 7 November 1922. Systematically and callously they trod the interests of the people underfoot and scorned the rights of the people.

For many years the old government sacrificed the interests of the people on the altar of its own policies, which were hostile to the people, which led the people toward collapse, the damage of war, and destruction.

The old government crudely violated the mutual assistance agreement which was reached with the Soviet Union on 5 October 1939 and by so doing, threatened the security, inviolability and independence of the Latvian state.

The old government of Latvia made no effort to honestly fulfill the obligations of the mutual assistance pact with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, made no effort to implement a strong and unshakeable union between Latvia and the great Soviet Union on the basis of this pact. On the contrary: the government began to adopt wrongful and duplicitous policies which threatened the peaceful nature of the Latvian people and the welfare of the entire state.

The government fell, having fully lost respect in the eyes of each honest patriot of this land, hated by the people. So, too, did fall the old regime of unlawfulness, oppression and arbitrariness.

With the agreement of the people, a new government has come to power which in its Declaration of 21 June ceremoniously promised to serve the people, to defend the people's interests, and to protect their sovereign rights.

The sovereign authority of the Latvian Republic must rest in the hands of the people and only the people.

In these historical days, the people of Latvia are being asked to elect a Parliament in general, equal, direct, secret and proportional elections.

The election days - 14 and 15 July - are drawing near. The Latvian people must go to the voting booths as unified as never before, uplifted in faith and love for their famous motherland, full of friendly and sincere feelings of brotherhood toward our great and mighty friend, the invincible Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The people of Latvia must go to the voting booths in these days full of the conviction that the only way to joy, state independence, cultural flowering and the highest achievements of the people's material welfare - this is the way of close friendship and honest union between Latvia and the USSR. This is the way of the brotherhood of Latvia and the Soviet peoples, the common way of all our peoples

for peace, joy, and for the uplifting of the Republic of Latvia and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Citizens of free, democratic Latvia!

We, the workers, farmers, working intelligentsia, labor unions, factory and business committees, cultural, educational and athletic organizations, free women of Latvia, working youth of Latvia, and Communist Party of Latvia, have joined in the great task of electing the new Parliament. We are the "Latvian Working People's Bloc", and our aim is to participate in the elections in a friendly and unified manner and to elect representatives of the people who are worthy - true representatives of the people who express the will of the people.

We, who have united in the "Latvian Working People's Bloc", call on all workers, farmers, intellectuals - all of the honest patriots of our land, to vote for those in the upcoming elections on 14 and 15 July who consistently, honestly and with full revolutionary vigor fight to meet the demands which are made by all of the working people of our land, by all of the people.

These are our demands:

a) In foreign policy:

Friendship between Latvia and the peoples of the Soviet Union and a strong, unshakeable union between the Republic of Latvia and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

b) In domestic policy:

1. Broad state assistance in providing land to those who have little or no land.

2. Absolution of impoverished or poor farmers from settlement of back payments to the state, taxes, etc., and cancellation of administrative sanctions against them.

3. Improvement of the material status of workers and servants by raising their wages.

4. Broadly organized work protection and social insurance for illness and accidents.

5. State protection for the handicapped, as well as for workers who are elderly.

6. A broad network of medical care, including hospitals, clinics, ambulances, first-aid centers, etc.

7. Protection of mother and child by organizing infant homes, kindergartens and children's homes.

8. Definite democratization of the army.

9. Ensurement of free expression, a free press, and free association which correspond to the interests of the working people.

10. Ensurement of the inviolability of the person and property of all citizens.

11. Broad assistance to national culture and science, education and art.

Citizens of the Republic of Latvia!

We call on you to vote for our demands, not forgetting that only the fulfillment of these demands will provide our people with freedom, independence and joy, will provide for the inviolability of our country, the flowering of our fatherland and its renown.

Cast no vote for those who are unable to fight to the end for the thorough fulfillment of these demands, for a full and relentless implementation of our platform.

Workers, farmers, members of the working intelligentsia - employees of the state and local governments, teachers and physicians, engineers, workers and journalists, lawyers, professors, soldiers - all progressive members of our people - vote for our platform, for the great principle of battle, and for the victory of our people's cause!

Citizens! Strengthen the unity, discipline and organization of the Latvian people, make relentless attack against the enemies of the people - the liars and the provocateurs!

The enemies of our people are the supporters of the old order, they are provocateurs who spread unfounded rumors to wreck our unity, to damage the cooperation among workers, farmers and the working intelligentsia. They spread provocative rumors that the aim of the workers and communists is forcibly to collectivize agriculture. These lies are being spread with the intention of wrecking the unity of workers and farmers.

Do not believe these provocative rumors! Unmask the provocateurs!

Our demands are included in our platform, and we ask you to fight for these demands.

Prepare for the election of our Parliament!

Vote as one for the candidates of our bloc, the "Latvian Working People's Bloc"!

Long live free Latvia!

Long live our friendship and close union with the great, invincible Union of Soviet Socialist Republics!

Long live the workers, farmers and working intelligentsia of our land!

For peace, for bread, for the freedom of the people!

The Latvian Working People's Bloc

The platform was signed by representatives of the following organizations, military units and social groups:

The Central Committee of the Latvian Communist Party:

Zaķis - Kalnbērziņš, Spure Žanis, Auguste Olga, Jablonskis Andrejs.

The Central Committee of the Latvian Union of Working Youth:

Kurlis Pēteris, Berklāvs Eduards, Sadovskis Pēteris, Bāliņš Pauls.

The Central Committee of the Red Aid Organization:

Nurža, Niedra.

Latvian workers' labor unions:

(a list of 25 labor unions and 48 leaders)

The Union of Latvian War Invalids:

(2 signatures)

Representatives of the Latvian Army:

(17 signatures)

Representatives of agriculture:

(6 signatures)

Representatives of unions and other organizations:

(11 signatures)

Cīņa, 6 July 1940. In the campaign platform which was printed at the "Rota" press at Dzirnavu iela 57, no mention was made of the representatives of the various organizations. (LVA, PA - 35.f., 60.apr., 8.l., p. 1).

No. 126

Telegram from the Representative of the USSR to Latvia, V. Derevjanski, to the Foreign Affairs Commissariat of the USSR

6 July 1940

The German ambassador to Latvia, Kotze, in a meeting with Kirhenšteins, has expressed interest about the amount of time that the Soviet armed forces will remain in Latvia and about the matter of future Latvian inde-

pendence. When Kirhenšteins said that if the matter of Latvia's future fate were to arise, Latvia would most likely choose the Soviet Union, Kotze replied: It may turn the other way. Kirhenšteins has several times insistently tried to focus our attention on the growing German activity.

Derevjanski

Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 453.

No. 127

Telegram from the German Ambassador to Latvia, U. von Kotze, to the Foreign Ministry

Telegram

Riga, 6 July 1940, 15:22

Received 6 July 1940, 17:25

Judging from the speech which the deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Vyshinskii, gave at the first election-related demonstration of the Communist Party, speaking from the balcony of the Soviet embassy, the decision to move the elections to an earlier date in all three Baltic states was taken under specific instructions in Moscow. It is also interesting that Vyshinskii calls the law on elections the first step in the freeing of the Latvian working people and in the movement toward a happier future. The further statements by the Soviet ambassador let one understand that it will not be long before the mutual relations are developed to the point of joining the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The demonstration, despite the fact that at first it was hampered by rain, was very well attended. At important crossroads the demonstrators were led and held back from any excesses by Russian police and many tanks. Comments by Russians standing near Vyshinskii's microphone indicated that they nevertheless felt that the masses were behaving in an undisciplined fashion.

Because there probably will not be time to prepare any non-Communist candidate lists, the elections, despite the fact that they are being based on the 1922 Constitution, will almost certainly result in the election of a parliament made up entirely of radically leftist deputies.

The extent to which Soviet Russia is directing these proceedings is evidenced by the fact that Vyshinskii reported to the crowd that the current government enjoys

the trust of the Soviet Union and that opposition to the government or to individual ministers is tantamount to opposition to Russia itself.

Kotze

PAAA, R 29895 - 214804. *Original.*

No. 128

Establishment of a Military and Administrative Region of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union on the Territory of the Baltic States

11 July 1940

An order by the defense commissar of the USSR, S. Timoshenko, Order No. 0141, "On the establishment of the Baltic Military Region, the disestablishment of the Kalinin Military Region, and the renaming of the Belarussian Special Military Region, hereafter to be known as the Western Special Military Region".

1. I hereby order that by 1 August 1940 a Baltic Military Region be established and that its headquarters be established at Riga. [...]

3. The commander of the Baltic Military Region shall be Col. Gen. A. D. Loktionov. The commander of the military region's headquarters shall be Lt. Gen. P.S. Klenov.

4. The Baltic Military Region shall include the territories of the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Lithuania, as well as the military units and institutions stationed in the western part of the Kaliningrad region. [...]

9. The establishment of the Baltic Military Region shall be reported to the commander of the armed forces on 31 July 1940¹.

Defense commissar of the USSR
Soviet Marshal
S. Timoshenko

Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 462-463.

¹ *This unprecedented order to establish a Soviet military region on the territory of independent countries left the fate of the Baltic armed forces unresolved. This matter was resolved by a decision taken by the Central Committee of the CPSU and by the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR to restructure the Baltic armies. On that basis, Timoshenko issued*

another order, which said, in part: "The existing armies of the Estonian, Lithuanian and Latvian SSR shall be maintained for one year, cleansed of untrustworthy elements, and restructured so that each army shall become an infantry corps. The commanders of these units shall within one year finish their Russian language studies and their military retraining. Afterward, territorial corps shall be replaced by exterritorial units on the general basis". Col. Gen. A. Loktionov was ordered to inform the governments of the Baltic republics about the establishment of the Baltic Military Region and to ensure that the governments took the necessary decisions to restructure their armies. Полпреды сообщают ..., с. 505-508.

No. 129

Excerpt from a Telegram from the State Secretary of the German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy in Moscow

Berlin, 11 July 1940

Citissime¹

Nr. 1185, no 11.07.

I. The embassies in Riga, Revel [Tallinn], and Kovno [Kaunas] have received the following orders via the telegraph:

In the wake of the political events which have taken place in the Baltic states in the last several weeks, it must be anticipated that the Baltic states will be incorporated into the Soviet Union after the 14 July elections. Events in western Belarussia and western Ukraine, where people's assemblies not only decided to join the Soviet Union but also to confiscate all private property, lead one to fear that similar developments may occur in the Baltic states, thus very much endangering our extremely important economic interests there.

We would ask you (after further instructions which will be approved by the foreign minister) to immediately point out to the government, and to any new government which might be established, the extent of our economic interests, and to state that we will certainly expect that our economic interests in the Baltic states will be fully guaranteed, irrespective of how the economic structures of those countries might develop. We must have security guarantees that the utilization and transfer of the property of German emigrants will not be disturbed, that the property of Volksdeutsche and Reichsdeutsche² will be

inviolable, that our trade with the Baltic states will continue at least at the level set out in the new trade agreements, that our trade representatives and expeditors will be unhampered in their operations, and that our shipping interests will be observed. [...]

The Soviet government must be made aware of the content of the telegraphed directives which have been sent to Riga, Revel [Tallinn] and Kovno [Kaunas], and in addition must be informed that we will not interfere with political developments in the Baltic states, which has been true since September 1939 and will continue to be true in the future. [...]

Weizsaecker³

Loeber, D.A. (ed). *Diktierte Option: Die Umsiedlung der Deutsch-Balten aus Estland und Lettland, 1939-1941*. Neumuenster: Karl Wacholtz Verlag (1972), pp. 277-279.

¹ *Citissime* (latin)- Very urgent.

² Meaning German citizens resident in Latvia and Germans who were citizens of other countries, respectively.

³ Ernst von Weizsaecker (1882-1951), state secretary of the German Foreign Ministry from 1938 to 1943.

No. 130

The Campaign Platform of a Group of Citizens A Call from Democratic Latvians

No later than 8 July 1940

Voters!

The time which we are experiencing now is most important. The elections which will take place on 14 and 15 July of this year will determine our fate for many years to come. We must all understand that this fate must not be determined by accident, by virtue of cowardice or fear. We are speaking to all decent citizens of our country in saying:

We want to maintain a free and independent Latvia; we do not wish to lose it.

We wish to maintain close and permanent cooperation with the Soviet Union and its peoples.

We wish to maintain loyal cooperation with our organized work force in raising the standards of our country's economic and cultural life.

We wish to have a system where the road of education is open to all, where every individual has access to every democratic freedom, to work and to sustenance, where the individual owns that which he has earned through honest labor.

It is for these purposes that we are entering the parliamentary election on 14 and 15 July with our united list of candidates and with the following campaign platform:

1. **A free, independent, democratic Latvia.**
2. **Close, permanent cooperation with the USSR with the purpose of reaching and improving upon the goals set out in the mutual assistance agreement of 5 October 1939.**

3. Further development of the state on the basis of progress and democracy, including loyal cooperation with the Latvian working people and their organizations.

4. Broadening of the country's land fund to provide land to farm workers.

5. Re-establishment and re-ordering of the country's economic life to place the interests of the working people on the highest level.

6. Maintenance and protection of the system of private property, with the possibility of limiting both aspects if the interests of the state and the welfare of the people should so demand.

7. Maintenance of the Latvian national culture, making it accessible to each citizen of the Republic of Latvia, and providing all ethnic minorities with the opportunity to fulfill their own cultural needs. Ensurance of education, including higher education, to all those who seek but cannot afford it.

8. Greater cultural and economic exchanges and closer communications with the USSR and its peoples.

9. Establishment of the Republic of Latvia on strong, juridical foundations, ensuring that each individual enjoys the inviolability of person and property, as well as the democratic freedoms of speech, association, press, faith, etc.

ELECTORS! We have not had much time. We will announce a full list of our candidates later.

Among others, the following men will stand for election from our list: **Atis Ķeniņš**, **Gen. J. Balodis**¹, **V. Zāmuels**², **K. Skalbe**³, **H. Celmiņš**⁴, **P. Bergis**.

Among our candidates, there is not a single man who is hungry to become a deputy.

We ask you to vote for our list in the deep and serious understanding that the current time demands this action from us.

Our country and our own fates demand a choice. No one may remain on the sidelines.

The Parliamentary Elections Commission
of Democratic Latvian Voters

M. Apinis Printers, Riga
K. Barona iela 16-18. Tel 32940.

LVA, PA-101.f, 1. apr, 34.l., p. 7.

¹ *Jānis Balodis (1881-1965), general, politician. Minister of war from 1931 to 1940. Deported to Sizran in Russia on 31 July 1940, later arrested. Returned to Latvia in 1956.*

² *Valdemārs Zāmuels (1872-1948), lawyer, politician. Agriculture minister from 1921 to 1922, justice minister and prime minister in 1924. Fled to Germany in 1944.*

³ *Kārlis Skalbe (1879-1945), poet, politician. Member of Parliament (1922-1925 and 1931-1934). Fled to Sweden in 1944.*

⁴ *Hugo Celmiņš (1877-1941), agronomist, politician, diplomat. Agriculture minister (1920), education minister (1923-1924), prime minister (1924-1925 and 1928-1931), Latvian ambassador to Berlin (1935-1938). Arrested in the fall of 1940, later deported.*

No. 131

The Motivation for the Arrest of Atis Ķeniņš¹

19 September 1940

"Confirmed"

Interior Commissar of the Latvian SSR, A. Noviks

"19" September 1940

Decision

(to arrest)

Riga, " " September 1940

I, **Vamža**, being an investigator of the Investigations Division of the State Security Service of the Interior Commissariat of the Latvian SSR, have reviewed materials concerning **Atis Ķeniņš**, b. 1874, former education minister, former leader of the Democratic Center Party, resident in Riga, Marijas ielā 34, apt. 1,

I find:

In July 1940, prior to the parliamentary elections, Atis Ķeniņš participated in illegal meetings in Riga which were organized by fascists, former members of the "Latvian Farmers Union" and ran as a candidate for Parliament on the list of the "Democratic Latvian Voters". He engaged in counter-revolutionary activity which was against the interests of the working people.

Under arrest, Rūdolfs Gulbis stated under interrogation on 5 August 1940:

"The meeting decided to run a unified "Democratic Latvian Voters" list in all of the regions, joining together with other rightist parties, as well as the Mensheviks, who were also holding their own meetings. It was decided that only in this way would we be able to ensure the participation of landowners, factory-owners and tradesmen in Parliament and in the lawmaking process. The list of candidates - Atis Ķeniņš (former leader of the "Democratic Center Party"), Hugo Celmiņš and others - we were planning to run the agronomists Brauns and Lielmanis.

Under arrest, Oskars Baltiņš stated under interrogation on 30 and 31 July 1940:

"Before the election there was considerable activity which was organized by officials of the former fascist regime who had been members of the "Latvian Farmers Union" and the "Democratic Center Party". The goal of this counter-revolutionary group was to run its own list in the parliamentary election and thus to grab power for themselves. In connection with this, meetings were held, the signatures of citizens were collected to support the "Democratic Latvian Voters" list, and agitation was conducted among the people to induce them to vote for this list. It was a battle against the candidates of the "Working People's Bloc". The main initiators of this counter-revolutionary effort, as far as I know, were leaders of the "Farmers Union" - Hugo Celmiņš, former prime minister, Jānis Birznieks, former agriculture minister, Atis Ķeniņš, "Democratic Center" representative and Pauls Akots, a worker at the "Rota" publishing house who actively participated in preparing for the campaign".

On the basis of this evidence, I ordered:

The **arrest** of Atis **Ķeniņš** (b. 1874) and a search of his property.

State Security Service, Interior Commissariat of the
Latvian SSR

Investigations Division, investigator *Vamža*
Agree: State Security Service, Interior Commissariat
of the Latvian SSR
Investigations Division, vice chairman
Sr. Lieutenant *Karpenko*

Latvijas Republikas Prokuratūras arhīvs, II - 5409 - Ē, pp.1-2.
Original.

¹ *Ķeniņš (Ķēniņš) Atis (1874 - 1961) - poet, teacher, politician.*

No. 132

A Report from Ambassador F. Kociņš to A. Kirhenšteins

Moscow, 13 July 1940
Confidential.

Honored President:

For the past week, the chairman of the Council of Commissars and foreign commissar, Molotov, has not been feeling well, and he has not received members of the diplomatic corps. His deputy, Dekanazov, who is most directly associated with Baltic affairs, is in Kaunas. For this reason, the only man who has been informed of our issues is Lisjak, the director of the Baltic States Department. In calling upon him, I raised the matter of the fate of our border guards who were taken away to the Soviet Union¹. The director said that he knows nothing of this. The investigation into the incident was ordered by Molotov himself. Lisjak said that if he hears anything new, he will inform me.

With respect to events in Latvia, Lisjak could say only that events are being overseen by Molotov's deputy, Vyshinskii, and that the department has very little to do with political matters. He personally feels that a leftist government will come to power in Latvia. New relations with the Soviet Union are a plank in the campaign platform.

10 For my part, I told Lisjak that the government had intended to dispatch a trade delegation to Moscow, to be headed by one of the ministers, but that the trip has been postponed until after the parliamentary election.

The Estonian ambassador Rei, who left for Tallinn on July 12, came to see me for a farewell visit. He reported that an Estonian economic delegation of 14 individuals will be arriving in Moscow sometime in the near future. The group will engage in discussions concerning the broadening of contingents and the purchase of new categories of goods.

Because chairman Molotov is not receiving visitors, Rei was seen by his deputy, Lozovski.

To the Honorable

A. Kirhenšteins

Prime Minister and Acting Foreign Minister

Riga

LVA, 2574.f., 2.apr., 7082.l., p. 30.

¹ See Document No. 110.

No. 133

Authority Issued by the Central Elections Commission to a Representative of the Comintern in the Latvian Communist Party, S. Sergejev

14 July 1940

Central Elections Commission

14 July 1940

No. 123

Authority

Valid until 16 July 1940

This document authorizes its bearer, S.V. Sergejev, to visit voting precincts and sub-precincts for the purpose of gathering information¹.

Central Elections Commission

A. Buševics, chairman

K. Gailis, secretary

LVVA, 1308.f., 9. apr., 3824.l., p. 146.

¹An identical document was issued to another representative of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (formally the Communist Internationale), V. J. Vadimov.

No. 134

Instructions from the Propaganda Department of the Social Affairs Ministry, "Everyone to the Voting Booth Today!"

15 July 1940

The Propaganda Department of the Social Affairs Ministry states: everyone, everyone, everyone, who has not yet carried out his obligation to participate in the 1940 parliamentary elections, do so today! This is the last day of the elections, so make haste so that those who are now doubting whether they should cast their vote should not later be shamed before themselves, before their colleagues, before their fellow citizens, before the patriots of Latvia, and before their own documents, which will not have the stamp indicating that the bearer participated in the parliamentary elections¹. Therefore, everyone to the voting booths today!

Jaunākās Ziņas, 15 July 1940.

¹In other newspapers the threat was posed more directly. In the newspaper "Rīts", for example, under the headline "Let Us Not be Enemies of the People!", the following was written: "Anyone who abstains from voting today and tomorrow is unquestionably an enemy of the people, [...] back sliders and cowards will not be able to halt history". (Rīts, 14 July 1940).

No. 135

A Report to Parliament by the Chairman of the Central Elections Commission, A. Buševics, on the Results of Parliamentary Elections

23 July 1940

The Central Elections Commission was established by virtue of a Cabinet of Ministers decision on 4 July of this year. The first meeting was held on 5 July. The commission had nine days in which to carry out its duties.

The enormity of this task is evidenced by the fact that approximately 1,250 voting precincts were organized. All of the rooms in which voting took place were provided with

the necessary equipment, and 112,000 technical workers were mobilized to carry out the technical work associated with the elections¹. Approximately 1,800,000 copies of the candidate lists were printed. These were sent to the appropriate places within the allotted time frame and were, likewise, collected after the election.

Clearly this work would not have been accomplished if there had not been great harmony between the elections commission on the one side and the government and voters on the other side. Also, the State Statistical Council provided to be a very good technical apparatus during the elections. Thanks to this unified work, the elections were carried out without any disturbance, and the work was accomplished in time.

The first job which the Central Elections Commission had to carry out was to find appropriate space for voting, keeping in mind that some technical work might have to be done in renovating or otherwise preparing the rooms in question. In order to settle the matter of voting space, we first had to determine the number of voting precincts, i.e., - how many rooms would be needed and where they would be located.

During its first meeting, on 5 July, the Central Elections Commission fulfilled this task, basing itself on the experience of previously parliamentary elections. The number of voting precincts and sub-precincts was set at a bit more than 1,250. Later, after consultations with the regional elections commissions, the number was increased slightly. In the end, there were 612 voting precincts and 644 sub-precincts.

The second matter which had to be handled quickly was providing voters with the opportunity to submit candidate lists in a way which permitted the review, printing and acceptance of each list prior to its distribution to the precincts for voting.

The commission determined that candidate lists could be submitted from 8 to 10 July, i.e., 3 days. After this decision was announced publicly, several groups and individuals inquired whether lists of a single candidate would be permitted. Apparently those who posed these questions considered this parliamentary election to be a "drive-in", where they could do their personal business. Another group of questioners wanted to know whether candidates

could run without party affiliation. We soon unmasked these people and found that their aim was by no means impartial and that indeed they had specific political interests.

The reasoning which was presented to us was that voters would not be able to choose quickly, because events were moving forward too rapidly; that voters could not choose a new government order that quickly - could not choose between the soviet system and the old political system with its *old political aims which are hostile to the Soviet Union*².

This led the Central Elections Commission to issue a supplementary rule on the order by which candidate lists could be submitted. The new rules provided that along with each candidate list, there must be a campaign platform and proof that the platform had been adequately distributed to the voters.

The commission held to the view that in this election more than in any other, there must be clarity about those who wish to present themselves as leaders of the people and about the road which they propose to pursue. The voters must also have an adequate opportunity to learn about the physiognomy of these "leaders of the people" in order to determine with which candidates to stand and which to oppose.

The next step was to establish elections commissions in the precincts. That was the most difficult job. The first issue dealt with the appointment of regional elections commissions. Because of a misunderstanding, these appointments were delayed by one day, which meant that the appointment of precinct elections commissions was similarly delayed. It turned out that on the even of the elections, it was still not known whether commissions had been established in all the precincts. When candidate lists were being sent out, some precincts had not yet filed reports. This was also true with respect to some regional commissions. The elections commission took the extraordinary step of using War Ministry vehicles to distribute the candidate lists, sending along technical workers and authorized individuals who took over operations in all those places where elections commissions had not yet been established and undertook contacts with local officials and the respective regional elections commissions. Materials

were submitted in this way. It turned out that the precinct and sub-precinct commissions had, in fact, been established and that materials had not been received from only two places, where officials had simply "overslept". But they, too, were located, and no emergency steps had to be taken. The next step was to organize the technical side of the elections and to print the candidate lists. Before that, however, the commission had to decide which lists were in keeping with the country's laws and regulations and which would be submitted to the voters. 17 lists had been submitted. Of them, nine were lists of only one candidate. Of the other eight, the Central Elections Commission approved five - the working people's bloc list in each voting region. The other three lists were declared void because they were of a local nature. One was intended for the Kurzeme region and had been assembled by the residents of the Mērsrags region. A second was from Latgale and was meant only for the Latgale region. The third list was meant for Riga. The Central Elections Commission rejected these lists because of a variety of formal defects which meant that they were not in keeping with the country's laws and regulations. Only List No. 1 remained.

The Central Elections Commission received reports on 12 July that voting space had been established in all the precincts, and this matter was settled. It was clear that everything was in order. The fact that elections commissions had also been established everywhere became clear on the night of 13 July, when reports were received from all the various locations. When the elections began, the Central Elections Commission knew that everything was in good order.

After the elections, materials were collected in the same manner, utilizing the vehicles of the War Ministry. Everything was done without any disturbance, in time, and in keeping with the planned order. 48 hours after the elections the Central Elections Commission could report to the Cabinet of Ministers that the elections had been concluded and could also announce the memberships of the parliament, i.e., submit the list of deputies.

After the final review of elections materials, it proves that the number of people who participated in the elections was slightly higher than at first was thought. The discrepancy can be explained by the fact that a few of the

telegrams which reported results were erroneous. In checking unacceptable candidate lists³, moreover, a few regional commissions approved them. The total number of votes in the elections was 1,181,323, i.e., approximately 94.8% of all residents with the right to vote. Of these votes, 1,155,807, or 97.8% of all votes, were delivered for the candidates of the working people's bloc. I will not belabor Parliament by reading the various data on how the vote was divided among the various regions, but I do want to mention the turnout. In Riga, among all the residents who had voting rights according to the 1935 census, 94.8% voted in the election. In Vidzeme, turnout was 101.3%. This may seem impossible, but it must be noted that some of the Riga voters participated in the election away from the city, in Jūrmala and other resorts, thus pushing the Vidzeme participation level above the true number. If the excess voters in Vidzeme are added to the Riga voter list, it turns out that nearly 100% of the city's residents voted. In Latgale, 93.9% of residents voted; in Kurzeme - 88.9%, and in Zemgale - 92.8%. The Latvian working people's bloc received 188,587 votes more than all of the lists taken together received in the previous parliamentary elections.

In filing this report with Parliament, the Central Elections Commission would like to report that there have been no complaints concerning the elections. There were a few submissions, both anonymous and signed, which reported that in some places the voting space was inappropriate, meaning that there were some rooms which were locked and where people could have crossed out the list or damaged it in another way. Other reports were not so much complaints as remarks that employees were not sufficiently polite. I have asked the Interior Ministry to determine the extent to which these reports are true. Because there were no formal complaints, however, I cannot report any complaints to Parliament. On behalf of the commission, I would ask you to confirm this commission.

Valdības Vēstnesis, 24 July 1940.

¹ *The first session of the Latvian People's Parliament, 21-23 July 1940. Protocol. On page 55 of a publication issued by Parliament in 1940, only 12,000 technical workers are indicated.*

² *In another protocol source, the text is "... for or against the Soviet Union".*

³ *The speaker meant to say "ballots", not "candidate lists".*

No. 136

A Report on Speeches by the Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, A. Vishinski, and the Soviet Representative in Latvia, V. Derevjanski, to Participants at a Demonstration

18 July 1940

"Citizens of the Republic of Latvia! I congratulate you on this great, historic day, when the true Parliament of the Latvian people has been chosen. I congratulate you for electing a Parliament made up of the best individuals of the Latvian people, those who make up the invincible bloc of workers, farmers and the working intelligentsia. In the name of the Soviet government and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, I congratulate your bloc, thank you for your heartfelt and brotherly greetings, and express the conviction that the new Parliament will satisfy the centuries-old and great longings of the Latvian people for unadulterated brotherhood and the joy of the working class."

A. Vyshinskii's statement, delivered in the Latvian language - "Long live the working people's bloc!" - was greeted by loud ovations from the demonstrators. The deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars addressed the gathering again: "Forward! Forward to a new, joyous and happy life in a close, irreversible and eternal union with your friend - the great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics". Again the vast crowd applauded loudly, with some crying: "We demand Stalin's constitution!" and "We demand that Latvia join the Soviet Union!"

Then the demonstrators were addressed by the ambassador of the Soviet Union, V.K. Derevjanski. Having congratulated the demonstrators on behalf of his government for the mighty victory which the bloc of workers, farmers and the working intelligentsia gained in the election, the ambassador stated that the victory was the

greatest in Latvian history. The working people's bloc demonstrated its unshakeable unity and its definite will to achieve total freedom. The ambassador continued: "The efforts by enemies of the Latvian people to split this unity and to hamper the solidarity of the people's masses with provocative rumors and low, hateful agitation have suffered complete defeat. The workers, farmers, soldiers and working intelligentsia gave their votes for the candidates of the working people's bloc, because the workers knew that the bloc is led by the Latvian Communist Party, which always and eternally will defend the interests of the working people. The Latvian Communist Party is the only party which can carry the working people to full victory. Citizens of the Republic of Latvia! The Soviet Union's many millions have followed your battle and your victory with heartfelt attention. The great Soviet Union, which under the leadership of the great and wise leader, comrade Stalin, is building a free and joyous life, was happy to learn that an absolute majority of voters cast their ballots for the candidates of the Latvian working people's bloc. This brilliant victory testifies to the further strengthening of the strong and unshakeable union between Latvia and the USSR. The obstacles which hampered closer relations between our two countries, which were erected by the former plutocratic government, have now been swept aside. They have been destroyed now and forever. There are no forces and there cannot be any force which could hinder the sincere and friendly wish of the people of Latvia and the USSR to establish the closest of relations".

At the close of his address, the ambassador stated that the Latvian people are standing on the threshold of great historical events. The new parliament will set up the system in the Republic of Latvia and will fulfill the ancient desires of the working people. The ambassador asked the demonstrators to stand ever closer to the great land of socialism. "Let us be unified in the working front against capitalism, unified in the freedom front against reactionism, unified in the peace front against the imperialist war! Express your demands during the first days of the new parliament, stand for peace, for close and friendly relations with the Soviet Union, which is the supporter of peace throughout the world."

Again the demonstrators hailed the Soviet statesmen with loud shouts and expressed the desire that Latvia be attached to the Soviet Union. Great joy was engendered by Vyshinskii's shout: "Greetings to our new brother, the people of Latvia, from the older brother - the people of the Soviet Union!"

In response to the cries of the crowd, Vyshinskii again took the floor. He pointed out that the people's enemies and provocateurs have tried to represent the great events in Latvia as an end to the national freedom of the Latvian people, as an end to Latvia's independence, and as the loss of Latvian culture and the future of the Latvian people. "This provocative babblings can easily be countered. Look to the East, where the sun - the bright sun, the sun of national equality - has risen. Where national inequalities and chauvinism have been eliminated, where dozens and hundreds of smaller and larger peoples hail the great name of Stalin." Vyshinskii continued by pointing to the great achievements which the Soviet peoples have obtained over the past 20 years in establishing their national, material and spiritual culture. The speaker expressed the firmest conviction that the Latvian people, who are known as intelligent, courageous and ready to battle for freedom, would be active and invincible when it joins the peoples of the Soviet Union as a fighter for the principles of true humanity. These principles are: freedom, national equality and free work under the flags of the Communist Party. "I hail you and your future, which will be more beautiful than this day, which will be greater than it ever has been in the history of Latvia. The future will hold the full and final freeing of your people. Long live the people's Parliament, the expresser of the people's thoughts and will, the speaker of the people's desires. Always forward, without pause, until the final victory of the worker!"

Jaunākās Ziņas, 19 July 1940.

No. 137

**A Telegram from the German Ambassador to
Latvia, U. von Kotze, to the Foreign Ministry**

Telegram

Riga, 19 July 1940, 22:18

Received 20 July 1940, 2:15

Cita!

The decision to organize a demonstration yesterday was taken by the Communist Party. It was extremely well-attended. Compared with the unquestionable purpose of the demonstration - to demand that the 14th Soviet republic be established and that Latvia join Soviet Russia - the speeches of the prime minister and the Soviet ambassador, as well as the deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Vyshinskii, were rather subdued. Only Vyshinskii pointed to the sacred nature of the Soviet republic and to the possibilities for the development of free peoples under the constitution of Stalin's united republics. Vyshinskii called on the masses to demand in the very first days of the new Parliament that this fact be recognized and that the closest of relations be established with the Soviet Union. The secretary of the Central Committee of the Latvian Communist Party, Spure, said in his speech on behalf of the party that the party would demand and achieve the establishment of the Latvian Soviet Republic and the implementation of Stalin's constitution. It is possible that the Communist Party will present this demand at the first meeting of Parliament, on the 21st of this month¹. Given the information which I currently have, and judging from the less-than-unanimous views of the press, it is difficult to say whether a decision to fulfill the Communist Party's demand will be accepted at the first meeting or whether deputies will instead decide to work out a new constitution first, one which would as closely as possible mirror the constitutions of the other Soviet republics. In any event, the work of the parliament will be dictated by the Communist Party group here, which means that the form and pace of local developments will be dictated only by Moscow.

Kotze

PAAA, R29895 -0 214792 - 214793. Original.

¹ This did, indeed, come to pass.

No. 138

**Amendment to the Law on the Execution
of the Post of President of the Country**

20 July 1940

The Cabinet of Ministers on 19 June 1940 adopted and the President of the country proclaimed this law:

The first paragraph of the Law on the Execution of the Post of President of the Country [Laws, 1936, 33] shall be amended to read:

1. Upon the convening of the Parliament which was elected on 14 and 15 July 1940, which shall occur at the hour of twelve o'clock on 21 July 1940, the post of President shall be assumed by the Prime Minister¹.

This amendment shall take force on the day of its proclamation

President *K. Ulmanis*

LVVA, 1303.f., 1. apr., 55.l., p. 58. Original. Valdibas Vēstnesis, 20 July 1940.

¹ *The law which was amended was adopted on 12 March 1936 and proclaimed by President A. Kviesis on 19 March 1936. It stated: "Until the implementation of the constitutional reform which was proposed in the declaration of the Cabinet of Ministers on 18 May 1934, the post of President shall be assumed by Prime Minister Dr. Kārlis Ulmanis".*

No. 139

**Notes Verbale from the Latvian Foreign
Ministry to the Diplomatic Representatives
of Lithuania, Germany and Switzerland
Requesting Transit Visas, Visas and Entry
Permits for K. Ulmanis to Enter Switzerland**

Foreign Ministry of Latvia

20 July 1940

Note Verbale

The Foreign Ministry of Latvia is honored to request of the Embassy of Lithuania that it show favor and issue a transit visa for Mr. Kārlis Ulmanis, who will travel to Switzerland. We ask that favor be shown and that Mr. K. Ulmanis also be issued an entry permit.

The Ministry wishes to offer its most profound gratitude in advance. Riga 20 July 1940.

To His Excellency
P. Dailide
Lithuanian Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Authorized
Minister
Riga

* * *

Foreign Ministry of Latvia 20 July 1940

Note Verbale

The Foreign Ministry of Latvia is honored to request of the Embassy of Germany that it show favor and issue a transit visa and an entry permit for Mr. Kārlis Ulmanis, who will travel to Switzerland.

The Ministry wishes to offer its most profound gratitude in advance. Riga 20 July 1940.

To His Excellency
U. von Kotze
German Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Authorized
Minister
Riga

* * *

Foreign Ministry of Latvia 20 July 1940

Note Verbale

The Foreign Ministry of Latvia is honored to request of the Embassy of Switzerland that it show favor and issue a visa and an entry permit for Mr. Kārlis Ulmanis, who will arrive in Switzerland.

The Ministry wishes to offer its most profound gratitude in advance. Riga 20 July 1940.

To His Excellency
M. de Fischer
Authorized representative of Switzerland
Riga

*Translated from the French and published in Kārlis Ulmanis
trimdā un cietumā: Dokumenti un materiāli (Kārlis Ulmanis
in Exile and Prison: Documents and Materials), Riga:
University of Latvia Publishing (1994), pp. 246-247.*

**Excerpt from an Address by the Secretary of the
Central Committee of the Latvian Communist
Party, Ž. Spure, at a Meeting of Parliament**

21 July 1940

[.] In deciding the type of government which Latvia should have, we must again cast our gaze at the Soviet Union. The great historical experience of the Soviet Union teaches us that only Soviet power can truly defend and protect the working people. (Applause.) Only Soviet power is the true power of the people, where the working people govern without capitalists, without barons, without large landowners and oppressors of the people. (Applause.)

All other forms of power, as we have seen in the capitalist countries and through the bitter experience of our own land, are nothing more than a betrayal of the people, where all slogans concerning the freedom and equality of the people serve only the interests of a narrow clique of the wealthy, and where a small group of oppressors rules over the majority of the people.

Slavery and oppression have been destroyed for all time in the Soviet Union. The ability of one individual to exploit another and to live on the fruits of another's labor has been eliminated. Each working man has been provided the right to work and to relax. (Applause.) The fundamental rule of life there is concern for the people.

Only soviet power is real, true and democratic power. (Applause). Working people can truly participate in the governance of the state and thus establish a free and happy life only by participating in their soviets. (Applause.) Soviets are the type of government which unites workers, farmers and the intelligentsia. Soviets move their leaders and organizers into the forefront of the country's political and economic life.

National oppression and injustice have been destroyed for all time in the Soviet Union. (Applause.) The people of the Soviet Union are a united community. Only soviet power can give talented individuals the opportunity to develop. No country knows, no country has ever known the cultural flowering which the people of the Soviet Union have known. There are no backward people in the Soviet Union.

The example of the Soviet Union teaches us that only soviet power can provide us with peace, work, bread and freedom in the cities and in the countryside, to free the people of Latvia from exploitation and injustice. (Applause.) Only soviet power will provide us with political, economic and cultural flowering. (Applause.)

Expressing the will of the Latvian working people, Parliament at this moment will proclaim the establishment of soviet power throughout the Latvian territory. (Members stand. Lengthy applause. Cries: "Long live!" "Long live the Red Army!" "Long live the Soviet Union!" "Long live Soviet Latvia!" Members sing the Internationale.)

Latvia will be declared to be the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic. (Cries: "Hurrah!" "Long live!" "Hurrah!" Lengthy, ceaseless applause, cries: "Long live the Latvian Communist Party!" "Hurrah!" "Long live Soviet Latvia". The cries are repeated three times, are repeated again and again amid uninterrupted applause. A cry arises from the hall: "Long live comrade Stalin!" The others repeat this cry three times, followed by hearty cries of "Hurrah!" and joyful applause. More cries: "Long live comrade Molotov!" "Long live!" "Hurrah!" "Long live the Latvian Communist Party!" "Hurrah!" The cries are accompanied by thunderous applause. The cry is heard again: "Long live the Latvian Communist Party", followed by the cry: "Long live comrade Spure!" The members greet the speaker with a loud ovation.)

From this moment all power in the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic shall belong to the working councils of the cities and the countryside¹. (Loud ovations and applause. Cries: "Long live the councils!") Parliament is fully convinced that the people will unite around the soviet power and stand for the complete victory of the working people, for the welfare of Latvia, for economic growth and for our people's happiness. (Cries: "Hurrah!" "Long live!" Members stand. Lengthy applause and cries: "Hurrah!" "Long live the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic!" "Long live!" "Long live the working people's councils! (Cries: "Long live! Long live!" Applause.) Long live the fatherland of the working people - the Soviet Union! (Cries: "Long live! Long live!" Lengthy applause.)² Long live our friend and helper, comrade Vyshinskii! (Cries: "Long live! Long live!" Lengthy applause.)

First session of the Latvian Parliament. Protocol, pp. 14-16.

¹ *The working people's councils in the Latvian SSR were elected on 18 January 1948.*

² *Deputies unanimously adopted a resolution proposed by the parliamentary presidium: "Having heard and considered Deputy Spure's report on governing power in Latvia, Parliament hereby declares: 1) In keeping with the will of the free working people of Latvia, Parliament hereby declares the establishment of soviet power in Latvia. From this moment, all power in the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic rests with the working people of urban and rural Latvia. The executors of this power are the working people's councils [..]".*

The Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, however, said:

1. Latvia is an independent democratic republic.

2. Sovereign power in the Republic of Latvia rests with the people of Latvia.

Paragraph 77 of the Constitution said: "If Parliament should amend the first, second, third or sixth paragraphs of this Constitution, such changes shall be submitted to a vote of the people before they shall take force".

No. 141

THE WHITEHALL LETTER

Anglo-Foreign Information Bureau Ltd.,
13, Queen Anne's Gate,
London, S.W.1.

PERSONAL

July 22nd, 1940.

AN EVENTFUL WEEK [..]

RUSSIA

Conquest by Plebiscite.

As Germany has placed first one country then another under her domination, it is interesting to note Russia's progress, which is achieved by a slightly different method. As soon as German intentions became apparent in Moscow, and German-Soviet negotiations revealed the scope of Hitler's ambitions, the Kremlin laid down a plan of fairly considerable dimensions, dominated less by desire for conquest than for protection against conquest - according to Soviet spokesmen. Whatever opinion may be held as to Soviet motives, it cannot

be disputed that protection against conquest has become a vital question for Russia.

Moscow's first moves were to secure naval bases in the Baltic from Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania and Finland. Refusal of the latter to grant Russian demands led to the Finnish war; accession to them might well have resulted in Finland to-day becoming a new soviet Republic. Last week we noted that Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia were fast being prepared for conversion into Soviet Republics. Only a few days later, the official Soviet radio announced the results of elections held in these three countries. In Lithuania 99.19% of 93% of the electorate demanded the formation of a Soviet union of the workers; in Latvia, 97% out of 94% of the population voted likewise, and 92% of 81% of Estonia's voters followed suit. It may be added that the candidates of only one party went to the polls; voters were required to produce their passports for stamping. Non-voters, lacking the necessary endorsement, are now branded as enemies of the people. With little pomp and ceremony, and no bloodshed, three more European countries have thus lost their independent characters and become merged once again with their more powerful neighbor.

Berlin has offered no comment on this phase of Russian development. The Russo-German common frontier has been extended still further. The recently Germanised Memel, in Lithuania, is now surrounded by Russia.

The Aaland Islands, belonging to Finland but subject to certain restrictions agreed upon between Sweden and Finland, are being demilitarised. Before the war, Finland and Sweden sought permission from the League of Nations to fortify the islands. Germany offered no objections but Russia did. Work on the fortifications was nevertheless begun. It has now stopped and demilitarisation has been carried out, not, it is to be supposed, with German approval, but at the behest of Moscow. [...]

No. 142

Report of the Mandates Commission to the
Latvian People's Parliament

23 July 1940

Deputy Fricis Deglavs:

Comrades deputies! My report will be very brief.

There was only one candidate list in the parliamentary elections of 14 and 15 July. It was the Latvian working people's bloc. More than 97% of all votes which were cast were given to this bloc. For this reason, the Mandates Commission's role was limited to checking whether all candidates of the working people's bloc were lawfully given their mandates. We have done this, and we have written the following protocol:

"The Mandates Commission, having reviewed the protocols and operations of the Central Elections Commission, hereby finds that mandates issued to parliamentary deputies who were elected on 14 and 15 July 1940 and whose names were published in No. 160 of *Valdības Vēstnesis*, were issued legally. The Mandates Commission reports this conclusion to Parliament, along with some data about the deputies who have been elected."

The deputies in Parliament come from the following groups:

Of the 100 deputies, 92 are men and 8 are women.

By profession: workers - 18 men and 4 women, total 22; agricultural workers - 2 men, 1 woman, total 3; farmers - 13, all men; workers in the free professions - 17, all men; social workers - 12 men, 2 women, total 14; soldiers - 5; servants - 14, all men; university instructors and teachers - 10 men, 1 woman, total 14; tradesman - 1 man¹.

First session of the Latvian Parliament. Protocol, pp. 58-59.

¹ The Mandates Commission failed to mention that at the time when it filed its report, Deputy P. Kurlis had already been arrested. A few months later the true political affiliations, social status and professions of the deputies became known:

Name	Sex	B.	Natl.	Educ.	Commun. party since	Status	Employment
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Aleksandrovīčs Aleksandrs	M	1904	Latvian	Middle	1924	Worker	Chmn., Daugavpils Factory Workets Union
Ancāns Jānis	M	1911	Latvian	Higher	-	Servant	Meat factory accountant
Auguste Olga	F	1896	Latvian	Middle	1925	Farmer	Latv. Com. Party CC secy.
Balančonoks Antons	M	1896	Latvian	Lower	1940	Farmer	Farmer in Dagda region
Baško Pēteris	M	1901	Latvian	Higher	-	Servant	Daugavpils schools inspector
Bergs Frīcis	M	1900	Latvian	Middle	1920	Servant	LCP Valka region committee secretary
Birģele Trīne	F	1888	Latvian	Lower	1940	Worker	Jelgava Red Aid leader
Blaus Pēteris	M	1900	Latvian	Middle	1940	Servant	Social Affairs Minister
Briedis Pēteris	M	1905	Latvian	Lower	1927	Worker	Supreme Council chmn., LCP Stalin region secy.
Bundulis (Birkenfelde) Milda	F	1903	Latvian	Middle	1921	Worker	LCP Jēkabpils region committee secretary
Buševis Ansis	M	1878	Latvian	Higher	1940	Servant	Supreme Court justice
Čemis Stapislavs	M	1905	Belarus	Lower	1940	Worker	Daugavpils lokomotive repair factory workers cmte. chmn.
Dambītis Roberts	M	1881	Latvian	Higher	-	Servant	Supreme Council Presidium member
Degļavs Frīcis	M	1898	Latvian	Middle	1920	Worker	State Plan Cmte. chmn.
Degļis Jēzups	M	1910	Latvian	Higher	1940	Servant	Control Commissariat employee
Dergačs Pāvels	M	1912	Latvian	Lower	1936	Farmer	LCP Abrene region cmte. second secy.
Eizaks Aleksandrs	M	1915	Latvian	Middle	-	Farmer	War hospital political dir.
Eliass Eduards	M	1893	Latvian	Lower	1919	Worker	LCP Cēsis region cmte. secy.
Fridmans Fatvišs	M	1908	Jew	Middle	1929	Servant	LCP Latgale region committee worker

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Gailis Kārlis	M	1903	Latvian	Lower	1931	Worker	LCP CC deision director
Galenieks Pauls	M	1891	Latvian	Higher	-	Servant	Agric. akademy professor
Gulbis Teodors	M	1904	Latvian	Lower	-	Servant	Valmiera agric. loan union board chairman
Gustsons Jānis	M	1906	Latvian	Middle	1937	Worker	Forestry commissar
Gebels Vilis	M	1903	Latvian	Lower	1924	Worker	Agric. union organiz. cmte. worker
Iļjins Galaktions	M	1898	Russian	Lower	1925	Farmer	LCP Rēzekne region committee secretary
Jablonskis Andrejs	M	1880	Latvian	Middle	1920	Servant	Justice commissar
Jakubovska Ilona	F	1904	Latvian	Middle	-	Servant	Teacher in Jelgava
Jansons Arnolds	M	1885	Latvian	Middle	-	Servant	Director, "Tosmare" factory
Jansons Jānis	M	1908	Latvian	Middle	1940	Servant	Deputy educ. commissar
Joffe Mihails	M	1898	Jew	Higher	1934	Servant	Deputy health commissar
Juhno Bropislava	F	1911	Latvian	Lower	1940	Worker	LCP Daugavpils cmte. worker
Junge Pēteris	M	1896	Latvian	Middle	1940	Servant	Valmiera region school inspector
Kalnare Valdis	M	1909	Latvian	Higher	-	Servant	Labor commissariat dept. director
Kalnberziņš Jānis	M	1893	Latvian	Higher	1917	Worker	LCP CC first secretary
Kalniņš Arvīds	M	1904	Latvian	Higher	1921	Worker	LCP Valmiera committee secretary
Karlsons Karlis	M	1907.	Latvian	Higher	1935	Servant	Industry commissar
Kažemaks Ludvigs	M	1910	Latvian	Middle	1937	Servant	Labor commissar
Kirhenšteins Augusts	M	1872	Latvian	Higher	1940	Servant	Supreme Council chairman
Kļaviņš Roberts	M	1885	Latvian	Higher	-	Servant	Lt. General
Komisārs Davids	M	1891	Latvian	Lower	-	Farmer	Bauska region farmer
Kotāns Antons	M	1903	Latvian	Higher	-	Servant	Ludza region sanitary inspector
Krastiņš Oļģerts	M	1917	Latvian	Middle	1940	Servant	Border guard political dir.
Kronitis Jānis	M	1905	Latvian	Middle	-	Servant	Forestry commissariat department

Krūmiņš Karlis	M	1905	Latvian	Middle	1940	Farmer	Madona region committee chairman
Kruze Dāvids	M	1868	Latvian	Lower	-	Farmer	Jelgava region farmer
Kudeiko Broņislavs	M	1911	Latvian	Higher	1940	Servant	Comm. Youth Org. CC department dir.
Lācis Jūlijs	M	1892	Latvian	Higher	-	Servant	Education commissar
Lācis Vilis	M	1904	Latvian	Middle	1928	Servant	Council of Commissars chairman
Lapiņš Rūdolfs	M	1898	Latvian	Lower	1922	Worker	Labor Union Council deputy chairman
Latkovskis Vikentijš	M	1899	Latvian	Higher	1940	Servant	Food industry commissars
Leja Ansis	M	1902	Latvian	Higher	1921 - 1930	Servant	Council of Commissars deputy chairman
Liēknis Jānis	M	1883	Latvian	Higher	-	Servant	Deputy education commissar
Lūkums Herberts	M	1902	Latvian	Higher	1940	Servant	Art council chairman
Lūkins Haralds	M	1906	Latvian	Higher	-	Servant	Physician
Matisons Augusts	M	1898	Latvian	Lower	1928	Farmer	Rīga region committee chairman
Mazjēcis Aleksandrs	M	1912	Latvian	Lower	1933	Worker	LCP Tukums region committee secretary
Mežapuķe Jūlijs	M	1901	Latvian	Middle	1940	Farmer	Rīga region committee deputy chairman
Miezis Alberts	M	1908	Latvian	Middle	1940	Servant	Editor, "Jaunais Komunārs"
Miķelsons Eduards	M	1896	Latvian	Middle	-	Servant	Opera singer
Morozovs Stepans	M	1902	Russian	Middle	1925	Worker	LCP Ilukstes region committee secretary
Neilands Roberts	M	1899	Latvian	Higher	1919	Worker	Council of Commissars deputy chmn., LCP CC secretary
Niedre Jānis	M	1909	Latvian	Middle	1934	Servant	State publishing & poligraphy service chmn.
Noviks Alfons	M	1908	Latvian	Higher	1932	Farmer	Interior commissar
Nurža Alfrēds	M	1905	Latvian	Middle	1930	Servant	Social welfare commissar

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Oškalsns Otomārs	M	1904	Latvian	Middle	1939	Servant	LCP Jekabpils region committee secretary
Pabērzs Juris	M	1891	Latvian	Higher	-	Servant	Supreme Court justice
Paldiņa (Rūsis) Ieva	F	1896	Latvian	Lower	1917	Worker	LCP Ventspils region committee secret.
Paldiņš Kārlis	M	1911	Latvian	Lower	1930	Farmer	LCP Talsi region committee 2h secret.
Platers Kārlis	M	1899	Latvian	Middle	1935	Worker	LCP Jelgava region committee 1th secretary
Pļešums Pēteris	M	1895.g	Latvian	Middle	1917	Farmer	Supreme Council deputy chairman
Prieže Kārlis	M	1907	Latvian	Lower	1929	Worker	LCP Ventspils region committee 2. secretary
Pudāns Viktors	M	1903	Latvian	Middle	-	Servant	Teacher
Pupurs Jānis	M	1901	Latvian	Middle	1940	Servant	Unemployed (former Riga city official)
Rezgaie Marija	F	1888	Latvian	Lower	1922	Worker	Seamstress in Mazsalaca
Rizga Pēteris	M	1883	Latvian	Higher	-	Servant	Agric. Academy docent
Rogulis Arvids	M	1897	Latvian	Higher	-	Servant	Physician in Jelgava
Rubins Antons	M	1898	Latvian	Middle	-	Servant	Forestry commissarian administrative director
Rudevics Ansis	M	1890	Latvian	Middle	1940	Servant	"Cupa" journalist
Rudovičs Floriāns	M	1904	Latvian	Middle	-	Worker	Factory worker
Salinis Jānis	M	1883	Latvian	Lower	1912	Worker	LCP CC worker
Simanovičs Simānis	M	1890	Latvian	Lower	1929	Worker	Liepāja reion court chairman
Spure Žanis	M	1901	Latvian	Middle	1920	Worker	LCP CC secretary
Stabrovskis Antons	M	1908	Latvian	Middle	1940	Servant	Liepāja security committee chairman
Strautnieks Voldemārs	M	1892	Latvian	Middle	-	Servant	School principal in Bauska region
Strupovičs Tomass	M	1892	Latvian	Lower	-	Farmer	Cooperative worker in Riga

Sadurskis Pēteris	1893	Latvian	Higher	-	Servant	Cooperative worker in Rēzekne
Sēršunovs Aleksejs	1889	Russian	Middle	-	Servant	Teacher, Riga Commercial School
Šics Kārlis	1904	Latvian	Lower	1929	Worker	Light industry commissar
Šnore Edmunds	1904	Latvian	Lower	1929	Servant	Jelgava flax factory director
Šuba Kārlis	1906	Latvian	Lower	1929	Worker	LCP Jelgava city committee secretary
Tabaks Arnolds	1907	Latvian	Higher	1934	Servant	Finance commissar
Tenisons Viktors	1917	Latvian	Lower	-	Worker	Sigulda infantry corps political director
Trubiņš Broņislavs	1897	Latvian	Middle	-	Servant	State control commissar
Truksāns Jezups	1910	Latvian	Middle	1932	Servant	Interior commissariat Rēzekne region director
Upiņš Andrejs	1877	Latvian	Middle	1917	Servant	Supreme Council deputy chairman
Vāgners Jānis	1869	Latvian	Higher	-	Servant	LSSR Senate procurator general
Vanags Jānis	1907	Latvian	Higher	1925	Servant	Agriculture commissar
Vierpe Jānis	1896	Latvian	Lower	1919	Farmer	Liepāja region committee chairman
Vinholde Ieva	1895	Latvian	Lower	1917	Worker	LCP CC personnel director

No. 143

**A Declaration Signed by the Deputy Secretary
of State of the United States of America,
S. Welles¹**

Washington, 23 July 1940

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 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 relationship between the 21 sovereign existing 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.

S. Welles

William J.H. Hough, III, The annexation of the Baltic States and its effect on the development of law prohibiting forcible seizure of territory New York Law School, Journal of International and Comparative Law, Vol. 6, no. 2, Winter 1985.

¹ *Sumner Welles (1892-1961), deputy secretary of state of the United States.*

No. 144

**A Memorandum from
the German Foreign Ministry**

Berlin, 24 July 1940

Today, acting in a friendly manner, I returned to the Lithuanian¹ and Latvian² ambassadors the notes which they had submitted concerning the incorporation of their countries into the USSR. To justify my action, I told them

that we can accept only notes which are being submitted in the name of the submitting diplomat's government. In keeping with my instructions, I stated that the notes were returned to the two ambassadors under the orders of the Reich's foreign minister.

The Estonian³ ambassador wished to submit an analogous note today. I asked him to refrain from doing so, explaining to him the above-stated reasoning.

The Lithuanian ambassador told me that on his own initiative, he has sent the Lithuanian [soviet] government a telegram to protest [Lithuania's] incorporation into the Soviet Union, declaring among other things that he does not consider the resolution in question to be binding for the residents of Lithuania, the nation or himself. The Latvian and Estonian ambassadors told me that they have not sent any such telegram and are not planning to do so.

I then informed the three ambassadors that they, along with other members of their diplomatic missions and their families, may remain in Germany if they wish to do so. The ambassadors expressed profound gratitude for this and asked me to thank the Reichsminister⁴.

Woermann⁵

PAAA. - R28870 - p. 322. Original.

¹ K. Skirpa.

² E. Krieviņš.

³ K. Toper.

⁴ On 2 August 1940, the Cabinet of Ministers of the Latvian SSR adopted a resolution asking the President to "fire the ambassador plenipotentiary and authorized minister to Germany and Holland, seated in Berlin, Ed[gars] Krieviņš, for disciplinary violations, decision to take effect 2 August 1940". (LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 2.l., p. 140). After a request from the Soviet Union, Germany closed the Latvian embassy and its consulates. The German ambassador to Latvia, U. von Kotze, in notes concerning a meeting with the Soviet ambassador, V. Derevjanski, on 8 August 1940, noted: "I began by expressing my best congratulations about the fact that the incorporation (Anschlusbewegung) and the official acts associated with it have been brought to a satisfactory conclusion, smoothly and without victims. I added that we, as a nation friendly to Russia, have good reason to share in the joy concerning this event". (Diktierte Option, p. 252).

⁵ Ernst Woermann, director of the German Foreign Ministry's Political Department from 1938 to 1943.

No. 145

A Published Report from TASS

24 July 1940

The incorporation of the three Baltic states into the Soviet Union does not concern the interests of Germany and Italy

Moscow 24.07. (TASS). According to a report on Berlin Radio, German political circles have stated that the incorporation of the three Baltic states into the Soviet Union does not concern the interests of Germany. Italian political circles have stated that the events are taking place in a part of Europe in which Italy has no direct interests.

Valdības Vēstnesis, 25 July 1940.

No. 146

**Excerpt from a British Report on the Baltic
Incorporation into the Soviet Union**

Personal

The Whitehall Letter

Anglo-Foreign Information Bureau Ltd.
13 Queen Anne's Gate,
London S.W.1
Tel.: Victoria 2874

29 July 1940

[.] **RUSSIA**

Baltic Problems for Diplomacy.

Several curious diplomatic situations have been created by the decisions of the three Baltic States to co-opt into the Soviet Union. Well knowing the extent of Russian pressure under which the decisions were taken and the plebiscites carried through, the Ministers Plenipotentiary in various capitals have declined to recognise the new state of affairs. This is true of London, Washington and Berlin. At the same time the Soviet Ambassadors concerned have presented themselves at the Foreign Offices of the capitals to which they are now accredited, explaining that they now represent the three Baltic States as part of the U.S.S.R.

Washington, as mentioned in a previous note, has declined to recognise the change, considering it to have been brought about by force. London has been deferring a de-

cision. The fact that closer diplomatic relations have recently been established between London and Moscow, which it is desirable to maintain, must obviously incline the British Government to recognise an accomplished fact which it is powerless to reverse. A still more difficult position will arise if first signs are to be believed and new Russian demands are about to be preferred against Finland.

Most interesting, perhaps, is the fact that the Baltic Ministers in Berlin should have protested jointly and sharply to their respective Foreign Offices, acting presumably after consultation with the German authorities. Thus in the Baltic, as in the Balkans, we find new evidence of a Kremlin policy which is unpleasing to Germany, even though it is conceived with no idea of aiding Britain to achieve her war aims¹. Several German missions have hastened to Moscow during the past few days. One is concerned with the unsatisfactory state of Russo-German trade, the other with repatriation of more than 100,000 Germans from Bessarabia and Bukovina.

Archive of the Latvian Embassy in London; Latvian Foreign Ministry Archive D-839911.

¹ *Despite the fact that Berlin, in signing its criminal deals with Moscow in August and September 1939, in essence accepted the destruction of Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian independence and proclaimed its disinterest in the fate of Bessarabia, Germany was nevertheless not particularly pleased to see the strengthening of the USSR in the Baltic states and the south-east of Europe. That was because Russian pressure against Germany grew by virtue of these occurrences, and Berlin's strategic position declined considerably. The USSR, being on Germany's flank, could easily have threatened the "lifelines" which abetted the German war machine (oil from Romania, peace in the Baltic Sea) and cast doubts upon Berlin's ability to maintain the European hegemony which it won with its surprising victories in Western Europe early in the war. Berlin was also somewhat distressed at Moscow's growing attempts to review or violate agreements which had been reached earlier. In occupying Lithuania, for example, the Soviet grabbed all of its territory, including the Mariampol region which had been declared to be in Germany's sphere of interests. In pressuring Romania, in turn, Moscow demanded not just Bessarabia but also Northern Bukovina, which was not mentioned in any of the secret deals between Germany and Russia.*

With respect to the external manifestations of German-Soviet relations, everything seemed to be going smoothly in the summer of 1940. Diplomats from both countries emphasized the "unfailingly friendly nature of our mutual relations" and congratulated one another on achievements on the front lines and the grabbing of foreign territory. The German ambassador to Latvia, U. von Kotze, was particularly inclined to lose all sense of perspective in this respect. Kotze went so far as to declare his joy at the destruction of the state in which he had been accredited. On 8 August 1940, a few days after the Baltic states were incorporated into the Soviet Union, Kotze visited the Russian ambassador to Latvia, V. Derevjanski. In reporting the results of this discussion to Berlin, Kotze noted: "At first I expressed by good wishes in connection with the fact that the annexation has been concluded in a satisfactory manner and added that we, as a friend of Russia, have the highest reason to share in the joy about this successful action. (Diktierte Option..., p. 252.)

No. 147

Decisions by the Cabinet of Ministers

26 July 1940

Protocol No. 73

The meeting was begun at 14:15.

[..]

3. The War Ministry is permitted to turn over a "Lot" airplane¹ which has been interned in Latvia to the military command of the USSR.

[..]

5. On the basis of a recommendation by the foreign minister, the President is asked to dismiss the ambassador plenipotentiary and authorized minister to London, *Kārlis Zariņš*, for disciplinary violations, effective 26 July of this year. The matter is to be turned over to the procurator's department in order to bring criminal charges against K. Zariņš². Zariņš is also freed from his obligations as consul general in London.

[..]

7. The Cabinet decides that it is currently not advisable that employees of Latvian embassies who are currently in Latvia return to their jobs abroad.

[..]

10. The Cabinet adopts the following order:

"The economic interests of the Latvian state demands that the entire Latvian trade fleet be under the full control of the Latvian government. In order to deter the captains of ships which are currently outside Baltic Sea waters from taking treasonous action, the Latvian government hereby orders all owners and captains of ships:

1. With respect to ships which are in foreign waters, such ships shall depart from or enter foreign ports only with the permission of the Latvian government.

2. Without the permission of the Latvian government, ships shall not be authorized to enter American and British ports.

3. Captains who disobey the Latvian government's order to return to the fatherland will be viewed as traitors and shall be declared to be operating in violation of the law. Along with the captains themselves, their family members and nearest relatives will be made to answer for this.

The government order with respect to shipping shall be published over the signature of the director of the Maritime department and the appropriate clerk".

The meeting was concluded at 14:50

Prime Minister A. Kirhenšteins
Acting director, Government Office, V. Stalažs

LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 2.l., p. 133. Original.

¹ The reference is to a Polish airplane which landed in Latvia in September 1939 and was interned.

² Prior to this, the Kirhenšteins government had, on 4 July, decided to "ask the President to dismiss, effective 1 July 1940, the Latvian ambassador and authorized minister to Estonia, Vilis Šūmanis, on his own request" (LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 2.l., p. 103); on 18 July the Cabinet decided to "ask the President to dismiss, effective 18 July of this year, the Latvian ambassador plenipotentiary and authorized minister to Finland, J[ānis Eižens Bruno] Tefers (ibid., p. 126). With respect to the ambassador plenipotentiary and authorized minister to Italy, Bulgaria and Greece, Dr. Arnolds Spekke, who was seated in Rome, at the 7 August Cabinet meeting the President was asked to "dismiss [him] from his post in the respective countries, based on his own request" (ibid., p. 145). The ambassador plenipotentiary to German and Holland, seated in Berlin, Edgars Krieviņš, was dismissed for "disciplinary violations", effective 2 August (ibid., p. 140). The

dismissal of ambassadors K. Zariņš and A. Bīlmanis, which was discussed at several Cabinet meetings, and the proposal of sanctions against them (see Doc. 148, 149) had to do with the emergency powers which the Ulmanis government issued to them on 17 May 1940 (see Doc. 64).

No. 148

Cabinet of Ministers Decisions Concerning Sanctions Against Latvian Diplomats

29 July 1940

Protocol No. 74

The meeting was begun at 13:00.

[..]

5. On the basis of a recommendation by the foreign minister, the President is asked to dismiss the ambassador plenipotentiary and authorized minister to the United States of America, Dr. Alfrēds Bīlmanis, for disciplinary violations, effective 29 July of this year. The matter is to be turned over to the procurator's department in order to bring criminal charges against A. Bīlmanis.

6. The Cabinet decides to publish in the press the old government's decision of 17 May, as well as information about the sanctions to be applied against ambassadors K. Zariņš and A. Bīlmanis¹.

7. On the basis of a recommendation by the foreign minister, the authorized representative to Argentina and Brazil, Dr. Pēteris Oliņš², is hereby dismissed for disciplinary violations and for the dissemination of anti-state propaganda, effective 29 July of this year. The matter is to be turned over to the procurator's department.

8. The acting director of the Administrative Department of the Foreign Ministry is hereby ordered to dismiss the Third-Class supernumerary secretary to the Latvian embassy in Buenos Aires, N. Ozoliņš, for disciplinary violations and for the dissemination of anti-state propaganda, effective 29 July of this year. The matter is to be turned over to the procurator's department.

9) The Cabinet of Ministers deems it necessary to reduce the staff of the Foreign Ministry by liquidating various divisions in the Political Department according to the views of the foreign minister.

[..]

The meeting was concluded at 18:00.

Prime Minister A. Kirhenšteins

Acting director, Government Office, V. Stalažs

LVA, 270.f., 1. apr., 2.l., pp. 134-136. Original.

¹ Only information about the sanctions was published.

² Pēteris Ozoliņš (1890-1962), diplomat. Served in the diplomatic corps of the Republic of Latvia beginning in October 1919. He was the authorized representative to Argentina and Brazil beginning in 1935.

No. 149

Cabinet of Ministers Decision Declaring Ambassadors K. Zariņš and A. Bīlmanis to be in Violation of the Law

30 July 1940

Protocol No. 75

The meeting was begun at 13:00.

Based on the rules set out in §8.2 of the law on citizenship, the Cabinet hereby decides to strip the former ambassador to London, Kārlis Zariņš, and the former ambassador to Washington, Alfrēds Bīlmanis, of their citizenship and, based on §9.3 of the same law, to confiscate the properties of Kārlis Zariņš and Alfrēds Bīlmanis. Kārlis Zariņš and Alfrēds Bīlmanis, as traitors against the state, are to be proclaimed to be in violation of the law¹.

LVA, 270.f., 1. apr., 2.l., pp. 137. Original.

¹ The Cabinet of Ministers amended the law on citizenship (Compendium of Laws, 1919, 127) on 26 July 1940. Paragraph 8.2 was amended to read: "The Cabinet of Ministers also reserves the right to strip of his citizenship any citizen of Latvia who has spent more than three years abroad without a foreign passport or with an expired foreign passport or who has failed or refused to return to Latvia within the time limit set out by the government". Paragraph 9 of the law was supplemented with a new third section: "The same sanctions may, in the same order, be applied against citizens who have violated the rules of §8.1 or §8.2, provided that a higher form of sanction is not to be applied against them on the basis of another law". The amendments took effect on 30 July 1940, when President A. Kirhenšteins proclaimed them in Valdības Vēstnesis.

No. 150
**The Departure of a Parliamentary Delegation
to Moscow**

30 July 1940

Parliament's chosen delegation will depart by train at 3:10 p.m. today, traveling to Moscow in order to petition the Supreme Council of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to accept Latvia into the Soviet Union. The delegation consists of O. Auguste, T. Birģele, P. Blaus, A. Buģevics, Gen. R. Dambģitis, P. Dergaģs, A. Eizaks, Prof. Dr. P. Galenieks, G. Ilģins, L. Kaģemaks, Prof. Dr. A. Kirhenģsteins, D. Krģze, J. Lģcis, J. Pabģrzs, I. Paldiņa, P. Plģsums, J. Salnis, S. Simanoviģs, K. Ŗics and A. Ūģģts. The delegation will be headed by P. Plģsums¹. The delegation will be seen off by workers from industry, as well as by the choir Salaks. The workers' delegations will arrive in the station square at 14:30, bearing flags. A rally will be held in the station square².

Jaunģkģs Ziņas, 30 July 1940.

¹ *Deputies had actually confirmed a different delegation: T. Birģele, A. Buģevics, D. Krģze, P. Briedis, Prof. A. Kirhenģsteins, Gen. R. Dambģitis, J. Lģcis, V. Lģcis, Ŗ. Spure, O. Krastiņģģ, Gen. R. Kļaviņģģ, G. Ilģins and Prof. P. Galenieks (Jaunģkģs Ziņas, 24 July 1940). The changes in the delegation were not officially approved.*

² *The protocol of the Cabinet of Ministers meeting of 5 August 1940 states: "[.] The Cabinet authorizes the Interior Ministry to devote 20,000 lats from the contingency fund to organize a people's festival on 6 August of this year in connection with the acceptance of Latvia into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics". (LVA, 270.f., 1.apr., 2.l., p. 141).*

No. 151
**The Law of the Supreme Council of the USSR
With Respect to the Acceptance of the Latvian
SSR into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics**

Moscow, 5 August 1940

Having heard the declaration of the authorized commission of the Latvian Parliament, the Supreme Council of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics hereby declares:

1) That the request of the Latvian Parliament is fulfilled, and the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic is hereby accepted as a Soviet Socialist Republic of equal standing in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

2) In accordance with § 34 and 35 of the Constitution (Basic Law) of the USSR, elections shall be held in the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic to select members to the Supreme Council of the USSR.

3) The Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR shall declare the date for such elections.

Moscow, the Kremlin, 5 August 1940

Presidium Chairman of the Supreme Council
of the USSR, *M. Kalinin*

Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Council
of the USSR, *A. Gorkin*

Valdības Vēstnesis, 12 August 1940.

No. 152

A Description of the Repressed

Benedikts Spridzāns,

Director, Department to Rehabilitate Unjustly Repressed
Individuals

Interior Ministry of the Republic of Latvia

Latvia's Darkest Day

March 25, 1949. This date will always be written in the history of the Latvian state and people as the most tragic day in the 50-year history of the Soviet occupation. 14 June 1941 had already passed¹, as had the year of 1945 and other years. But the broadest deportation of repressed individuals took place between 25 and 29 March 1949.

The residents of Latvia could not know that in the case of many individuals, their days of life in their homes or apartments were coming to a rapid end and that soon they would undertake the long and tortuous road to the Far East of Russia, many never to return.

The fate of these individuals was settled in January 1949 in the Kremlin and in February in Riga.

On 29 January 1949, the Council of Ministers of the USSR issued a strictly confidential order, No. 390-138,

which set out the categories of people in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia to be deported. These categories included:

- 1) Kulaks and their families;
- 2) Bandits and illegal nationalists and their family members, as well as the family members of bandits who have been shot;
- 3) Legalized bandits and their family members who continue to engage in anti-Soviet activity;
- 4) Family members of the supporters of bandits.

The order stated that deportation would be applied to all family members residing together who had reached the age of majority. Minors and those who were unable to work were not deported, but they were permitted to voluntarily go along with their family members.

Subsequent to the Soviet order, the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR on 17 March 1949 adopted a strictly confidential order, No. 282, "On the Deportation of the Families of Kulaks from the Latvian SSR". The order stated that 10,000 kulak families would be deported from the Latvian SSR to the far reaches of the Soviet Union.

The order also gave the government's imprimatur to lists of kulak families which earlier had been assembled by regional committees. The actual task of deportation was assigned to the State Security Ministry. The order was signed by the chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR, V. Lācis, and the administrative director of the Council of Ministers, I. Bastin.

11,000 families, or more than 38,000 individuals, were included in the lists of kulak families to be deported, which indicates that there was a "reserve" in case there was difficulty in reaching the mandated level of 10,000.

[.] From 25 to 29 March 1949, 9,147 families, or 29,252 individuals, were deported from Latvia. There were 28,107 Latvians, 482 Russians, and 663 representatives of other nationalities.

The documents necessary to deport 9,100 families (29,114 individuals) were signed by the state security minister of the Latvian SSR, A. Noviks. The rest of the documents were signed by his deputies.

The actual number of kulak families to be deported, thus, was smaller than had been intended.

At the same time, however, the shortcoming was evidently "compensated" by the deportation of nationalist families. Their number was not set out in earlier documents.

3,841 families (12,881 individuals) were deported on grounds of "nationalism". The documents concerning 3,821 of these families (12,832) were signed by A. Noviks.

The decisions had to be sanctioned by the procurator of the Latvian SSR, A. Mishutin. He sanctioned the deportation of 3,808 families (12,789 individuals).

Once the individuals had been deported, the State Security Ministry of the USSR, in late 1949, adopted supplementary decisions concerning deportation of family members and confiscation of properties. The supplementary decisions included individuals who had reached 16 years of age. Children younger than that, in other words, ended up in Siberia because of decisions taken only by A. Noviks and A. Mishutin.

Of the individuals deported as nationalists, 12,158 were Latvians, 293 were Russians, and 430 were representatives of other countries.

From 29 to 29 March 1949, 33 trains (numbered 97320 - 97351 and 97383) departed for the Amur, Omsk and Tomsk regions, bearing 12,987 families (42,133 individuals):

5,487 individuals to the Amur region;

20,844 individuals to the Omsk region;

15,584 individuals to the Tomsk region.

197 individuals died en route.

The deportees were distributed to various kolhozes and sovhozes upon their arrival.

16,940 of the deportees were men. 25,193 were women.

Grouped by age, the deportee contingent looked like this:

Children under 7 years of age - 3,369;

Children from 7 to 16 years of age - 7,621;

Individuals aged 16-60 - 23,341;

Individuals aged 60-80 - 7,068;

Individuals over 80 years of age - 734.

In terms of their professions, the deportees were:

Farmers - 32,238;

Workers - 1,584

Servants - 858, including 181 teachers, four clergymen, five artists and 37 medical specialists, including four

physicians. There were also 7,093 schoolchildren, 230 university students and 130 students from technical institutions of learning.

(Special Publication of the Magazine *Latvijas Arhīvs*, No. 1 (1995), pp. 2-3)

¹ On the night leading to 14 June 1941, the Soviet authorities deported thousands of Latvians to Siberia.

No. 153

Excerpt From the Stenogram of the Sixth Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Latvian Communist Party, 22-23 June 1953 Excerpt from the Address by the First Secretary of the LCP CC, J. Kalnbērziņš

[..] It must be noted that in recent years the LCP CC and the Council of Ministers, as well as local party and soviet organs, have turned over to the Interior Ministry all matters concerning liquidation of the hostile national-socialist underground and that the Interior Ministry, in turn, has applied repressions very broadly. Between 1945 and 1953, 119,000 individuals were repressed in the republic. Among them, 26,500 individuals were arrested by the institutions of the former State Security Ministry; 2,321 were shot as bandits¹; 43,702 individuals were expelled from the republic as kulaks² or supporters of bandits. The institutions of the militia and procurator's department arrested 46,350 individuals.

Latvijas Vēsture, 1992, No. 1(4), p. 40.

¹ "Bandit" in this context was used to refer to anti-Soviet partisans, who remained active in the Latvian forests for a number of years after the Soviet invasion, as well as other opponents of the occupation regime.

² "Kulak" is a Soviet-era word which broadly covered farmers and rural homeowners deemed to be bourgeois or overly wealthy. The Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR adopted a resolution in 1947 which stated that a kulak household could be determined by one of six indicators, including use of salaried help, profit from the rental of agricultural equipment, et al.

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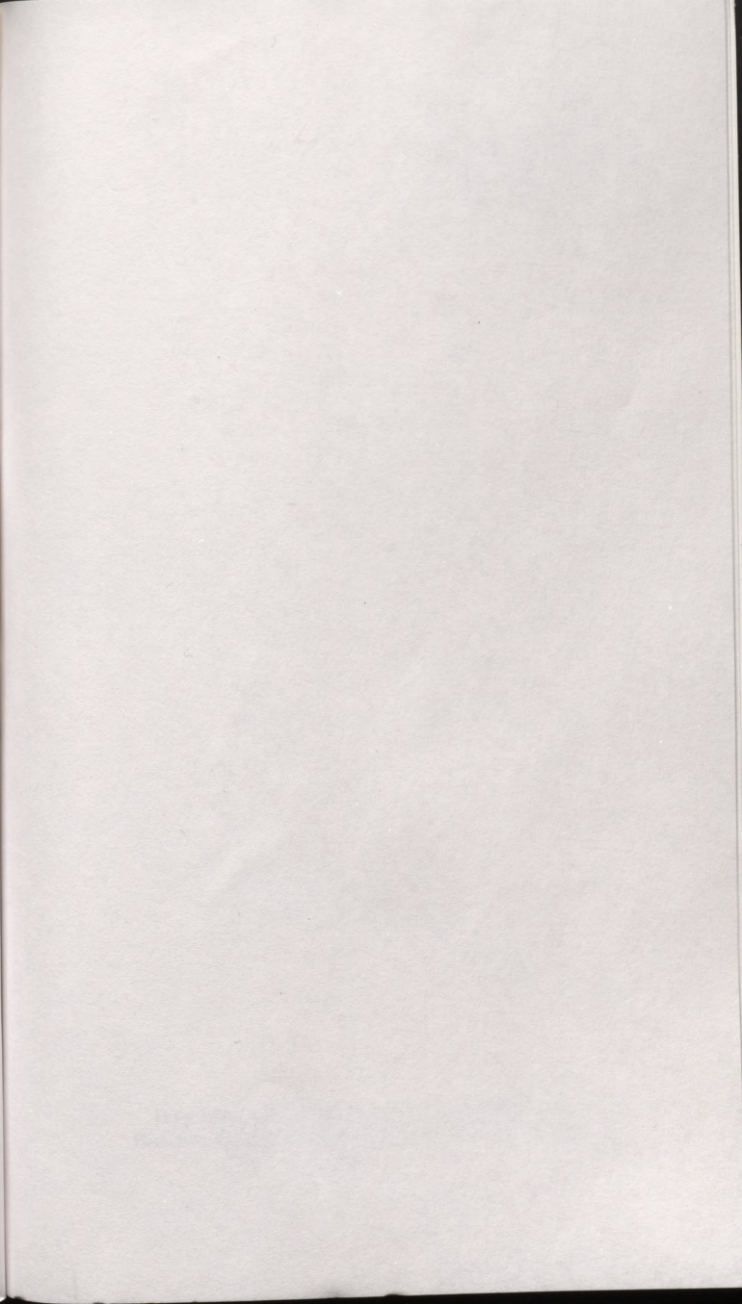
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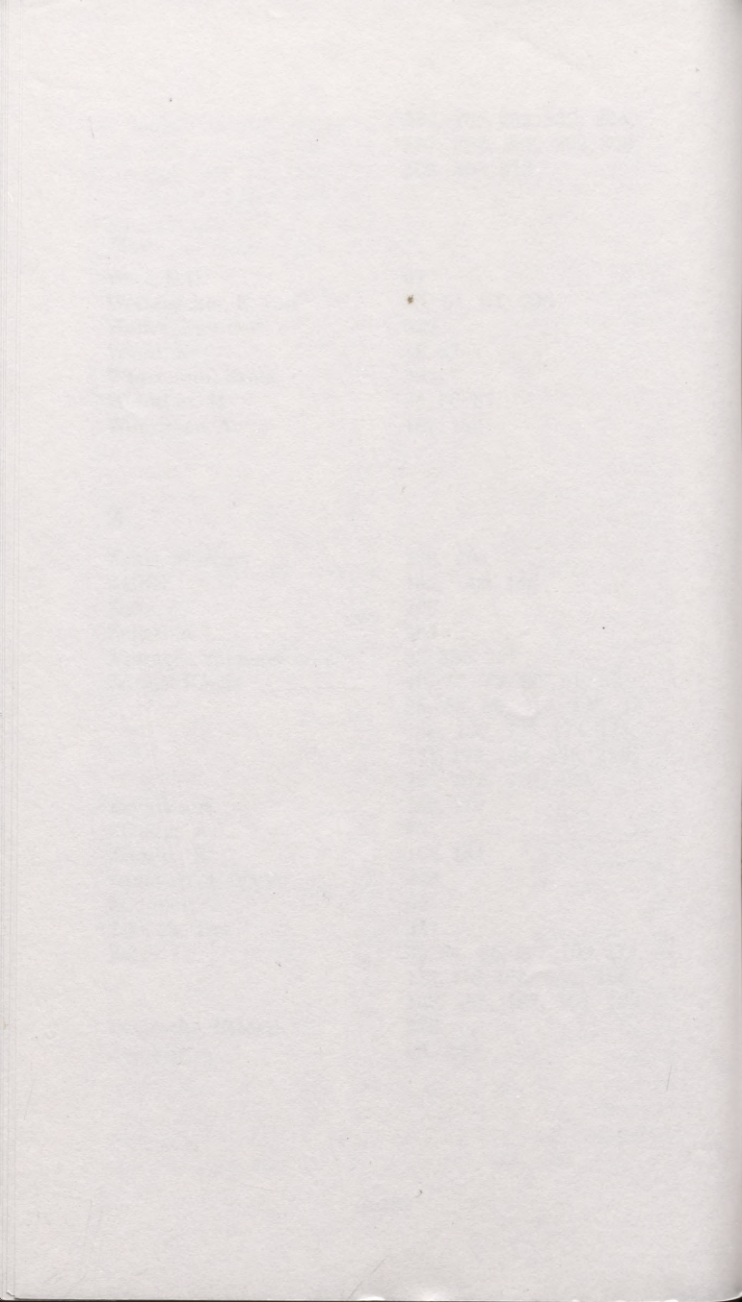
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