



UNPUNISHED CRIMES

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UNPUNISHED CRIMES

LATVIA UNDER THREE OCCUPATIONS

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LATVIAN RELIEF SOCIETY DAUGAVAS VANAGI INC.



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Two totalitarian powers, Nazism and Bolshevism, due to their uninhibited imperialistic tendencies, perpetrated horrific crimes on Latvian soil during the World War II. Absolute and exclusive ideologies justified terror, chiliastic promises and control of state and society by means of force, including the extermination of millions of innocent people.

The object of this book is to describe the criminal acts committed in the Baltic states by two totalitarian rulers – Stalin and Hitler – and to bring them to the attention of the world. The rest of the humankind is not yet sufficiently aware of the extent of such crimes. It is hoped, therefore, that this book will be of some help in comprehending the hardships experienced by the Baltic peoples under these three occupations.

This is a shortened edition of *Okupācijas varu nodarītie postījumi Latvijā 1940–1990*, in Latvian, by the same publishers, 2000.

Translations by Vaiva Puķīte, except for the cover pages, the articles by Baltais, Dreifelds, and Rūsis, and the documents and testimonies which are in the original English, or were previously translated into English.

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FOREWORD

In the mid-twentieth century, the Latvian people suffered three occupations by two criminal, totalitarian regimes. The Latvians were able to free themselves from the last occupation only at the end of the century. The writing of world history has largely ignored the crimes of the occupying powers and their consequences for Latvia and the Latvian people. Whether or not they realize it, most people have a mistaken view of the Second World War. Hitler is always characterized as the one who started the war, as an imperialist and mass murderer, while the Eastern despot Stalin stays out of the limelight, an innocent onlooker basking in the light of false propaganda. Hitler did not start the war on his own: Stalin prepared him for it. Stalin needed the war just as much as Hitler. Russianized Marxist ideology dictated it. Russianized Marxist ideology had lost much of its luster in Russia's appallingly bloody purges and absolutism, and the great social and economic experiment was showing unmistakable signs of failure. The Communist parties of the world were unable to bolshevize Europe by peaceful means. It required the Red Army's help, which went against the basic tenets of Western Marxism. Force and cunning were called for.

Historians ascribe to Hitler the murder of eleven million people. The scope of Stalin's bloody deeds is so vast that it has not yet been measured. The most sensitive archives in Moscow are still closed. Nevertheless, there are unequivocal indicators. The most important is *The Black Book of Communism*, published by the Harvard University Press in 1999. This monumental work was written by six researchers, including longtime French Communist Party members who became disillusioned by Communism. There is no reason to repeat the numbers mentioned in the book of people murdered, especially during Stalin's rule. They are horrifying. The Russian public itself has available information about the crimes of the Communist regime. A front-page article in the October 30, 1997, issue of *Izvestia* has the impressive headline: "Communists murdered 110 million people." The article states: "In the times of peace of the twentieth century, 170 million people were killed worldwide. Of these, 110 million were killed [...] in countries oriented towards Communism." These figures are also mentioned in the book *The Open Wound*, which further states that 62 million people were killed in the Soviet Union from 1917 to 1987. Are these figures believable? Guesses and estimates will abound until the world knows the truth. It defies

understanding that the Communist regime is still not called to criminal accountability, even if just before the court of history.

Russia, the heir to the Soviet Union, still has a legal Communist Party, which has demonstrations with red flags and posters of Communist heroes. How would the world react if the same situation occurred with Hitler and the Nazi Party? There is the small enough example of Austria. Why such a difference?

Germany, the legal successor to the Nazi regime, has developed into a model of European democracy. It has apologized for Nazi Germany's crimes and their consequences; it has expended great effort in uncovering and documenting them and punishing those responsible.

There still has been nothing of the sort from Russia. To the contrary, Russian politicians continue to threaten the Baltic states and interfere in their internal affairs, refusing to let go of Russia's traditional expansionist policies to the West. The Baltic people still await a declaration by the Russian president and government acknowledging the fact of occupation and the enormous crimes committed against the Baltic nations. Today's Russia, the legal heir to the Communist Soviet Union, continues to cover up and even deny the crimes of the Bolsheviks. In the face of published facts, it continues to spread disinformation around the world, maintaining that the occupation of the Baltic states never happened. The flow of lies continues to the present day. It seems that Russian political leaders are afraid of the truth, for the "dark corners" of the truth hold an inhumanity of unimaginable proportions.

Hitler tried to get *Lebensraum* for his people and dominate Europe by sheer force. Stalin used cunning in addition to his masses of armed force, to achieve by force and cunning the same goals that Hitler tried to get by force alone. Stalin deceived Roosevelt and Churchill into giving him half of Europe, in return for nothing. Stalin played his part well. Western leaders trusted him, and their trust supported Russia's historical policy of expansion to the West and the East. Stalin was a villain, but nevertheless also a genius: an evil person, endowed with Lucifer-like cleverness, at the head of a large empire.

The world has judged, sentenced, and condemned Hitler, but fears to touch Stalin, who remains unjudged and unsentenced. One has to ask: why? Does the size of one's empire dictate the truth?

It is time the Western world started calling a spade a spade in judging the former Soviet Union's successes and failures. The heirs of the mighty Soviet Union in Russia have not yet learned to do so.

The Publishers

LATVIANS' DECLARATION TO THE WORLD

"Did our people have to be threatened with extinction before Europe learned who the Latvians really were? Until then, Europe had no time to get to know the people who had lived there the longest." Rainis, Latvia's greatest poet and thinker, wrote these despairing words about his people's fate during the First World War. Have Europe's highly cultured nations ever known much about what happened at that time to our people here, in the center of the Baltic states? To be honest, one has to say that they have known little or nothing. All throughout history we have been far from Europe's center of attention. Nonetheless, through no fault of our own, we have repeatedly been in the middle of Europe's most significant and tragic events. In the First World War, our land was shattered by the gunfire of the two largest armies of the time. Almost a million Latvians, just under 40% of the country's population, fled as refugees into Russia. Thousands of lives were lost in gaining Latvia's independence.

We persevered and survived our first threatened extinction. The refugees returned to their abandoned homes. The independent state of Latvia appeared on the map of Europe on November 18, 1918 – the culmination of our hopes and dreams. But there was no time to rest; there was much to build anew, much to do to develop a morally and materially strong state. And our people did achieve it – and had the inexpressible joy of creating a state of their own for the first time.

The Latvian people as a whole, and the generation that grew up in the twenty years of independence in particular, had no idea of what was about to happen to them.

We will mention only briefly the terrible tale of the Latvian people during the longest and darkest night of their history. We believe that the world will understand us, and will search with us for the answer to the inescapable question: how can the Latvian people survive?

It might seem paradoxical that this question arises now, when Latvia has regained its freedom and is recognized as an independent state. We are and will always be grateful to everyone who helped achieve this. But it is important to understand that the renewal and recognition of our nation's independence is based on the legal, political, and moral ethical principles of the internationally recognized Latvian state that existed

between the two world wars. The Latvian people and the Latvian nation can have no other concept of the essence of the Latvian state.

Ethnic Latvians and the Latvian nation as a whole (including the Jews destroyed in the holocaust in Latvia) are among the European peoples to suffer the most in World War II, as a result of three occupations and the genocide of the tyrannical regimes of Hitler and Stalin. The number of people killed in purges and reprisals, deported, and forced to emigrate is more than 500,000.

In return, in the forty years after the war, the Soviet Union's central planning and security institutions flooded Latvia with 800,000 people from the rest of the empire, with the goal of deliberate, forced Russification. The policy of Russification was a complex colonialistic process, which was especially pronounced in the center of the Baltics – Latvia. The newcomers were channelled to Latvia's largest cities, mainly to Riga, where 60% of them settled.

Even though the level of industrialization in Latvia before annexation was higher than that of any other Soviet republic, the rate of industrialization was forcibly accelerated by the Soviet Union. Factories were hurriedly built. Raw materials were transported from thousands of miles away. All institutions – local governments, businesses, housing authorities, etc. – were forced to replace their employees with less qualified newcomers.

The Russian language was decreed the official language in all institutions and documents. In about fifteen years' time, Latvian schools were methodically transformed into so-called “mixed” schools. Children were forced to speak “Lenin's language” from the first years of school.

Latvia was the only republic of the USSR to have its own overt program of total denationalization from 1959 to 1962. Starting in 1962 and lasting twenty-five years, there was a deliberate and detailed campaign against “bourgeois nationalists” in all spheres of life. It was evident (also from the central media in the USSR) that Latvia had been selected as an experimental locale for the accelerated creation of the “united Soviet people,” and, concomitantly, for the acquisition and subjugation of the center of the Baltics.

Latvians and their culture were sidelined in their own land. They became second class citizens, and their numbers shrank to a minority in Latvia's seven largest cities. The influential “ruling” class of newcomers, hoping to maintain their dominant status and the standard of living that was higher than in their ethnic homeland, and hoping to develop Russian

"autonomy" in Latvia, soon started to side with those who supported formal independence for Latvia.

It must be noted that this barbaric policy against the Latvians was carried out not far from Europe's center. It could have been seen. We can understand that for a long time the fear of Russian tanks and nuclear weapons was paramount in Europe, and that with its silence, the West was ready to write us off in the archives of history – to write off Latvians and Latvia, a country that was once a member of the Council of the League of Nations. That is how it was; that is reality, and not particularly flattering to the great powers of Europe and the rest of the world.

But what of the situation today, when Russian threats to the West have been transformed into Russian politicians' ingratiating tolerance of that self-same West? Formally and actually the West has again noticed us, unfortunately not as we really are, but as we have been portrayed through the centuries. How much cynicism and hypocrisy does it take for the mass of immigrants in Latvia to ask, in the name of human rights, for governmental power proportional to their numbers? to lie and threaten the world, unashamedly boasting of the fact that they have flooded in in such numbers as to constitute approximately 40% of the total number of inhabitants? What would be a crime and a disgrace for an ethnical representative of any other people is, for the chauvinistic Russian politician, an argument for the continuation of evil. We hereby emphasize that we in no way equate the aforementioned politicians with the majority of Russian immigrants; however, we cannot but point out that because of their chauvinistic upbringing, a certain proportion of this immigrant majority is easily influenced. Politically outdated "leaders" will continue to use this fact for their selfish ends, especially if they sense even the slightest support from the West.

We are sure that there are no Balkan-like dangers in Latvia. Such threats are found only in the speeches of the most extreme Russian chauvinists, in articles in Russian papers published in Latvia. These are widely and persistently used in diplomacy by Russia to get something for itself into the bargain and to avoid any responsibility for the crimes committed against the Baltic states by its legal predecessor state, the USSR.

We are absolutely sure that with even a minimum of support from Europe and the rest of the free world, the whole problem of nationalities in the Baltic states can be solved more easily and successfully than in many other places. The main prerequisite is – to tell the truth.

Currently, the many lies about the Baltics come mostly from official and semi-official sources in Russia, and are based on false information from the radical chauvinists in Latvia and Estonia.

We are witnesses to a paradox, and to an extent its victims. The Russian extremist groups in Latvia, while continually denigrating Russia's president and democracy, at one and the same time use influential Russian politicians to call for human rights in the Baltics, i.e, in actuality – for the preservation of their Soviet-era privileges in these countries. We now realize that this odious ploy is often taken seriously in the West.

To clarify the situation, we solemnly proclaim:

- Ethnic Latvians and the other original inhabitants of Latvia (about 65% of the current population) henceforth will not be subject to any further pressures from immigrants. Of this there cannot be the slightest doubt.
- There will never be any kind of power-sharing or any confederation of ethnic groups called "Latvia" in the ancient land of the Latvians.
- Our nation has belonged the educated nations of Northern Europe since the beginning of this century, and we know how to guarantee human rights in our country no less than does any other country. Only the Latvian people and their true representatives will be allowed to decide, on the basis of political and ethical considerations, to whom and to how many citizenship will be granted in this country, with absolutely no pressure from any residual occupying power or its foreign government.
- We understand all too well that fate decreed our people and our country to be a laboratory for the co-existence of peoples with completely different religious and cultural traditions. Undermining the rights of the native people would mean the destruction of the laboratory itself.
- The accusations against our nation are incorrect. The West often suggests, even threatens, that Latvians have to be more humane in sharing power with the Russian-speaking portion of the population. Those with this ready advice do not realize that this is an opportunity for that aggressive group to ask for even more of that to which they have no moral or legal right. If simply the resettlement of a large number of people by an occupying power in and of itself creates rights that are greater than or absolutely equal to those of the native people, then that is the same morality already demonstrated to the world, to its

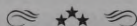
misfortune, by history's two greatest tyrants – Stalin and Hitler.

- We maintain that recognition of the Latvian state's regained independence is only the first step in liquidating the effects of the Second World War. The next step is renewing the true historical rights of the tormented Latvian people in their own country. This could be accomplished humanely and successfully with the help of the world's community of nations. This help has to be forthcoming.
- As regards the humanism of the Latvian people: this they have not lacked, and never will. In the words of the poet Rainis, the Latvian people "have been wronged to their very life." We cannot be silent until our people's tale of suffering and the crimes committed against them become known to the world, to people of all faiths, everywhere.

Let everyone know what price we have paid for our country and for our right to exist. And we have to survive. For our sake and yours, for the sake of Christian justice. No matter how important the above-mentioned arguments, most important of all is the spiritual attitude of the Latvians themselves. We repeat today the words of the martyred Latvian Catholic bishop, Boļeslavs Slokāns: "The Latvian people will be able to survive only with faith and high morality, as it has had through the centuries. An enemy does not destroy a people, they destroy themselves when morality is lost."

Submitted to Pope John Paul II on the occasion of his pontifical visit to Latvia, 1993.

Latvijas Vēstnesis [The Government Messenger], supplement *Pavadonis* [Companion], No. 1, September 4, 1993.



Tadeušs Puisāns

LATVIAN NATIONALISM

On the border I laid my head
To defend my homeland;
Better that they took my head,
And spared my homeland.

– from *Latvian folklore*

This short, four-line stanza expresses the deepest national consciousness of the Latvians. Latvians did not go to war in the name of patriotism to subjugate other lands or peoples, but only to defend what was dear and holy to them. Latvians, therefore, do not have to be ashamed of their nationalism. It is free of messianic and imperialistic ideologies – ideologies that both the East and the West have tried to force upon the Latvian people for hundreds of years.

In modern times, nationalism has come to have a broader meaning, encompassing loyalty to political institutions, a sense of responsibility towards other people, and loyalty to one's cultural and historical heritage and to the land of one's birth in a specifically physical sense. This can all be expressed in two words: nationalism and patriotism, which are basically the same. A nation cannot exist without a collective national consciousness; otherwise it is just a mass of people. A collective national consciousness does not arise spontaneously, it has to be taught to children in the earliest years of their lives. A sense of nationhood is a people's strongest weapon in the struggle against foreign aggression, no matter what form it takes. Generally, small nations have no other weapon.

A people, state, and nationalism: these three concepts are closely tied to that of a freely existing human society, and their differences can be discerned only over the course of history. In modern times it is accepted that a people's most complete existence is expressed in the state, and the state is the people. Only with an independent state of their own can a people take their place in the world's forum, showing their cultural achievements and highlighting the uniqueness thereof, showing the creative powers of their spiritual values and asking for the right to develop these powers freely in the future. A people conscious of its nationhood can exist freely only as a sovereign unit, free of physical and legalistic

coercion by foreign powers, free of foreign authorities and admixtures of foreign domination. Latvians have their own unique national basis. It is their rich heritage of folklore, which calls for loyalty to one's community and homeland, and which in the ancient legal system is sanctioned by God himself. These ancient sayings clearly state: do not do evil in order to gain good for yourself. Follow your conscience. Nurture fairness.

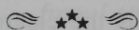
This ethical basis, found in the spiritual values of Latvian folklore, characterizes an organically interconnected group of people that unites all persons and which, by means of a sense of duty, transcends the individual. A national state is the clearest expression of a national consciousness. It arises from the values of justice and fair play in the folklore, calling for duty, honor, and love for the land of one's birth and for the society in which one was raised. This idea is not new. It is embodied in the ancient Roman legal system, which neither barbarian invasions nor the international theologies of the Middle Ages could exterminate, and which was partially restored by the French Revolution, with its attempts to separate nationalism from culture and connect it to politics. So it has remained to this day. Latvian nationalism, beginning with the Bermondt episode, is also connected with politics – *Patria Communis* – including every city, region, and community, regardless of the fact that its origins may not be homogeneously Latvian. It can be all described with one word – *Patria*.

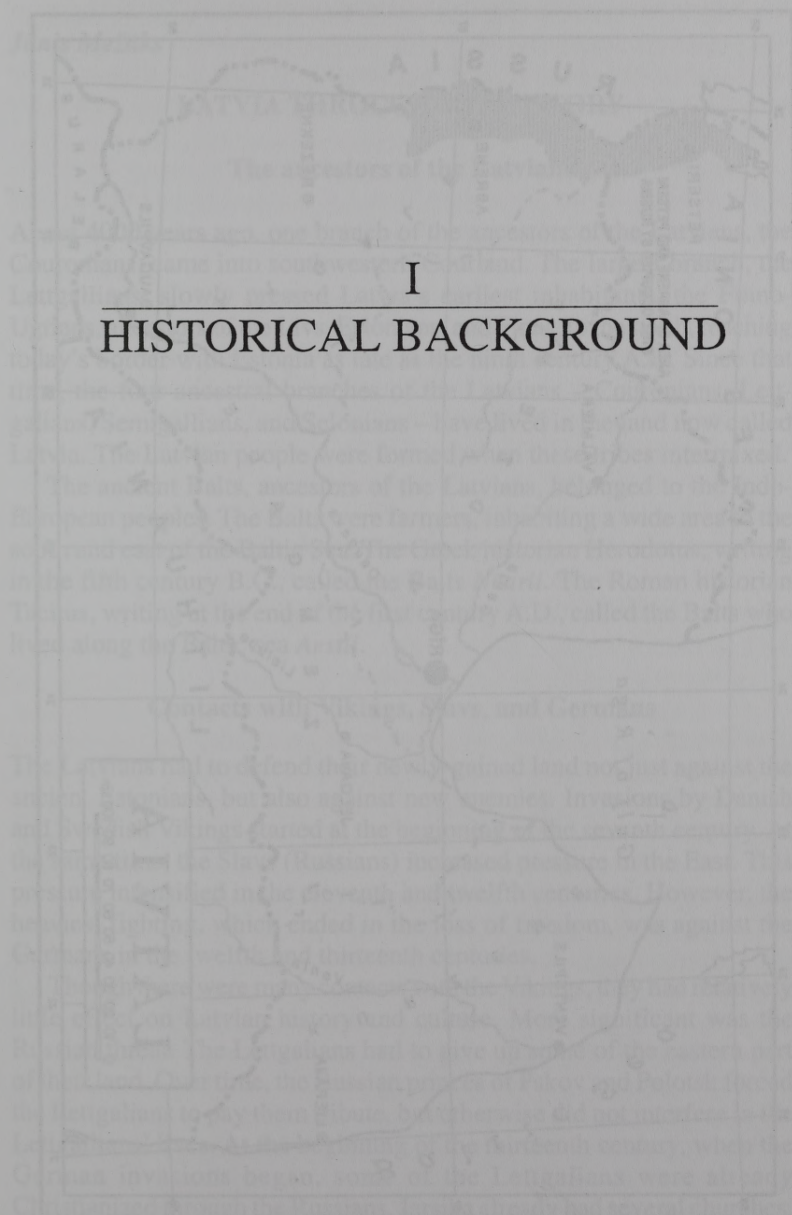
Patria solum omnibus carum est (The homeland is dear to all). As such it stands above all politics and contains within itself all political viewpoints. It embodies the idea of the Latvian people's united, defensive nationalism, which was developed over the centuries defending one's self and the group of people that is the Latvian nation, and which is expressed in the four-line verse at the beginning of this article. Latvian defensive nationalism has successfully repulsed all attacks by foreign powers up to now, and today too its strength has not diminished.

The history of the Latvian people, told in legends and combined with ideas gained from a democratic educational system, has created a strong, unique concept of sovereignty: to exist freely and serve one's own nation with faith and honor, without interference from Eastern messianism and Western imperialism.

In their works, Kant and Herder called on peoples to serve one another. Domination, as practiced by the East and the West, spiritually kills the exploitee and also the exploiter. Domination always creates resistance, and resistance has never been wanting in the Latvian national

consciousness. Therefore, working together with the Christian church, the youth of the country has to be raised in a national spirit, instilling in them fairness, moral strength, happiness, and trust in their people's future. Without ethical virtues as a base, a nation cannot exist and cannot become a full-fledged member of the community of nations. To this the Latvians, like other nations of the world, have a God-given right.





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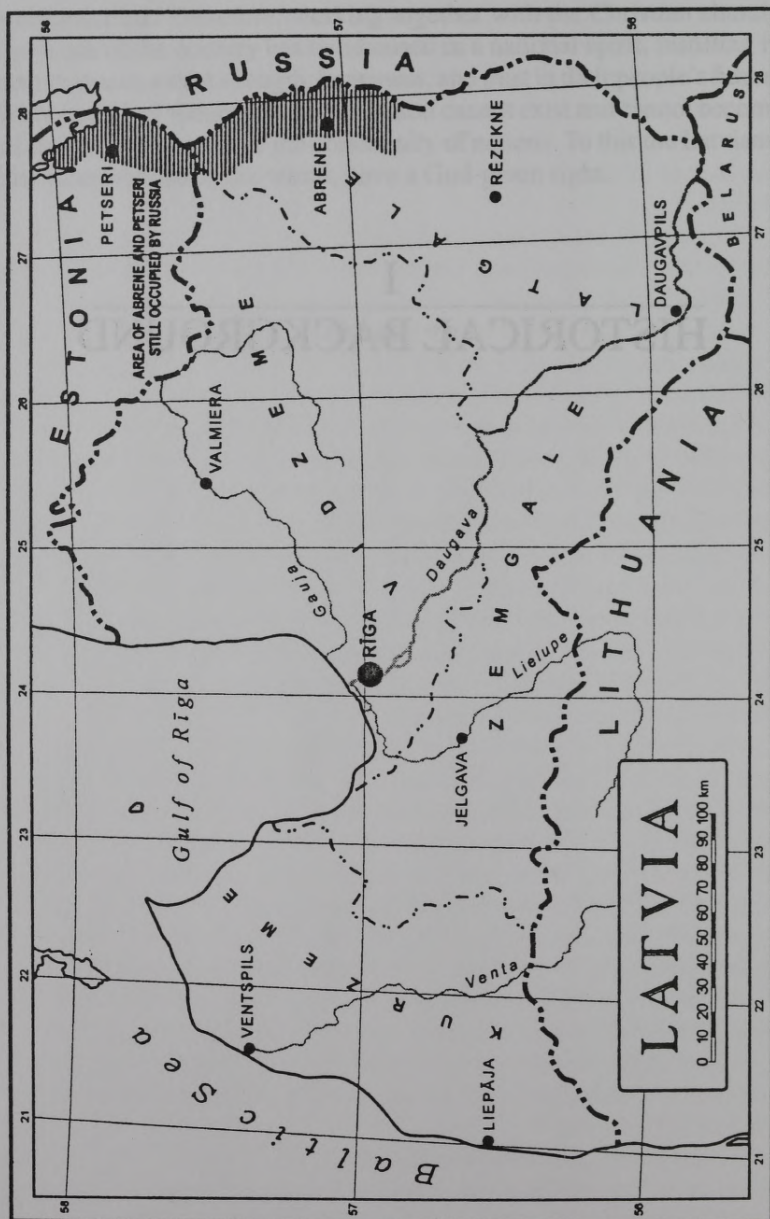
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Contacts with Vikings, Slavs, and Germans

The Latvians had to defend their semi-tribal land not just against the ancient enemies, but also against new enemies. Invasions by Danish and Swedish Vikings started at the beginning of the seventh century, as the Vikings from the north (Russians) had moved southwards in the East. This pressure influenced the growth and wealth of the region. However, the heaviest fighting, which ended in the loss of independence, was against the Germans in the twelfth century.

The first wave of German invasions came from the north, from the Baltic Sea. The Germans had to give up some of the eastern part of the land. Later, the Germans moved southwards, into the region of the Latvians. The Germans had to give up some of the eastern part of the land. Later, the Germans moved southwards, into the region of the Latvians. The Germans had to give up some of the eastern part of the land. Later, the Germans moved southwards, into the region of the Latvians.

The arrival of the Germans onto Latvia and the subsequent wars are



Jānis Mežaks

LATVIA THROUGHOUT HISTORY

The ancestors of the Latvians

About 4000 years ago, one branch of the ancestors of the Latvians, the Couronians, came into southwestern Courland. The largest branch, the Lettgallians, slowly pressed Latvia's earliest inhabitants, the Finno-Ugrians, ancestors of the Livs, Estonians, and Finns, to the north, reaching today's border with Estonia as late as the ninth century A.D. Since that time, the four ancestral branches of the Latvians – Couronians, Lettgallians, Semigallians, and Selonians – have lived in the land now called Latvia. The Latvian people were formed when these tribes intermixed.

The ancient Balts, ancestors of the Latvians, belonged to the Indo-European peoples. The Balts were farmers, inhabiting a wide area to the south and east of the Baltic Sea. The Greek historian Herodotus, writing in the fifth century B.C., called the Balts *Neurii*. The Roman historian Tacitus, writing at the end of the first century A.D., called the Balts who lived along the Baltic sea *Aestii*.

Contacts with Vikings, Slavs, and Germans

The Latvians had to defend their newly-gained land not just against the ancient Estonians, but also against new enemies. Invasions by Danish and Swedish Vikings started at the beginning of the seventh century. At the same time, the Slavs (Russians) increased pressure in the East. This pressure intensified in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. However, the heaviest fighting, which ended in the loss of freedom, was against the Germans in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Though there were many contacts with the Vikings, they had relatively little effect on Latvian history and culture. More significant was the Russian threat. The Lettgallians had to give up some of the eastern part of their land. Over time, the Russian princes of Pskov and Polotsk forced the Lettgallians to pay them tribute, but otherwise did not interfere in the Lettgallians' lives. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, when the German invasions began, some of the Lettgallians were already Christianized through the Russians. Jersika already had several churches.

The arrival of the Germans into Latvia and the subsequent wars are

described in two chronicles, both written by Germans. The first part of the wars, from the end of the twelfth century until 1227, is described in the *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*. The period from that time until the end of the war, at the end of the thirteenth century, is documented in the *Rhyme Chronicle*.

The first Germans in Latvia were merchants. From about the middle of the twelfth century, they came from Lübeck and Visby to trade with the Livs and other Latvian peoples. They were soon joined by monks spreading Catholicism.

The German invasions were directly associated with the crusades and their ideology. Seeing that the monks had little success in converting the native peoples to Christianity, soldiers – crusaders – arrived to force conversion, and to gain land for themselves. Bishop Albert carried out a systematic campaign to conquer the Latvian land. In 1201, he founded the city of Riga on the site of a small Liv village where the Rīdzene River flowed into the Daugava (Dvina) River. The Latvian peoples' greatest misfortune at that time was the lack of a unified nation. The patchwork of small states in the area could not stand together against the invaders, and the Germans subjugated first the Livs, Lettgallians, and Selonians, and then the Couronians and Semigallians.

Livonia

The Germans divided the conquered lands among themselves, creating lands joined in a confederation called Livonia, also referred to as Terra Mariana (Land of the Holy Virgin). Feudalism was introduced to Latvia.

When the wars in Livonia ended in the fourteenth century, knights and vassals devoted more attention to agriculture, developing large manors (*muižas*). These needed large numbers of workers, and so, following the example of Western Europe, the local people were tied to the manor's estate. They were forbidden to leave the estate, ensuring that its owners would never lack for workers and tribute. The era of serfdom had begun. For hundreds of years, the manor lords – German barons, later also Polish and Russian nobles – controlled life in Latvia.

The Russian threat existed throughout the age of Livonia. Having united as the state of Muscovy, the Russians invaded a number of times with only short-term success. Then Ivan IV (Ivan the Terrible) started the Livonian War in 1558. Poland joined in, and the Livonian Confederation collapsed and was divided up in 1561. Poland gained present-day Vidzeme and Lettgallia outright, while a new province subject to

Poland was created in Courland and Semigallia, the Duchy of Courland. Polish lands north of the Daugava were called *Pārdaugavas hercogiste*, “the duchy across the Daugava River.” Hard times befell the Latvians. The war continued until 1583, as Russia was also determined to gain territory, but in the event remained empty-handed.

Peace, however, did not last long. In 1600, war broke out between Poland and Sweden. When peace was declared in 1635, Sweden gained Vidzeme (as well as Estonia), but Poland kept Lettgalia. Latvia now had three rulers.

Swedish rule in Vidzeme

The Swedes ruled in Vidzeme for 70 years. They instigated many reforms benefiting the Latvians: the power of the barons was curtailed, *corvée* labor and tributes were regulated, the government established schools and supported churches. Lutheranism took hold. Government support enabled Ernst Glück, a minister in Alūksne, to translate the Bible into Latvian. The peasants’ standard of living rose. Latvians long remembered the “Swedish golden age.”

The Great Northern War and its consequences

The Great Northern War between Russia and Sweden started in 1700 when Czar Peter I (Peter the Great) decided to “open a window to the West.” After twenty years of war, Vidzeme fell to the Russians.

The Great Northern War and its consequences were devastating to the Latvians, especially in Vidzeme. The land was ravaged and a large proportion of the population killed, carried off as captives to Russia, or died from hunger or the plague. Large areas of Vidzeme were virtually depopulated.

Furthermore, after the war, conditions in Vidzeme were such that it was difficult for the Latvians to recover from the devastation and rebuild their lives. The Russian rulers granted the landholding nobility, who were concerned only with improving their own lives, more rights and power than ever before. This was an extremely difficult time for the peasants, and is still considered a black time in Latvia’s history.

Reading the history of the Latvians in the eighteenth century, one has to be impressed with the Latvian people’s great resilience. Nothing could break them. Their numbers increased, they withstood all burdens and kept in good spirits. As soon as conditions improved in the nineteenth century, the Latvians availed themselves of every educational opportunity, raised their standard of living, and in the end won their freedom and

their country. There are few similar examples in the history of the world.

In the eighteenth century, the provinces of Latvia one after another fell under Russian rule. First, Russia annexed Vidzeme in 1721 with the Treaty of Nystadt, which ended the Great Northern War. In 1772, Russia took Lettgalia from Poland. Finally, in 1795, Russia also gained Courland and Semigallia. All Latvians now suffered hard times. But as is said, the night is darkest before the dawn. In the nineteenth century, conditions slowly started to improve.

In the latter half of the eighteenth century, Western Europe experienced two great changes, which also influenced the lives of Latvians, albeit with some delay. These were the Enlightenment and the French Revolution of 1789. Few people in Latvia accepted the principles of the Enlightenment, but there were notable exceptions, for example, the clergyman Johann Georg Eisen, and Garlieb Merkel, who tried to improve the condition of the serfs. These were the first rays of dawn after the long night. The French Revolution, too, created unrest in people's minds, generating demands for greater human rights. Russia at first resisted all calls for reform, but even there conditions improved in the nineteenth century.

The Duchy of Courland

The division of Livonia in 1561 united Courland and Semigallia in a new province called the Duchy of Courland. The first duke was Gotthard Kettler, who promoted the building of churches and schools in the duchy. The most notable duke was his grandson Jacob. Industry and trade flourished under his rule, which also benefitted the Latvian farmers, and he even gained colonies in Gambia and Tobago. The famous castles at Jelgava and Rundāle were built during the reign of Duke Ernst Biron. In 1795, the Duchy of Courland was the last part of Latvia to be joined to Russia.

Lettgalia under Poland

Poland continued to exert its influence in Lettgallia, and consolidated the power of the Catholic Church. The landed nobility had wide powers, and serfs' lives were very hard. The Catholic Church published the first printed books in the Latvian language, some written and some translated by Erdmanis Tolgsdorfs and Juris Elgers. More than two hundred years of Polish rule, and later Russification, to a large degree estranged the Lettgallians from other Latvians.

Serf emancipation

Life was hard for Latvian peasants in the eighteenth century. At the end of the century there were many incidents of peasant unrest. Economic changes and the spread of liberal ideas in Europe caused change even in Russia, changing the relationship of the Russian rulers and nobility to the peasants. 1804 saw passage of the first Vidzeme Peasant Law, which somewhat bettered conditions there. Serfdom had outlived its time; the old ways had to be changed.

Serfdom was abolished in Courland and Semigallia in 1818, in Vidzeme one year later, and in Lettgalia (as in the rest of Russia), in 1861. Freedom, however, was frequently illusory. The peasants gained personal freedom to choose their place of residence and work within the province, but had no right to own land. The land belonged to the nobility, and the peasants had to buy or rent it from them. The peasants had to pay the nobles for the use of the land, sometimes with dues, but generally in exchange for labor, i.e., working on the estates. Having to spend most of their time on the estates, the peasant farmers were not able to cultivate their own farms, and grew increasingly poorer. Incidents of peasant unrest increased again.

The reforms of 1860

In the 1860s, Russia's government was forced to make significant reforms in Latvia's socioeconomic structure. In 1861, new laws created the opportunity to acquire land and buy homes. In 1865, obligatory labor contracts were outlawed. The opportunity to buy one's own farm was very significant for the Latvian people's further development. Having their own farm was the key to gaining wealth and being able to educate their children. The people actively responded to this new life. The peasant farmers paid large sums of money to the foreign nobles for their own ancestral lands. In the words of the writer Jānis Purapuķe, an overwhelming number of Latvians aspired to "their own little corner of land." This was the rural Latvian's greatest goal in life, and the reason that the Latvian farmer cherishes his land.

The Latvian national awakening

Besides wanting to own their own home, a second trait characteristic of Latvians was their great thirst for education. More and more Latvians gained higher education, and national activists arose.

Events took place in Latvia in the second half of the nineteenth century

that are collectively called the “Latvian national awakening.” That was the time a Latvian national consciousness arose. Latvians started to think of themselves as a nation, with rights to freedom and their own culture. They started organizing and founding societies to further their common goals, and gained experience in social activism. Latvians started publishing their own newspapers and books, and transcribing their oral folklore traditions – the folk songs (*dainas*), tales, and legends – which laid the basis for the development of Latvian culture.

New laws also furthered the growth of cities. Many Latvians moved to the cities, especially Riga. Two new Latvian social classes were formed: burghers, who owned property (homes, shops) or had higher education (doctors, lawyers, teachers), and city workers, who worked in factories or as servants.

Latvian city dwellers needed their own organization, and in 1868 they received permission to found the Riga Latvian Association, which became one of the most influential groups in Latvian society. Its example inspired the founding of similar associations in other cities and rural areas.

In 1873, the Riga Latvian Association organized the first Latvian Song Festival, the first of many which strongly influenced the development of a national culture and helped unite the Latvian people. The ruling classes, Germans and Russians, tried to stifle the national awakening and persecuted its leaders, nicknamed the “new Latvians.” The most prominent were Krišjānis Valdemārs, Atis Kronvalds, Juris Alunāns, Krišjānis Barons, and the poet Auseklis.

Jaunā strāva (New current)

In the 1880s, the Russian Czar Alexander III instituted an intensive Russification program in the Baltics. Schools were required to use Russian in teaching all subjects except religion. It was forbidden to converse in Latvian even during breaks. Newspaper and book publishing was subject to strict censorship, and associations could not function freely. While these and other measures threatened the cultural life of the Latvians, the Russians failed to Russianize them, as national consciousness was already strong. Instead, the measures intensified the Latvians’ dislike of Russian coercion.

At the end of the nineteenth century, a new outlook and cultural direction started spreading among the Latvian people, called the *Jaunā strāva* (new current). It was based on the formation of Latvian socioeconomic classes and Marxist ideas from Western Europe. *Jaunā*

strāva leaders were J. Jansons, T. Zeiferts, J. Pliekšāns (Rainis, pseud.) and P. Stučka. Under their influence, city workers and the intelligentsia started to form socialist cells, which combined to form the secret, illegal Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party in 1904. This was the first Latvian political party.

The revolution of 1905

One of the most dramatic events in the history of the Latvian people was the revolution of 1905. The revolution began in Russia, but quickly spread throughout Latvia. Latvia became one of the largest centers of the uprising, as the Russian government's oppression and German barons' privileges were especially pronounced there.

Although the most active leaders of the revolution were socialists, it should be noted that many who were not socialists also participated in the revolution in Latvia. Revolutionaries, mainly farmers and teachers, were also active in rural areas. They all fought against the oppressors and for human rights and freedom. The 1905 revolution in Latvia had two aspects, the social and the national. It was the start of the Latvian fight for freedom. Kārlis Skalbe, Jānis Akuraters, Rainis, and Antons Austrīņš were some of the younger writers to participate in the revolution. To escape punishment, they were forced to flee overseas, and lived for years in exile. After the amnesty, they returned to Latvia. They wrote about the 1905 revolution in their works. About 4,000 others fled further abroad, mainly to America, and only a few of these returned to Latvia.

The many casualties of the 1905 revolution were not in vain. The Russian government was forced to grant more freedoms, and the national and political consciousness of the Latvians solidified and matured.

After 1905, Latvia's cities, especially Riga, grew dramatically. Industry developed, the standard of living rose, as did the level of education. The development of industry had a negative effect in that the job opportunities and higher standard of living enticed Russians and other foreigners to Latvia. Every year the percentage of Latvians in the population declined, and one could foresee that in a short while Latvians would be a minority in their own country. This possibility was averted by the First World War and the establishment of the Latvian state.

World War I and the establishment of the Latvian state

The First World War started in 1914. The winds of war again swept over Latvia, after a hundred years – the last had been the Napoleonic wars of

1812. In the struggle between Germany and Russia, tens of thousands of Latvians were mobilized on the Russian side. At first they were scattered over various units, but when Courland became a war zone, separate units of Latvian infantry were created – the *strēlnieki*, which was the beginning of the national Latvian army.

The First World War caused great suffering and losses for the Latvian people, but also gave rise to conditions that created the opportunity to found the Latvian state. For Latvians, the losses were not in vain. Widespread suffering and the heroic struggles of the *strēlnieki* heightened national consciousness and awareness of the people's own power. The First World War caused almost one million Latvians to flee the country, 570,000 from Courland alone. Many never returned from Russia. As a result of the war, Latvians lost approximately 700,000 people, 27% of the nation's population. In 1914, there were 2.5 million inhabitants in Latvia; ten years later, there were only 1.8 million left.

While the First World War caused great suffering for Latvians, it also generated favorable conditions for the establishment of the Latvian state. The war caused the collapse of two imperial powers, Russia and Germany, that would never have allowed the creation of an independent Latvian state, but that were now powerless to prevent it. American President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points Declaration, with its emphasis on self-determination, also contributed to a favorable climate for the creation of new states. In addition, the Latvian *strēlnieki* gained attention in the West with their heroic fight against the Germans. Latvians were no longer unknown to the world's leaders.

With the overthrow of the czar in the Russian revolution of 1917, a democratic provisional government, led by Kerensky, was formed. However, chaos continued in the entire country and the army collapsed, as no one wanted to continue the war. Exploiting the Russian people's exhaustion and the chaos, the Communists overthrew Kerensky's government in October of 1917 and seized power. At the same time, the German army occupied all of Latvia and Lithuania.

In this time of chaos and change, Latvians took the first steps in gaining political authority for themselves. First, *pagasts* (roughly, township) representatives established regional provisional councils. Since Kurzeme (Courland) and Zemgale (Semigallia) were occupied by the Germans, the Kurzeme provisional council was formed by refugees in Tartu, Estonia.

Representatives of the regional councils, refugee organizations, and political parties assembled in Valka in the fall of 1917 to form the

provisional Latvian National Assembly, a central representative body for the Latvians. The National Assembly declared that Latvia was an autonomous, democratic republic. At the same time, in German-occupied Riga, Latvian activists formed the Democratic bloc, with the same aims as the National Assembly.

In the fall of 1918, there was also a revolution in Germany, and the World War ended on November 11. The terms of the armistice dictated that the German army would remain for a time in Latvia. The National Assembly arrived in Riga and made contact with the Democratic bloc. They agreed to form the National Council on November 17, which in turn a day later decided to proclaim the Latvian state. The proclamation of the Latvian state took place in the National Theater on November 18, 1918.

War of independence

The Latvian state was declared to exist on November 18, 1918, but it still had to be freed from its enemies. Both the Russian Bolsheviks (Communists) and German reactionaries wanted Latvia for themselves. The first struggles were against the Bolsheviks.

The German army still occupied Latvia, but there was also a revolution in Germany, and on the Western front the war had ended with surrender to the Allies (England, France, Italy, and the USA). Though the Allies stipulated that the German army in Latvia should continue fighting against the Bolsheviks, most of the army did not carry out these conditions of surrender but returned to Germany. Only the smaller Baltic German forces took a stand against the Bolsheviks. Having been born in Latvia and Estonia, they owned land there and wished to establish a "Baltic Duchy."

Since the Latvian army at the time was so small, the provisional government was forced to ally itself with these German forces, which were also supported by the Allies. At the outset of the independence wars, Latvia's army fought alongside the Germans against the Bolsheviks, but the Germans were not fighting for Latvia. They wished to colonize the Baltics. The provisional government had no other choice; it had to accept German support to free Kurzeme from the Communists. It was a deadly embrace. On April 16, 1919, the German commander Goltz attempted to overthrow Latvia's legal government, and installed a subservient countergovernment, headed by Andrievs Niedra.

Even after Riga was freed from Bolshevik control, Goltz could see that the Latvians did not support his plans and did not recognize the government he had installed. He then planned to subjugate the Latvians

by force. Instead of sending his army to the Latgale front against the Communists, Goltz ordered them to occupy already-liberated Vidzeme and attack the Latvians and Estonians by Cēsis. Thus, in June 1919, the Latvian army started fighting against two enemies, Communists and Germans.

Justice and luck were on the side of Latvia and Estonia. Even such ruses as Goltz's Germans being "reborn" as Russians in the Bermondt army were not successful. The decisive battles against the Bermondt army took place on November 10 and 11, 1919, not far from Riga. Riga was liberated on November 11, and Latvians still honor their veterans on this day.

In freeing Vidzeme from the Communists and then from the Germans, Latvians had assistance from the Estonians. In freeing Latgale from the Communists, they had assistance from the Poles. A peace treaty with Soviet Russia was signed on August 11, 1920, in which Russia renounced all sovereign rights to Latvia "forever". Unfortunately, Communists keep their promises only as long as convenient for them.

On June 17, 1940, the Communists again invaded Latvia and ended her independence.

Constituent Assembly

As soon as Latvia's territory was freed of enemy troops, the work of building the new state began. One hundred fifty members of the Constituent Assembly (*Satversmes sapulce*) were elected in the first free general elections of April 1920 (two more were elected later), with the main task of creating a constitution for the new state. This took two years. In addition, the Constituent Assembly passed 205 laws, the most important of which was the agrarian reform law.

The Constituent Assembly began work on May 1, 1920, and the agrarian reform law was passed on September 16 of the same year. All estate lands were nationalized, but those landowners who had not fought against Latvia were allowed to keep 50 to 100 hectares. They received no compensation for the expropriated land, for in the thirteenth century it was taken from Latvians by lies and force. The expropriated land was redistributed in holdings no larger than 22 hectares. In 1920, there were about 140,000 farmsteads in Latvia; in 1935, the figure was slightly more than 275,000. The agrarian reform law stabilized and legitimized the new state, and averted the Communist threat.

On February 15, 1922, after much study and debate, the Latvian

Constitution was adopted. Referred to as the "Constitution of 1922," it is still the only legitimate constitution of the state of Latvia. It declares that Latvia is an independent democratic republic, whose sovereign power resides in the people of Latvia (*Latvijas tauta*). Legislative power belongs to the parliament (Saeima) of one hundred members elected for three years. A president is elected by the Saeima. Executive power resides with a cabinet, consisting of the prime minister and his appointed ministers, responsible to the Saeima. If the Saeima votes no confidence in the cabinet, it has to resign.

Having completed its mission, the Constituent Assembly dissolved itself in 1922, and elections to the first Saeima were held.

The era of parliamentary government

From 1920 until 1934, the Latvian state was governed by elected representatives. Until 1922, this group of representatives was called the Constituent Assembly, and after that, the Saeima. These years saw the reconstruction and growth of the Latvian state.

In 1922, the Saeima elected Jānis Čakste as Latvia's first president. He remained president until his death in 1927. From 1927 until 1930, the president was Gustavs Zemgals. Both belonged to the Democratic Center party. The third Latvian president, from 1930 to 1936, was Alberts Kviesis, a member of the Agrarian Union. His time in office saw the greatest changes in the functioning of the state.

From 1922 to 1934, while Latvia had three presidents, there were nineteen cabinets of ministers. Each lasted on the average only ten months. The cause of this frequent change in minister cabinets was the large number of parties and groups in the Saeima, which severely hampered cabinet formation and effectiveness. An exceedingly liberal election law allowed virtually any group to submit a list of candidates for Saeima elections. There were four parliamentary elections in all. In 1922, 88 candidate lists were submitted, in 1928 – 141, in 1928 – 120, and in the last elections in democratic Latvia in 1931 – 103. The members of the last Saeima (deputies) represented twenty-seven parties and groups.

The Social Democrats and the Agrarian Union had twenty-one and fourteen deputies respectively, but twelve groups had only one deputy each. As no one party had a majority, coalitions had to be formed with numerous different groups. Every party and group came with its own demands, and coalition formation was derisively called the "party game." Unfortunately, the two largest parties, the Social Democrats and the

Agrarian Union, were not able to work together to form a coalition that would not be dependent on the smaller ones. The Social Democrats, for the most part, found themselves in the opposition. The fragmentation of the parties and their tendency to squabble hurt the Saeima's reputation. Despite all that, the nation's representatives accomplished much in building the Latvian state.

Latvia's first foreign minister, Zigfrīds Meierovics, achieved notable successes in foreign policy. He envisioned close cooperation among Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. On his initiative, representatives from these nations met at a conference in 1920 at Bulduri. It turned out later that cooperation could not be achieved because of intractable obstacles, especially the bitter dispute between Lithuania and Poland, but Latvia itself had good relations with each nation separately. Meierovics' greatest achievement was obtaining the *de jure* recognition of the new Latvian state by England, France, and Italy on January 26, 1921, and by the United States in 1922. Latvia was admitted to the League of Nations in 1921.

The devastation of war had particularly affected agriculture, and much effort was expended to restore it as quickly as possible. The acreage of land under cultivation was increased by the creation of many new farmsteads, and every year saw better harvests and improvements in animal husbandry. At first grain had to be imported, but soon rye and wheat were being exported. Milk production grew tenfold. Butter exports accounted for a large portion of the country's income. Agricultural products constituted the major part of the export trade with countries such as England and Germany.

Similar growth was seen in industry and commerce. The government tried to minimize imports and backed local manufacturing enterprises. In Latvia, the worldwide economic crisis that started in 1929 was soon under control.

The government paid great attention to construction. Homes, railroad lines, and bridges destroyed in the war were rebuilt and new ones constructed, new farms were built in the countryside, and many fine government and public buildings were built in cities and rural areas. The building of new schools received special attention. Memorials honoring those who died in the wars of independence were raised throughout the country, including the Freedom Monument and imposing Cemetery of Brethren in Riga.

Social welfare was also accorded special attention. Progressive laws were passed regarding workmen's compensation, health care, unem-

ployment benefits, and pensions. In this area, Latvia was at the forefront of European nations.

In one's own country, it is possible to experience the fullness of education and the arts. The government realized their importance and supported education and the arts in many ways. The Culture Fund, created in 1920, was used to support not only individual artists, but also libraries, schools, and art academies. From the beginning Riga had a state-supported opera and theaters.

All this was achieved by a people enthusiastic about their hard-won freedom, aware that they were now masters in their own land. All this was achieved with diligence and hard work.

The coup of May 15, 1934

Despite Latvia's great economic and cultural achievements in these years, there were serious shortcomings in its political processes. Many of the political parties and groups were first and foremost concerned only with their own good, not with the well-being and security of the country as a whole. The constant formation and dissolution of minister cabinets was not conducive to strong, effective government. There were also external threats working to overthrow the democratic government – Communists and Nazis, supported by the Soviet Union and Germany.

To overcome these shortcomings and threats, it was necessary to amend the constitution to provide a strong government. In the fall of 1933, Kārlis Ulmanis proposed a constitutional change that would increase the powers of an elected president as well as those of the cabinet of ministers. This attempt to move toward a system closer to that of England and the United States was, however, voted down by the Saeima.

On May 15, 1934, Prime Minister Ulmanis, justifying his actions by the increasing unrest in the populace and the aforementioned threats, declared a state of emergency in Latvia. The Saeima was dismissed until a new constitution could be drafted and its powers were taken over by a new cabinet consisting of members from the largest national parties. The change in the structure of the state was carried out peacefully and affirmed by the president, Alberts Kviesis. The new government was recognized by all other countries and also by Latvia's highest court, the Senats. When Kviesis' term ended on April 11, 1936, Prime Minister Ulmanis also took on the office of president.

May 15, 1934, was the start of an unprecedented upsurge in national feeling and well-being. Economic growth was promoted in the cities

and rural areas, social benefits were increased, education and the arts were subsidized. However, six years later the independent state of Latvia was destroyed during World War II by the invading Soviet army.

World War II and the Soviet invasion of Latvia

To secure his rear in the war being planned against Poland, France, and England, Hitler concluded a nonaggression pact with Stalin on August 23, 1939, known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. The secret protocol and the addendum of September 28 attached to this pact gave the Soviet Union a free hand in Finland and the Baltic states.

Some months later, the British Foreign Minister Halifax stated, "In making this treaty, Mr. Hitler sold that which was not his to sell – the freedom of the Baltic states."

Having bought Stalin's friendship, Hitler attacked Poland on September 1, 1939, starting World War II. All three Baltic states proclaimed their neutrality in this conflict. In reality their fate was already sealed. They had been sold to Moscow.

The Soviet Union immediately started the systematic destruction of the Baltic states, all the while taking care to create the appearance of legality to the outside world. All three Baltic states were first threatened and forced to sign mutual assistance pacts permitting Soviet military bases on their soil. Latvia signed this pact on October 5, 1939. The Soviet Union gained bases in Liepāja, Ventspils, and Pitrags, where they stationed 30,000 troops. The Bolsheviks promised not to interfere in Latvia's internal affairs, but this was the first step in the loss of independence.

Germany's quick and decisive victories in the West in the spring of 1940 were an unpleasant surprise for the Soviet Union. Moscow hurried to get its fair share of the spoils also. The three Baltic states received ultimatums at almost the same time.

Falsely asserting that the Baltic states threatened the Soviet Union, Moscow demanded:

1. the formation of new governments sympathetic to the Soviet Union,
2. entry of an unlimited number of Soviet troops.

Latvia received this ultimatum on June 16, 1940. After considering all options, the government decided not to resist. On June 17, the Soviet army occupied all of Latvia. The independent state of Latvia ceased to exist. The "year of terror" (*Baigais gads*) had started.

With the Soviet Army came Andrey Vishinsky, a special Soviet emissary charged with organizing Latvia's "legal" incorporation into the

Soviet Union. First, he formed a compliant government, headed by Professor Augusts Kirhenšteins. Parliamentary elections were set for July 14–15, with only one list of candidates allowed. Vishinsky formed the list from Communists and others obedient to the Russians. Some nationalist Latvians tried to form a second list of candidates, but the attempt was brutally crushed. Everyone was forced to vote, but there was no choice.

Immediately after these “elections,” on July 20, the new Saeima removed President Kārlis Ulmanis from office. He had been held under house arrest. On July 22 he was deported to Russia, where he died. The Vishinsky show was not yet over. On July 21, 1940, the servile Communist deputies dutifully passed the motion sent over from Moscow requesting that Latvia be annexed to the Soviet Union, which, of course, duly happened.

Soviet power was consolidated in Latvia. Land and businesses were declared to be the “property of the people.” Exactly the same process took place in Estonia and Lithuania. Staging these performances, Moscow wanted to show the world that everything in the Baltic states was happening legally and voluntarily, at least on the surface. But in his hurry, Vishinsky forgot that the Latvian Constitution could not be abrogated by a Saeima resolution alone, but had to be voted on by the people (Constitution of 1922, Paragraph 77). Thus, the Communist efforts to create the appearance of legality were unsuccessful. The United States and a number of other countries refused to recognize the incorporation of Latvia into the Soviet Union.

The plundering of the Latvian economy, the arrests, torture, and executions started immediately. The largest deportations to the far reaches of Russia’s northern and eastern regions took place on the night of June 13–14, 1941. That night, Chekists and their helpers arrested 16,000 people, including old people, women, and children. In the slave camps, families were generally separated. During the “year of terror,” Communists killed or deported into slavery about 36,000 people.

The German occupation

This torturing of an entire nation was interrupted by the German attack on the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. The Germans took Riga on July 1, and soon all of Latvia was liberated from the Communists. The retreating Red Army was also harassed by Latvian partisans. The Latvians hoped that the Germans would restore the Latvian state, but these hopes

were not fulfilled, as the Nazis had their own plans. They wanted to make the Baltic states their colony. With their Nazi methods, the German occupation authorities succeeded in replacing the generally friendly feelings of the populace with shock and hatred. The Latvians were exploited again. In 1943, when things started going badly for the Germans in the East, Hitler ordered the creation of the Latvian Legion and began mobilization. Only about 30,000 of the approximately 150,000 Latvian men mobilized were sent to the two divisions (the 15th and the 19th) of the Latvian Legion; the rest were scattered among various German units. Though fighting with an unwanted ally, Latvian soldiers fought heroically against their greater enemy, the Communists.

With the collapse of the German army, Latvians also had to retreat ever further to the West. In July 1944, there was fighting on Latvian soil. On October 13, the Red Army took Riga. Kurzeme was the last Latvian region to resist, defended by the Latvian 19th Division. The 15th Division was transported to Germany. "Fortress Kurzeme" held out in bitter fighting until Germany's surrender on May 8, 1945.

All of Latvia was once again in the hands of the Communists. Only about 120,000 Latvians succeeded in fleeing to the free world, mainly to Germany and Sweden in 1944 and early 1945.

Many Latvians lost their lives during the German occupation from 1941 to 1945. In 1944, the Gestapo arrested Professor Konstantīns Čakste, son of Latvia's first president and leader of the underground resistance organization, the Latvian Central Council. He, along with many others, died in a concentration camp. The Second World War robbed the Latvians of their country, killed large numbers, caused untold suffering, drove a portion of the populace into exile, and subjected those that remained to Communist servitude.

The return of Soviet power

As of May 8, 1945, all of Latvia was under the Communists. Formally, it was still a separate republic, the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic (LSSR), but in reality it was just a region in the new Russian empire, the Soviet Union. All directives came from Moscow. The destruction of private farms ruined Latvia's agriculture and destroyed the Latvians' traditional way of life, which was based on small individual farms. Farmers became Communist serfs, members of the kolkhozes (collective farms), who owned nothing.

To break the resistance to farm collectivization, "kulaks" (individual

farmers) and “nationalists” were deported on March 25–29, 1949, to the far reaches of the Soviet Union. 42,133 Latvians were deported in this one action. Smaller deportations took place both before and after 1949. Most of those deported returned to Latvia in 1956 and 1957, but 5,073 died before then.

Latvia's economy was planned and dictated from Moscow. Industrialization was accelerated, but most of the goods produced were sent to satisfy the needs of the “vast motherland.” Raw materials and workers were imported from the Soviet Union. This, too, served Moscow's political aims of Russifying the Latvians and turning Latvia into a Russian province. In 1989 Latvians were only 52% of the population. The black deeds of the occupying powers and the consequences of those deeds are the subjects of this book's subsequent chapters.

The collapse of the Soviet Union

After seventy years, the dictatorship of the Communist Party, born in the blood of the Russian revolution and maintained by false ideology and terror, was morally and economically bankrupt. The last dictator of the USSR, Mikhail Gorbachev, tried to save the unsavable with deceit. Neither “glasnost” nor “perestroika” helped. In words, Gorbachev called for revolutionary reforms, but in his actions he tried to strengthen Moscow's centralism and save the absurd Soviet system. As the Swedish newspaper *Svenska Dagbladet* (The Swedish Daily) wrote on December 19, 1991: “A totalitarian regime, which controlled all means of power and was not threatened from abroad, collapsed from the inside in about three years, almost without bloodshed.”

The Balts showed the larger nations of the USSR the way out of the “prison of peoples.” The “third awakening” or “singing revolution” in Latvia started on June 14, 1987, when demonstrators led by Eva Biteniece and Rolands Silaraups gathered at the Freedom Monument in Riga. Subsequently, the newly-elected Latvian Supreme Council voted to renew the Republic of Latvia after a transition period. The situation in Riga grew critical in January, 1991, the days of the barricades. Changes in the USSR reached their culmination in the unsuccessful Moscow coup. On August 21, 1991, the Latvian Supreme Council declared the Republic of Latvia to be an independent sovereign republic, based on the Constitution of 1922. The circle was complete.

LATVIA'S ACHIEVEMENTS, 1918-1940

When the new state of Latvia signed a peace treaty with the Soviet Union and Germany in 1920 after having driven out its enemies, the entire country was completely devastated. Industrial equipment had been removed to Russia during the First World War, buildings, especially in the war zones, had been burnt down and domestic animals slaughtered, many hectares of farmland lay fallow, part of the population was still in Russia as refugees, and thousands of Latvians had lost their lives to war and illness. Of 2.5 million inhabitants in 1914, there were only 1.6 million left.

Reconstruction started quickly. Heeding the invitation of the Latvian government, some of the refugees returned to Latvia. Despite the Latvian government's requests, the industrial machinery was not returned from Russia. The economy had to be restructured on different bases. Having separated from Russia, Latvia now looked to the West for its economic development. Soon England, Germany, and even markets on other continents more than replaced the Russian market, and Latvia's goods became highly respected in the West.

Latvia developed an economic system based mainly on the principles of private property and private initiative. Individuals and companies could own commercial and industrial enterprises, and also land. The state assumed ownership of all railroads, almost all forests, many of the larger factories, and the main banks. Radical agrarian reform laws expropriated almost all (about 98%) of the land belonging to the landed gentry, which was immediately distributed to the landless as their property with no encumbrances.

Agriculture

During the war, from 1914 to 1920, 10% of the total number of farm buildings was destroyed and 14% was partially destroyed, 25% of arable land was left fallow, harvests fell, and the number of domestic animals shrank. Carrying out the agrarian reform required many resources. These were created by the industriousness of the Latvian farmer for the renewal and rational development of agriculture in Latvia. Not only were the destroyed buildings rebuilt, but new buildings were constructed for the

many new farmsteads: in 1920 there were 692,000 farm buildings, by 1930 an additional 355,000 new buildings (50% of the 1920 total) had been built, and from 1930 to 1937, an additional 86,000. The value of new farm buildings constructed in these 16-17 years was about 730 million lats (US \$150 million).

The state supported agriculture in many ways, including granting farmers credit and promoting agricultural exports. During the worldwide depression from 1930 to 1933 and also later, when world prices for agricultural products fell, the state guaranteed prices for farmers' products. Agricultural production and exports rose, which also helped raise the standard of living for the nation.

From 1909 to 1913, under the Russians, the total grain harvest averaged 815,500 metric tons a year, but from 1934 to 1938 it was on the average 50% higher, 1,245,000 m.t. In the same time period, the potato harvest grew from 639,000 to 1,610,000 m.t. a year, an increase of a million tons. Sugar beets were introduced and became an important crop. In the years just before the Second World War, Latvia was almost self-sufficient in sugar and grains. From 1934 to 1938, the average yield of rye on one hectare was 47% higher than from 1909 to 1913, the yield of winter wheat was 21% higher, and that of potatoes was 63% higher.

The number of horses fell from 320,000 in 1913 to only 261,000 in 1920, then grew to 400,000 in 1938. For cattle, the figures were 912,000, 768,000, and 1,224,000 respectively. Milk production rose from 618,000 m.t. in 1920 and 1921 to 1,668,000 m.t. in 1937 and 1938. Meat production went from 98,000 m.t. in 1923 and 1924, to 168,000 m.t. in 1936 and 1937.

Rye and wheat production per inhabitant grew from 150 kg per year in the years 1909-1913 to 280 kg per year in the years 1934-1938. Milk production per inhabitant grew from 360 kg in 1920-21 to 840 kg in 1937-38. The increase in agricultural production was the more notable since the number of farmers from 1920 to 1935 remained essentially the same, about 1.2 million. Farmers found markets for larger quantities of their products in Latvia's cities and abroad. Butter exports grew from zero to 23,457 m.t. in 1938, with a value of 54 million lats, a quarter of the value of all exports.

At the time when the collectivization of agriculture was creating famine in Soviet Russia, the free farmers in the small country of Latvia increased yields significantly. Comparing 1928 and 1930 with 1934 and 1938, the grain harvest grew by 400,000 m.t. (a 50% increase), the potato yield by 800,000 m.t. (100%), and sugar beet production by 250,000

m.t. The number of cattle increased by 24%, pigs by 54%, sheep by 38%, horses by 8%. Milk production grew from 1,160,000 m.t. in 1927 and 1928 to 1,668,000 m.t. in 1937 and 1938. Meat production grew from 113,000 m.t. in 1930 and 1931 to 168,000 m.t. in 1936 and 1937, an increase of 50%. Most farms, 275,500 or 66%, were of medium size, from 5 to 50 hectares.

In Latvia, this was a time when agricultural production, food product consumption, and the standard of living rose significantly. The main increases in consumption were of milk products and meat. In the two years from 1934 and 1936, Latvia went from being a grain importer to a grain exporter.

Industry

When the war ended in 1920, Latvian industry employed only 21,000 workers, down from 93,000 in 1910. Increased agricultural production, higher farm income and standard of living, import restrictions on industrial goods, and export subsidies all combined to increase industrial employment to 50,000 in 1925 and 63,000 in 1930. After a short interruption in the pace of development during the world-wide economic depression, industrial employment reached 99,000 in 1938, five times the number in 1920.

Industrial capacity also increased. Generator capacity grew from 49,000 horsepower in 1922 to 194,000 in 1937, while electric engine capacity increased from 13,000 horsepower to 107,000.

Latvia's population increased by 25%, from 1.6 million in 1920 to 2 million in 1937, as a result of the return of refugees from Russia and natural population growth. In the same years, employment in trade and industry increased from 61,000 to 205,000, an increase of 235%. The inescapable conclusion is that the development of Latvian industry was strong and there was no unemployment. In fact, Latvia seasonally brought in 50,000 farm workers from Poland and Lithuania to fill the rural labor shortage.

Capital investment

During the years of Latvia's first period of independence, many resources were invested in construction in both the private and public sectors. In the first ten years (1920 to 1930), 10 million cubic meters of lumber from state forests were used for new construction and the rebuilding of war-damaged buildings.

In the fourteen years from 1926 to 1939, the number of city housing units grew by 58,000 (deducting the units in housing torn down). An additional 8,000 buildings of various types were constructed in cities during that same time period. The years just before the Second World War saw the construction of the Ķegums power station, with a projected capacity of 100,000 horsepower and a cost of approximately 60 million lats.

The Justice Building (costing 2.5 million lats), the Finance Ministry (6.3 million lats), and the War Museum were among the monumental governmental buildings built in Riga. Governmental building also took place in Daugavpils, Jelgava, and other cities. The high rate of construction in the years 1936-1939 was facilitated by the increase in the production of building material. Cement production increased from 49,629 m.t. in 1932 to 154,621 m.t. in 1938. Demand for cement was so great that a second cement factory was built in 1936-1938, and large amounts still had to be imported. Brick production increased from 47.4 million pieces in 1932 to 126 million in 1938.

During Latvia's first period of independence, 864 kilometers of railroad lines were built, as well as a large number of highways and roads.

Exports and imports

Increases in production meant increased trade with other countries: import and export of goods rose from 360,000 m.t. in 1921 to 3,215,000 m.t. in 1927. Trade between Latvia and the rest of the world was brisk. Latvia exported agricultural and wood products and manufactured goods. It imported machines, raw materials, coal, and consumer goods. In 1930, the value of exports per inhabitant in Latvia was 130 lats; in Lithuania, the figure was 74 lats, in Poland - 45, in the Soviet Union - 17, in Hungary - 96, in Spain - 99, in Portugal - 23, and in Italy - 80 lats.

Roads and transport

During Latvia's first period of independence, 864 kilometers of new railroad lines were built, and the number of locomotives and cars was greatly increased. The tonnage of good transported rose concomitantly. In 1919 Latvia had only a few private automobiles, but in 1938 there were 5,829. The pre-war merchant fleet had a total tonnage of 88,000;

only 10% (8,916 m.t.) was left in 1920, growing to 123,286 in 1931 and almost 200,000 in 1939.

Standard of living

The Latvian government guaranteed high prices for agricultural products. As a result, yields of grain, milk, meat, etc. increased rapidly, and everyone in Latvia had enough to eat. Comparing 1926 and 1927 to 1936 and 1937, yearly consumption of various products by an adult male city-dweller increased as follows: butter consumption from 10.4 kg to 16.2 kg (a 56% increase), cream – from 2.6 kg to 8.2 kg, milk – from 177 kg to 204 kg, meat – from 63 kg to 70 kg, wheat bread – 48 kg to 54 kg, wheat flour – from 13 kg to 17.3 kg. Consumption of fish, sugar, sweets, vegetables, and fruit also rose. Consumption of precisely the most expensive foodstuffs – meat, milk products, wheat bread – rose the most.

Food product consumption in rural areas also increased. Comparing 1927 and 1932 to 1937 and 1938, yearly consumption of various products by a rural inhabitant over 15 years of age increased as follows: wheat consumption from 29 kg to 88 kg, whole milk – from 303 kg to 345 kg, butter – from 9.6 kg to 12.4 kg, meat – from 73.7 kg to 81.7 kg, eggs – from 69 to 100.

Before the Second World War, Latvia had one of highest level of meat and milk product consumption in Europe and the world. In 1935 and 1936, average meat consumption (excluding poultry and game) per person in Latvia was 84.8 kg. For the years 1930 to 1934, the figure for Belgium was 41 kg, Denmark – 57 kg, New Zealand – 107 kg, and Great Britain – 64 kg. Milk product consumption per person for the same years was as follows: Latvia – 566 liters, Denmark – 417 liters, Belgium – 341 liters, Great Britain – 403 liters, Norway – 446 liters, USA – 368 liters.

Compared to some other countries, Latvia had much lower consumption of eggs, sugar, vegetables, and fruits. For example, sugar consumption per person in Latvia was 22.2 kg, while in Denmark it was 54 kg. Latvians consumed 76 eggs per person, while the Belgians consumed 236.

Purchasing power rose dramatically, especially in the last years of the first period of independence, since food prices in Latvia's cities in 1936 and 1937 were much lower than a decade earlier. In 1936 and

1937, working families were able to buy more food for fewer lats than in 1926 and 1927. In numerical terms, wages stayed essentially the same during that time period.

In the spring of 1940, average yearly wages for a young male farm worker were 600 lats (besides free room and board), while for a female worker they were 460 lats. With his wages, the young male could buy 400 kg of fresh pork, eight of the cheapest wool suits, or thirty pairs of shoes, since prices in Riga at that time were as follows: fresh pork – 1.50 lats, cheapest wool suit – 75 lats, cheapest pair of shoes – 20 lats.

Until 1939, all income less than 2,000 lats per year was not taxed.

Latvia's achievements compared with the Soviet Union

The most striking picture of Latvia's achievements is given by comparing them with those of its much larger neighbor, the Soviet Union. Before World War II, Latvia was a country with 2 million inhabitants and an area of 65,791 km², while the Soviet Union had 170.5 million inhabitants and an area of 21.4 million km². The Soviet Union was 324 times as large as Latvia in area, with a population 85 times as large.

Economic data for two countries can be accurately compared only if it is converted to per capita figures. To equal Latvia, Russia would have to show production figures at least 85 times as large as Latvia's.

From 1933 to 1937, per hectare yield of all grains in Russia was 910 kg; in Latvia, it was 1,230 kg – higher by 35%. The yearly per hectare potato yield in Russia was 8,700 kg in 1933, and 9,600 kg in 1937. Corresponding figures for Latvia were 13,500 kg and 14,000 kg. Sugar beet harvests in Russia were 13,800 kg per hectare in the years from 1934 to 1938, while in Latvia they were 20,000 kg. Thus, in per hectare terms, both potato and sugar beet harvests were about 50% higher in Latvia than Russia.

In per capita terms, yields of grain (rye, wheat, oats, and peas; also corn and others in Russia) were about the same in the two countries: from 1934 to 1938, 600 kg in Russia, 630 kg in Latvia. Per capita potato production in Latvia was more than twice that of Russia. In 1933, sugar beet production in Latvia was twice that of Russia, but by 1937 it had fallen to about the same level: 100 kg per capita in Russia, 140 kg in Latvia.

Even though Russia had much greater land area, on a per capita basis Latvia had twice as many farm animals (excluding sheep) as Russia.

There were great differences not only in the number of animals, but also in their quality and productivity. In 1937 and 1938, a cow in Latvia gave on the average 1,900 kg milk, but a cow in the USSR kolkhozes gave only 1,100 kg, about half as much.

In 1932, two years after the start of "total collectivization" in Russia, per capita meat production in Latvia was five times that of Russia, and in 1938, four times that of Russia. In those same years, milk production in Latvia was five to six times that of Russia, and wool production 70 to 100% greater. Even though in 1938 the population of Russia was 85 times that of Latvia, milk production that year was only 17 times greater than that of Latvia (in Latvia, 1.7 million m.t.; in Russia, 28.9 million m.t.).

Latvia was able to produce great quantities of butter. Production in 1938 was 29,661 m.t., about 15 kg per inhabitant. That same year Russia, on the other hand, produced only 197,700 m.t. of butter, only slightly more than 1 kg per inhabitant!

The standard of living in Latvia and the Soviet Union

In 1937, per capita consumption of meat in Latvia was about 85 kg; in 1938, the figure for Russia was only about 21 kg. Meat consumption in Latvia was four to six times that of Russia. In 1938, per capita consumption of fish in Russia was about 9 kg, in Latvia – about 13 kg. Even though a large proportion of Latvia's milk production was exported as butter, milk consumption in Latvia in 1936 was 566 liters. In Russia in 1938, it was three to four times less. The per capita potato harvest in Russia was half that of Latvia. Sugar consumption in Russia in 1938 was 15 kg per inhabitant. In Latvia in 1937, it was 23 kg.

Anonymous, in *Latvju Domas [Latvian Thoughts]*, March 1947.



Agusts Balodis

SOVIET MILITARY BASES IN THE BALTIC STATES

The Soviet Union wasted no time in making use of the opportunities given it by the treaty with Hitler. Relations between Estonia and the USSR had not been particularly good since 1938, and they deteriorated even further after the German attack on the USSR. The Soviet Union increased the intensity of its military pressure on Estonia by naval actions in the Gulf of Finland.

The interned Polish submarines were ordered to sail from Tallinn. In September 1939, a new treaty between Estonia and the USSR was due to be signed. On Molotov's request, Estonia's Foreign Minister Karl Selter arrived in Moscow on September 24 to sign the new treaty.

During the talks, after discussing some general questions, Molotov pointed out that relations between the two countries were not good, since the Estonian government was unable to maintain order and security in its own country, as shown by the escape of the *Greif*. Therefore, the USSR proposed the immediate conclusion of a mutual assistance pact which would give the USSR air and naval bases on Estonian territory. That same evening, Molotov presented Selter with a finished draft of the pact that included not just air and naval bases, but also army bases, saying:

The situation requires an immediate solution. We cannot wait. I advise you to accede to the wishes of the Soviet Union in order to avoid something worse [...]. Do not depend on England or Germany [...]. Do not compel us to use force in order to achieve our aims!

Selter declined to discuss the matter further without consulting his government. He returned to Tallinn via Riga, but did not inform the Latvian government of the events, even though this was stipulated in the Latvian-Estonian Treaty of Alliance. Latvia's Foreign Minister Vilhelms Munters behaved exactly the same way towards Lithuania when it was Latvia's turn. However, when flying for the second time out of Riga to Moscow on September 27, Selter encountered Estonia's ambassador, Benas, and asked him to inform the Latvian government of the Russian

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demands and the progress of the talks in Moscow. After consulting with Munters, Rebane sent a note to Selter in Moscow informing him that the previous evening he informed the Latvian foreign minister about relations with the Soviet Union, Russian demands, and Estonia's viewpoint. Munters promised to inform the president. Later Munters responded that Latvia understood Estonia's actions, and if she were to get into a similar situation, it would be hard to imagine what else to do but sign such a treaty.

The Soviet demands created deep unrest in the Estonian government. The army was not ready to fight, and President Konstatin Päts could see no other possibilities than talks with Molotov to avert the threat to the Estonian state. In the meantime, to heighten the tension still further, the Soviets fabricated the incident with the steamer *Metallist*, supposedly torpedoed and sunk in the Gulf of Luga, near Narva. The number of overflights by Soviet planes increased markedly, adding to the feeling of unease. In this tense atmosphere, the Estonian delegation arrived for talks in Moscow. At the very beginning Molotov insisted on the right to garrison 35,000 air force, navy, and army troops on Estonian territory. When Stalin joined the conference, he "agreed" to reduce the number to 25,000. They would be stationed in bases on the islands of Saaremaa and Hiiumaa and at the port of Paldiski. Further demands were made for airfields in the interior.

During the talks, Stalin particularly emphasized that Estonia had no need to fear Soviet garrisons: "We assure you that the Soviet Union does not want to affect Estonia's sovereignty, government, political or economic system, internal affairs or foreign policy in any way "

This promise is written into article 5 of the mutual assistance pact, which was signed on September 28, 1939. The Soviet Union demanded that Estonia ratify it within six day without debate by parliament, and Päts did so.

On Molotov's request, Munters also arrived in Moscow for talks. The conference in the Kremlin started October 2 at 9:30 pm, with Stalin, Molotov, Potemkin, Zotov, Munters, and Kociņš attending. Protocols of the talks of October 2nd and 3rd are available, and give good insight into Russian tactics.

Stalin's introductory words are significant:

Twenty years have passed; we are stronger, and you too are stronger. We want to discuss airfields and military defense. We do not impose on you our constitution, administrative organs, min-

istries, foreign policy, financial policy, or economic system. Our demands are necessitated by Germany's war with France and England.

If we can agree, there are good prospects for commercial and economic transactions. [...] The states of Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland have already disappeared from the map. Others may also disappear.

[...] That which was agreed on in 1920 cannot remain for eternity. Peter the Great saw to it that we had an outlet to the sea. We are now without such an outlet, and this situation cannot continue [...].

Later in the conference, Stalin said that the Germans had asked that Latvia be divided along the Daugava, but the Soviet Union could not agree to such a division of one people's area of inhabitation. Naval and air bases in Liepāja, Ventspils, and along the Lithuanian border, as well as fortified coast artillery installations between Ventspils and Pitrags, were necessary for the security of the USSR.

Munters tried to object that the USSR had a nonaggression pact with Germany and all problems were solvable within the framework of existing treaties, as two friends, Germany and the USSR, ruled the Baltic. The Russians dismissed these objections: "You have nothing to fear. Your riflemen were good, and your army is better than Estonia's. [...] Garrisons will be necessary only in case of war."

During the talks, the Russians in general avoided outright threats, although at the end they did ask for a positive answer within 48 hours. Munters "bargained" the size of the garrisoned troops down from 40,000 to 30,000. The mutual assistance pact was signed on October 5, 1938, and included in article 5 the same promises regarding the inviolability of sovereignty as in Estonia's pact. On October 30, the first Red Army units entered Latvia.

On October 2, Lithuania's Foreign Minister Juozas Urbšys in turn arrived in Moscow for talks. Stalin and Molotov suggested a treaty be signed:

1. About the return of the city and region of Vilnius to Lithuania.
2. Conclusion of a mutual assistance pact allowing 50,000 to 60,000 Soviet troops to be garrisoned at strategic places around Lithuania.
3. The return of the western part of the Mariampole region to Germany.

Germany and the Soviet Union had already agreed on the third point. (In this case, Stalin had no objections to the division of a people's land.) This point was a deliberate indiscretion and a ploy by Molotov to paint Germany as an aggressor and thief, while the Soviet Union in the name of justice would give Lithuania back its ancient capital.

On Urbšys' request, the German ambassador in Kaunas explained that the agreement mentioned "had long since ceased to be a pressing matter" (*schon lange unter den Tisch gefallen*). Ribbentrop, on the other hand, instructed the German ambassador to ask that Molotov not bring the question up in these talks but later reach an agreement directly with Germany about the date of the occupation.

Molotov also squeezed the maximum propaganda effect out of the first point of the treaty, the return of Vilnius to Lithuania, whose function was to sweeten up the unpleasant demands of the other paragraphs. In fact, he ignored earlier treaties. If Lithuania had followed Germany's invitation, she would have been able to take over the Vilnius area herself, as stated in the 1920 peace treaty between Lithuania and the USSR. Now Molotov, in a grand gesture, gave Lithuania about a third of this territory, or 6,665.5 km² with 522,000 inhabitants. Soviet propaganda incessantly trumpeted this supposedly unique situation in international affairs, when a large and powerful state gave stolen regions back to a small state "without counterclaims."

In fact, however, the USSR broke the 1920 peace treaty even while claiming to honor it. That treaty already defined the border with the Soviet Union. Later, to sweeten the bitter pill when Lithuania was being incorporated into the Soviet Union, Belorussian representatives promised to give Lithuania back an additional 7,500 km² with 300,000 mostly Lithuanian inhabitants. After the incorporation this promise was changed, and the Lithuanian SSR was given 2,618 km² with 82,000 inhabitants. Thus, the USSR in fact never did return the entire Vilnius region to Lithuania as promised in the 1920 treaty.

The Lithuanians objected to the bases and resisted allowing in the Red Army until October 9. But they too could not convince the Russians to drop their demands, and they did not want war. On October 19, 1939, at 10:00 pm, Urbšys signed the "mutual nonaggression and assistance pact" with the Soviet Union for Lithuania. The size of the Soviet forces to be garrisoned in Lithuania was set at 20,000 men.

While the Soviet Union had written in each of these pacts that it did not aim to curtail that country's sovereignty, influence its internal affairs or foreign policy, or interfere in its economic affairs, in the fall of 1939

maps of the Baltics were printed for the Red Army with the designations "Latvian SSR" and "Lithuanian SSR." On October 11, while the foreign commissar of the USSR was holding a banquet in the Kremlin in honor of the Lithuanian delegation, the NKVD issued top secret Order No. 001223, about identifying and later deporting anti-Soviet elements from the Baltic states.

Finland's foreign policy had been oriented towards Scandinavia, but this did not save it from the USSR's ultimatum-like demand on October 5 to sent its representatives to Moscow "to discuss concrete political questions." The Soviet Union had already earlier expressed interest in several islands in the Gulf of Finland, so the Finnish delegate J. K. Paasikivi had some idea of what the Russian demands would be. However, the demands were much larger than the Finns anticipated. Before the talks started on October 12, the Scandinavian countries and the United States tried to help Finland through diplomatic means, but this help meant little in Moscow. Participating in the talks were Paasikivi, Finland's ambassador to Moscow Yrjö Koskinen, Stalin, and Molotov. Molotov said the theme of the talks would be political and economic questions (a new trade agreement between Finland and the USSR was also due to be signed). Then Molotov asked if Finland would have any objections to concluding a mutual assistance pact with the Soviet Union, as the Baltic states had done. Moscow's demands were as follows:

1. Finland would lease the Hango Peninsula to the USSR for 30 years, also giving it rights to use the port of Lappvik. Hango would have a navy base with a garrison of no more than 5,000 men, consisting of 1 tank company, 1 rifle company, 2 air force squadrons, and 1 antiaircraft defense squadron.
2. Finland would return the outer islands of the Gulf of Finland, including Hogland and Björkö, to the Soviet Union.
3. Finland's border in the Karelian Isthmus, which at its closest was 35 km from Leningrad, would be pushed back at least to 70 km.
4. All fortifications along both sides of the border would be destroyed.
5. The Soviet Union desired to take over the Finnish part of the Rybachiy Peninsula in the Arctic Ocean (in the Petsamo region).
6. A clause would have to be added to the nonaggression pact, forbidding either side to join any grouping of countries or alliances against the USSR or Finland.

The land area asked of Finland by the Soviet Union totaled 2,761 km². In return, the Soviet government was prepared to give Finland an area of 5,529 km² in Eastern Karelia, north Lake Ladoga, in the districts of Repola and Porajarvi. If these proposals were agreed to, the Soviet Union would raise no objections to the fortification of the island of Åland.

During the talks, Stalin emphasized that the newly-concluded treaties with the Baltic states did not threaten their sovereignty in any way. Paasikivi pointed out that he would be able to give an answer to the Soviet proposals and demands only after consulting with his government. To answer the questions the way the USSR desired would require a 5/6 majority in the Finnish parliament. At that Stalin and Molotov laughed, "You will certainly get a 99% majority and our votes to boot!"

The Finnish government was divided on the Soviet proposals and demands. While Paasikivi, Marshal Gustav Mannerheim, and the Social Democratic leader Väinö Tanner advocated continuing the talks and above all trying to reach an agreement, Foreign Minister Erko and Defense Minister Niukkanen considered any compromise impossible and Stalin's demands only an attempt at extortion.

The most difficult demands to accept were the leasing of the Hango Peninsula and the border corrections in the Karelian Isthmus. The Finns also did not want to conclude the mutual assistance and nonaggression pact, as that would just give the USSR reason to interfere in the foreign policy and internal affairs of Finland. Finally the government agreed to a counterproposal: to give the Soviet Union five islands in the Gulf of Finland (Seiskari, Penisari, Lavansari, and Large and Small Tittersari) in return for compensation, and to straighten out the Kuokkala curve of the border in the Karelian Isthmus, which would increase the distance to Leningrad to 45 km. At the same time, the Finnish government tried to clarify Sweden's stance in the case of war with the Soviet Union.

The talks resumed in the Kremlin on October 23, this time also including Tanner on the Finnish side. Paasikivi immediately protested strongly against the Soviet overflights of Finnish territory. Stalin promised to investigate the incident, but he was not at all happy with the new Finnish proposals.

His basic demands were the leasing the Hango Peninsula and the border question in Karelia: "Finland is small and weak [...]. You are not strong enough, even if you would want to, to hinder the forces of a large power landing on your shores."

Tanner pointed out that relations between Finland and the Soviet Union were regulated by the 1920 peace treaty of Reval. Molotov's

answer was similar to Stalin's reply to Munters: "You cannot expect that the situation of 1920 would be applicable to us now and that the Russia of today would be satisfied with the 1920 agreement."

Later Molotov lifted the requirement to conclude a mutual assistance pact and agreed to reduce the Hango garrison to 4,000 men. With these new developments, Paasikivi left for Helsinki.

The Finnish government continued to debate various options, but as a whole did not want to accede to these Soviet demands either. They weighed Finland's chances in case of military conflict. Opinions were divided about this question. On October 26, Tanner wrote a personal letter to his Swedish party colleague and Sweden's Prime Minister Per Albert Hansson, asking him to spell out Sweden's viewpoint in the question of relations. On October 27 Hansson replied that "the overall viewpoint is that Sweden should not do anything that would involve it in a conflict." Sweden did not want to get into a conflict with the Soviet Union over Åland, Hango, or the Karelian border. Help to Finland could only be diplomatic. Sweden observed these basic principles during the entire war, even though the Finns received significant amounts of humanitarian and also military help from them.

The majority of Finland's government rejected the idea of military bases in Hango or elsewhere in Finland's territory. Similarly, acceding to the USSR's demands regarding the Karelian Isthmus was unimaginable, and there could be no talk of destroying the fortifications. With this government resolution and some minor concessions, Paasikivi left for Moscow on October 31. A large number of people gathered at the Helsinki station, singing "A Mighty Fortress is Our God." By Viipuri (the Russians now call it Vyborg, from a czarist-era name) the delegates received a telegram from Foreign Minister Erko, informing them that Molotov had read the Soviet Union's demands of Finland in a session of the Supreme Soviet. That could only mean that the Soviet Union regarded the talks as having in fact concluded and was not prepared to draw back from its demands. After a short interruption, the delegation nevertheless continued on the way to Moscow.

On November 3, the delegation was received at the Kremlin. Stalin did not participate in this meeting. Molotov, of course, was in no way satisfied with the Finnish viewpoint and proposals. He ended the meeting with the words: "This question has now been considered by civil institutions, and since agreement was not reached, the question has to be given to military institutions for resolution."

The next day, the Finnish delegation was nevertheless again invited

to the Kremlin. Stalin agreed to modify some of the demands, satisfying himself with a navy base on the islands by Hango and slightly less dislocation of the border in Karelia, but as the Finnish government overall did not want to accept foreign bases on its territory, the delegation after several unsuccessful attempts at making contact saw no other solution but to leave Moscow, which they did on November 13.

Note:

This episode showed the cynicism of the leaders of the USSR in its most extreme form. At the head of one of the largest countries in the world was a criminal government, which considered only "brute force" to be the basis of international relations. Under cover of a perverse ideology, it promised to lead humanity through a "bloodbath" into Communist "bliss."



Aivars Pētersons

HOW THE RED ARMY OCCUPIED LATVIA

The Baltic states' singular geopolitical situation, characterized by land and sea routes crossing between East and West, has often caused these states to serve as battlegrounds of war. The most important of these states is Latvia, with its harbors that do not freeze over. During the Russian Empire, the harbors were a sure route for about 30% of Russia's exports and imports. In both world wars of the twentieth century, the front lines stayed on Latvian soil for years, and bloody front line struggles continued up to the end of the Second World War, when the relatively small Kurzeme Peninsula became "Fortress Kurzeme" and paralyzed almost the entire Soviet Baltic Fleet.

In the years leading up to the Second World War, the Baltic states' large neighbors repeatedly planned and prepared for an attack on the recently independent Baltic states. The brazen division of the Baltics into spheres of influence was recorded in the infamous secret protocol of the treaty between Germany and the Soviet Union on August 23, 1939, the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. In reality, however, the planning and practice invasions took place much earlier.

Documents about these plans are still being hidden in the KGB archives, but some can be found in other high-level government archives. A good example is the Molotov-Ribbentrop protocol itself and documents about the massacre of Polish officers by the NKVD (*Narodny Kommissariat Vnutrennikh Del*, People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) at the beginning of 1941. Copies of some of these documents survived in the archives of the History Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry and in the Russian Navy archives. Several Russian and foreign historians have been able to see them.

The most significant document about the Soviet Union's plans in the Baltics known to the author at this time is the interrogation protocol of Deputy Defense Minister Marshal Mikhail Tukhachevsky, deputy to Minister of Defense (then called People's Commissar) Kliment Voroshilov. Tukhachevsky was arrested in May 1937. In the interrogation protocol, he sets forth Soviet strategy and analyzes operational plans.

The marshal lists them: first, wage war only on foreign territory; second, carry out only intervention (invasion) operations, and he calls these forces precisely and unmistakably intervention armies; third, make concrete calculations. He confirms that strategic staff exercises included tests of these kinds of plans in April 1936 and January 1937. The exercises showed that an invasion would only be a success if the "limitrofs" (as the Baltic states were called in the Soviet jargon of the 1920s and 30s) were decisively and completely destroyed beforehand. The marshal repeatedly stressed the great strategic importance of the harbors and surrounding areas of Riga, Ventspils, Liepāja and Tallinn (Reval).

Marshal Tukhachevsky was shot on Stalin's orders on June 11, 1937. His plans and calculations were taken over by Stalin himself, who gave orders to carry them out. One has to note that Tukhachevsky erred in thinking that the main goal of the German attack in the next war would be Kiev, not Moscow. This was opposite to the view held by the second most prominent Soviet strategist, General J. Uborevich, who had spent over a year studying at the German war academy and correctly judged what the Germans would do. Thus, since those days before the war, the Soviet Union based its plans on an erroneous strategic theory, which was one reason for its crushing defeat on the Eastern front in 1941.

Prelude to war

The idea of an invasion of the Baltic states gained shape in the plan of 1938. It had a trial run that year in October, when the Soviet Union mobilized in response to the Czechoslovakian crisis and army groups were formed against the Baltic states and Poland. These army groups are described in detail in Volume 2 of *The History of the Second World War* (Moscow, 1974). On June 26, the military districts of Belorussia and Kiev were reorganized as special military districts.

In Belorussia, the district closest to the Baltics, two army operations groups were formed, which were to be ready for war on September 1. The main command post was set up at Proskurov, near the Ukrainian border. Headed by General Semyon Timoshenko, it was under the direct command of Moscow.

The Vitebsk army group took up battle-ready positions facing Latvia. It consisted of the Polotsk group (4th Rifle Corps, 5th and 50th Rifle Divisions, and 18th Tank Brigade) along Latvia's border north of the Daugava, the Lapela group (27th Rifle Division, 24th Cavalry Division, and 16th Tank Brigade) along the south bank of the Daugava, and also

the 67th Rifle Division in the Opochka region opposite Abrene and Kārsava. The 67th Rifle Division came from the newly-formed Kalinin Military District, which was, in fact, designated to be the command center for the Baltic Military District. It was officially made such in Riga on July 11, 1940.

On Voroshilov's orders, these units took up their initial positions on September 21, and two days later they were put on full alert, as were all air bases and airports.

In all, one tank corps, thirty rifle divisions, ten cavalry divisions, seven tank brigades, one motorized rifle brigade, and twelve air brigades (equivalent to air divisions), a very powerful anti-aircraft group, as well as support groups, were on full battle alert. Eight air regiments (548 airplanes) were ready to transfer to Czechoslovakia's airfields. To reach the requisite numbers of personnel, partial mobilization was ordered and demobilization of those currently serving in the armed forces was suspended.

Also, on September 29, an additional seventeen rifle divisions, twenty-two tank brigades, three motorized rifle brigades, and thirty-four air bases were deployed in the Leningrad, newly-formed Kalinin (Baltic) and Belorussian Military Districts. Thus, in this short time, the Soviet Union's strategic reserves were deployed in full alert from the country's western border to the Volga and the Urals. A second line of defense consisted of an additional thirty rifle divisions, six cavalry divisions, and two tank corps.

Czechoslovakia lost its independence on October 1, 1938. However, the army groups remained deployed along the Soviet border until October 25, when it was no longer possible to support them in the field and the political situation in Central Europe changed. In 1938, this military campaign did not take place. The world was less troubled by Czechoslovakia's fate than by the Red Army's march of "liberation" in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the Baltics.

The start of the invasion

In 1939, some small changes were made in the plans, but the main points were kept. From May 15 to August 31, the Soviet Union fought against Japan in Mongolia near Kalkhin-Gol, but the significant events occurred after the August 23 treaty between Germany and the Soviet Union with its secret protocols about spheres of influence. Latvia was included in the Soviet sphere of influence.

After August 23, the cascade of events became an avalanche. First on the agenda was Poland. The Germans invaded on September 1, and the Soviets on September 17. The war in Poland had not yet ended (Warsaw surrendered on September 28) when late at night on September 25, Stalin summoned the German ambassador in Moscow, Werner von Schulenburg, and the representative of the Estonian government to demand from the latter that the Red Army and navy be allowed into Estonia.

At the same time, various provocations were staged on the Estonian border to soften up the Estonian government. Flagrantly violating international norms, several Soviet warships entered territorial waters along the Estonian coast and fired several rounds to make sure they were noticed. Powerful Soviet air force units flew into Estonian airspace around Narva.

To avoid starting a war, the Estonian government had to issue a special directive to its anti-aircraft defense forces to hold fire. To further intimidate the Estonians, the Soviet merchant ship *Metallist* was sunk in coastal waters by a submarine and a torpedo boat. The Soviets accused the Estonian government of the sinking and threatened to unilaterally bring in the Soviet army. Voroshilov's order to start war on September 29 has been found in the Soviet archives. On September 28, under duress from these threats, the Estonian government gave permission for the Soviet army to enter Estonia.

The next day, Latvia's representative was summoned to Moscow. Latvia's Foreign Minister Vilhelms Munters signed a similar document on October 5, and Lithuania's minister on October 10. Then Finland's foreign minister was called to the Kremlin. The demands were similar, but Finland's minister acted like a diplomat of a truly independent state. He left Moscow only on November 13, having refused Moscow's demands. That was a shock to the Kremlin. With great presence of mind, the Finns used that time to build up their defenses.

Plans to occupy Finland had been worked out by March 1939 under the direction of General Kiril Meretskov. Troop deployment took only two weeks. To justify the aggression, on November 26 near the border by Mainila a special NKVD unit fired seven cannon shots at its own troops from hidden positions, resulting in the death of four Red Army soldiers and injuries to nine. Moscow immediately broke the non-aggression pact with Finland and recalled its ambassador from Helsinki.

On November 30, without a declaration of war, the Soviet Union bombed Finland's larger cities, and that night Soviet troops invaded the country.

So started the Winter War, which lasted 105 days, or three months and twelve days, until March 12. The Finnish Army fought honorably. Although Finland lost some of its territory, it retained its independence. A country of 3.5 million mobilized 295,000 men, of whom 185,000 saw combat. Finnish losses in the war were 19,576 dead, 4,101 missing, and 43,557 wounded.

Russia announced just recently that it lost 131,476 men in the Winter War (dead, missing, and those that died of wounds). Adding in the wounded, total losses were about 460,000 men out of 1.3 million combat participants on the Soviet side. The Red Army also lost 3,540 tanks and 760 airplanes.

This deeply shocked the “victors” and completely eroded their international standing. As an aggressor, the USSR was expelled from the League of Nations, the predecessor of the United Nations, but its imperialistic policy of invasion did not change. Soviet forces stationed in the Baltic states (one corps in each country) were soon used to completely occupy these countries.

The occupation of the Baltic states

The basic plan of occupation of the Baltic states was worked out by the General Staff of the Red Army. Chief of General Staff until 1940 was Marshal Boris Shaposhnikov. Most of the work was done by Operations, headed by the noted General Nikolay Vatutin, with Colonel Alexander Vasilievsky most directly involved. Just before the operation in the Baltics, Vasilievsky was designated the plan’s “managing director,” and he remained responsible for the Baltics until the end of the Second World War. It should be noted that two invasion operations were planned at the same time: one in the Baltics; the other, to the south in Bessarabia, directed by General Georgi Zhukov.

Three army groups participated in the Baltic invasion operation, the Leningrad, Kalinin (Baltic), and Belorussian, and also the Soviet Baltic Fleet. In all, three land armies (with three corps each), five air divisions (1,140 airplanes) with two long-range bomber corps in reserve (in Novgorod and Smolensk), 188 ships of various types, and 656 navy planes entered the Baltics in the invasion. The main strike force came from the Belorussian Special Military District. Tank Force Colonel-General Dimitry Pavlov was named its commander on June 10.

At the same time, one of Voroshilov’s deputies, Colonel-General Laktionov, was in the Baltics, ostensibly on an inspection tour. Two weeks

later, he was made commander of the Baltic Military District (transforming the short-lived Kalinin Military District).

The army group was commanded directly from Moscow by Timoshenko and Shaposhnikov. On June 9, the Baltic Fleet received Directive No. 02622, stating that on June 10 at 5:00 am, the fleet came under the command of Leningrad Military District Commander General Meretskov, with the objective of being ready for battle on June 12. Battle plans were to be handed in for approval on June 11.

Similar directives were received by the other army groups. The directives did not give detailed plans, as they had long been known and practiced in the army group command posts and operations staff exercises. Some details became known from the fleet commander's report after the end of the campaign, which I have seen.

Carrying out the plan entailed difficulties. The experience of the war in Finland made the "victors" cautious. If the Latvians were to hold the invaders at their main defense line (in the Eastern variant of Latvia's Defense Plan A, defense was prepared along the line of the Pededze – Aiviekste rivers, with corresponding covering positions on the Rēzekne and Ludza line), achieving even a part of what happened in the war with Finland, there could be extremely unpleasant consequences on a world scale.

The General Staff in Moscow found an original strategic answer. They made plans to avoid the risky defense line by directing the main attack toward Riga from Šiauliai in Lithuania. To accomplish this would require at least two full 24-hour days, considering the speed at which the forces could move (according to the directive, mechanized units could move 100 km and infantry 40 km in a 24-hour period), and then only the mechanized forces would have arrived at the necessary starting point of the campaign. More time could not be allowed, for the Moscow General Staff well understood that the Baltic states could use the time to mobilize completely. The aggressors' strategic interests called for speed, and therefore Lithuania was given the ultimatum two days early.

Since the infantry from Belorussia could not keep up with the tanks, the 214th Air Force Brigade from Marjina Gorka (60 km from Minsk) was transferred to Šiauliai during the campaign.

The battle order to the commander of the army group clarifies the main points:

To the Commander, Belorussian Special Military District
Battle Order No. 0231 16.6.40.14:10

Considering the permission granted by the Latvian Government,
I order:

To cross Latvia's border

- a) 5:00 17.6.40 23rd Rifle Div. Drisvyaty-Novovaleksandrovska (Zarasai) and take up positions in the Daugavpils - Ilūkste area.
- b) 8:00 17.6.40 25th Tank Brig., supplemented by 126th Rifle Div. infantry, to go into the Jēkabpils area and hold it until arrival of 126th Rifle Div.
- c) 2nd and 27th Tank Brig. with a party from the Airborne Brigade to cross the border by Jēkabpils, and to take Riga after going through Jelgava.
- d) 6th Tank Brig. of 2nd Rifle Div. with 67th Rifle Div.* move out to take Jelgava and Tukums. Rest of 2nd Rifle Div. units to stay in their areas, to take Kuldīga by 8:00.
- e) 5:00 17.6.40 128th Motorized Rifle Div. to cross the border west of Pskov by highway to Riga and take up positions there.
- f) Small craft unit of the Baltic Fleet by 8:00 17.6 to anchor in the channel of the mouth of the Daugava.
- g) Speed of movement for mechanized units - 100 km per day, rifle units - 40 km per day.

Timoshenko, Shaposhnikov

* the units mentioned in paragraph d) actually took up positions in Liepāja, Vainode, and Ezere.

The Latvian government received a different order, which was so insolent as to be cynical. The document read by the President of the Council of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union and Foreign Commissar Vyacheslav Molotov to the Latvian ambassador in Moscow, Fricis Kociņš, on June 16, 1940, at one o'clock in the morning Latvia's time, in the Kremlin, had two categorical demands:

- 1) immediately form a new government;
- 2) immediately guarantee free passage of Soviet troops into Latvia's territory.

This was a demand for Latvia to renounce its sovereignty.

To ensure the pace of the planned campaign, the Soviet assault groups (the two tank brigades and the airborne brigade) were to take and secure all of Riga's bridges in a timely manner. Plans for the Soviet 2nd Independent (i.e., occupation) Rifle Corps in Liepāja, the tank units from Vainode and Ezere, and forces from the 67th Division were like a dagger

in the back for the Latvians. In the night of June 16-17, they were to start the operation to take the most important objects in the direction of Jelgava and Tukums, at the same time taking Kuldīga and all the bridges across the Venta, in fact dividing Kurzeme from the Latvian Army's main forces.

Looking back on that day's events, it is no wonder that to Latvians, the Soviet 67th Division soldiers who died in the battle to defend Liepāja in June 1941, including the commander, General N. Dedayev, will always be traitors, not defenders. That is also how all the Soviet 2nd Independent Corps will be remembered.

To justify their aggression to the world, the Soviets staged several strategic provocations, including one that was particularly inhumane and bloody. NKVD Order No. 001 11.06.40 included directives to kill all Latvian border guards and police in a 7–10 km wide zone in the Abrene area. On the night of June 14–15 special NKVD units destroyed two Latvian border guard cordons in Mašlenki and Šmaiļi, killing four persons and heavily injuring others. One of the injured died later in the hospital. Almost 40 Latvian citizens were kidnapped and taken over the border, per Captain Holanders.

What was the point? Remember the thief's cry, "Catch the thief!" All villains try to look better than they are. The answer could be found the next morning in Moscow newspaper articles stating that Latvian fascists had attacked the holy territory of the Soviet Union, but the Red Army taught them a lesson and captured a large group of aggressors.

One has to note that the "fascists" captured, herded across the border, and imprisoned in the Ostrov jail included women with small children. These hostages would have had to justify the many victims that would have arisen had the Balts resisted the aggressors when war started.

Resistance would have definitely meant the start of war. The authoritarian regime showed its negative side in ignoring the will of the people. The Latvian government (in the person of Kārlis Ulmanis) acceded to the aggressor's demands. The "leader" was not ready to take responsibility but handed the Latvians over to the most terrible regime.

Should Latvians have resisted? The answer is clear: only peoples who fight preserve their independence. Did the possibility exist? Yes! The best example is the Finnish people.

Latvia's defense, like Finland's, was planned out in detail for the first three to four months of war. Also, the whole world helps people fighting for their freedom. Notwithstanding the perfidy of neighbors (some Western countries refused to allow transit through their territory to help the Finns) and the war's painful result, the Finnish Army was

twice as well armed at the end of the war as at the beginning.

Professor Edgars Andersons' research also confirms that according to foreign military specialists, Latvians were prepared to defend themselves.

Also, 19,575 Finnish soldiers lost their lives in the Winter War. The number of Latvian soldiers lost in the front lines of the Second World War is estimated at 115,000 (80,000 on the German side alone), and that does not include those killed in Siberia.

Returning to the events of the night of June 16, one has to mention another strategic provocation. The Russians summoned Latvian representatives to Bigosov, on the eastern border, for talks on the entry of the occupying forces into Latvia. But when the representatives were already on their way, it was suddenly announced that they had to arrive in Joniškis, in the opposite direction. This was deliberately done so that the Latvian representatives would not be able to arrive in time and no talks would take place.

There was more deceit. To deceive the Latvian Army's intelligence service, the invaders imitated tank movements on Latvia's eastern border for several nights. In reality, as the participants later jeeringly recounted, it was all done with tractors, as they were saving their limited tank resources.

This is all testimony to the level of strategic disinformation in this campaign, and also to the fact that the Soviets took the possibility of Latvia's resistance seriously. Many in the Soviet Union were greatly impressed by Latvian soldiers in the First World War, as confirmed by the memoirs of those who participated in the intervention. The morale of the invaders was, in general, very low. This was well understood in the Latvian Army's headquarters, headed by the talented General Hugo Rozenšteins. Rozenšteins' deputy, Colonel Otto Ūdentiņš, led the group of six intelligence and operations officers that headed to Bigosov for talks. They all spoke good Russian. (Ūdentiņš, who had received the Lāčplēsis Order as an award for heroism in the Latvian war of independence, was also highly regarded by the Red Army leadership. In July 1940 he was made a general, and all during the war he was a senior lecturer at the Soviet General Staff Academy.)

Understanding the goals of the provocation, and with the Ūdentiņš group already on the way to Bigosov, General Rozenšteins quickly authorized his second deputy, Colonel Jūlijs Ķikulis, to go to Joniškis.

The morning of June 17, 1940, dawned with those exceptional circumstances. Soviet assault units crossed the Latvian border in sixteen

places simultaneously. Invasion armies crossed the border of Estonia in three, Lithuania in six, and Finland in five places.

Of course, it all had its ulterior motive. The General Staff of the Red Army had at its disposal three motorized brigades. In actuality there were three groups: two tank brigades and one army staff battalion (three companies), which were to be reorganized into motorized rifle regiments by 1942. Moscow tried to surprise Latvia's Army with a massed tank attack, calculating that Latvians would lack antitank defenses.

This is true in part, as was understood even better by General Rozenšteins' men. The general, a graduate of the Czech war academy, had a good understanding of the bases of modern war and the functions of tank and motorized divisions. He was in control of the situation in his district and had already done everything necessary for Latvia to develop antitank defense (not for nothing were the Latvian divisions considered the most modern rifle divisions even in those days). In the fall of 1935, Colonel Ūdentiņš was sent to Berlin, Hanover, Vienna, Bofors (in Sweden), Helsinki, and Tampere to learn about modern antitank weapons and the newest mortars, and also to assess the possibilities of procuring them.

The Latvian government made a mistake in not allocating money to acquire these very important weapons. By 1938, when our politicians understood what was happening in the world, all countries were hurriedly arming themselves and it was impossible to find any of these weapons to buy.

Early in the morning of June 17, the liaison officer at the Krustpils garrison caught up with the Ūdentiņš group and redirected it to Joniškis. At dawn, Colonel Ķikulis' car met the Red Army's motorized assault group heading for Riga on the Jelgava highway. Of course, he was not able to stop the tanks, so he found the group's commander and informed him that he, Ķikulis, had been sent by army headquarters to show them their positions in Riga, in Pārdaugava. The assault group's commander replied that he was obeying war orders and, following correct procedure, asked the Latvian Army representative not to bother him! Colonel Ķikulis' mission had ended. All he could do was to note in which direction the enemy drove off.

Soon everything became clear. One tank brigade with a landing force blocked the coast artillery regiment's positions at the mouth of the Daugava, the tank brigade's and sapper regiment's positions in Bolderāja, and the Spilve airfield. The second tank brigade took Riga's bridges and its center, blocking the central rail station and all postal, telegraph, radio,

administrative, and, of course, government buildings. There was a back-up plan. In case the tanks were not able to cross the Daugava, the 128th Motorized Rifle Division would come down the Vidzeme highway from Pskov to Riga. This was a large force, as Soviet motorized rifle divisions had about 250 tanks, more than German tank divisions.

As the Latvian Army was ordered not to resist the aggressor, the tanks moved into position by 12:39 pm. The rifle divisions would still be marching toward their goals for three days.

Colonel Ūdentiņš' group reached Joniškis, as ordered, at nine o'clock in the morning. After half an hour, the Soviet assault group's commander, Colonel-General Dimitry Pavlov, arrived at the Joniškis station with communications equipment and a strong armored-car guard. Ūdentiņš showed his authorization for the talks, but to the Russian general, everything was clear, even without a map. The Latvians had foreseen this possibility and had with them two copies of the maps. As the Soviet side was not at all ready for talks, minutes were taken in Russian by Lieutenant Colonel J. Upītis. Ūdentiņš showed the general the positions in Pārdaugava planned by the army staff. But the general had different plans. Armed with the expression "Comrade Stalin ordered...", he drew his red circles on the map. When Ūdentiņš objected that there were no places there in which to station troops, he reacted strangely, saying in Lithuania they had tried to get on with him. All in all, however, the general was satisfied with the results of the operation, as reports on the assault groups' movements could be constantly heard on the radio. An announcement was also heard about an airplane accident. The general commented that it was supposed to have attacked the presidential palace, but that that was no longer necessary.

After eating lunch and drinking a large shot of cognac, the general signed the protocol and about 1:00 pm let the Latvians "go home."

According to Moscow's plan and calculations, the operation in the Baltic Sea required four days. Excerpts from the final report of the Soviet Baltic Fleet Commander Vice-Admiral V. F. Tributs:

Soviet Navy Archives. Collection: R-9 Register: 2s, Item 672

p. 172: 120 ships participated in the campaign (these are listed by name).

p. 178: ... on the signal, ships and naval units (armed forces) started fulfilling their given objectives:

6:00 17.06.40 21st Bridge Engineering Battalion took the area around the Surupa battery (Northern Estonia).

6:30 17.06.40 deploying a landing force, took Vulf's Island.

7:05 17.06.40 deployed a landing force and took Nargen Island.

p. 179: 7:40 17.06.40 fleet's independent assault battalion took the harbor of Mina and navy barracks in Tallinn, battleship *Oktyabryaskaya revoliuciya* with three light cruisers anchored in Tallinn channel.

8:00 17.06.40 minesweeper Gordiy, submarines "S-1" and "S-3" anchored in mouth of the Daugava.

Concluding operations started June 17, 1940, ended June 21:

10:40 13.06.40 blockade forces deployed;

23:00 14.06.40 blockade begun;

12:00 20.06.40 blockade ended.

p. 179b: During the blockade our ships and submarines detained 52 Latvian, Estonian, Finnish, and Swedish ships. Reconnaissance had been organized since June 4, 1940, when the situation was tense, and gave the command much useful data.

p. 251: Cruiser *Kirov*, battleships *Minsk*, *Leningrad*, minesweepers *Gordi* and *Lenin* detained 7 Latvian and 2 Estonian supply ships.

p. 252: Supply ships resisted detainment, so warning shots fired from cruiser *Kirk*, battleship *Minsk*, minesweeper *Lenin*, and submarine "S-1." Supply ships then stopped.

Navy Commander Vice-Admiral V. Tributs

Navy Chief of Staff Rear-Admiral J. Panteleyev

Even more interesting is General Pavlov's handwritten report to Defense Commissar Timoshenko, dated 21.06.40 12:15. Excerpts follow:

I find it unacceptable to be situated together with the armies of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. I propose the following:

disarm all three countries' armies and ship the weapons to the Soviet Union [...].

In any case, disarm the Latvians completely. Afterwards, when done with the army, immediately (48 hours) disarm all the inhabitants.

Shoot those who do not give up their arms.

The Belorussian Military District is ready to carry out the campaign. But please let us know of the order 36 hours before the start.

Tank Force Colonel-General D. Pavlov

On July 1, 1940, the Baltic Military District was already being formed in Riga, the capital of an independent state, out of the Kalinin Military District. By July 1941, the Latvian Army was destroyed and its command heavily repressed.

Heinrichs Strods

FIRST GROUPS OF CIVILIAN OCCUPIERS, 1941–1946

The occupation of Latvia by the Red “evil empire” started at 10:00 am on June 17, 1940. The Red Army crossed Latvia’s border from two directions. From Lithuania, it headed for Riga, and from already-occupied Poland, it headed for Daugavpils.

With these armed forces came civilian occupiers. Communist Party officials, “mass demonstration organizers,” arrived in Riga with the tank convoys. These Party officials joined the ones who had been in Latvia since October 5, 1939 as part of the Red Army. In the following weeks “Party and state specialists,” who had completed special courses in Russia, started arriving in Latvia. Since many Latvian “specialists” had been killed in 1937 and 1938, those sent to Latvia were Russian. Protocols of the Central Committee of the Latvian Communist Party (LK(b)P CK, *Latvijas Komunistiskās (bolševiku) partijas Centrālā komiteja*) show that besides the official bureau staff of eight persons, there was also an “unofficial bureau staff” of nine persons – larger than the “official” staff. The latter was formed mainly of “Russian comrades” lead by LK(b)P CK Secretary J. Kalnbērziņš’ assistant, Machonko. In all, 58 “specialists” were sent to the LK(b)P CK from Russia, more than half of the LK(b)P CK staff.

Not counting those in the very top positions, 1,000 middle-level “specialists” and their families were sent into Latvia in the first Communist group in 1940 and 1941. In total, their number probably exceeded 3,000. 800 (80%) of these “specialists” were Chekists, who were placed in the NKVD and the militia. 35 (3.5%) and 28 (2.8%) went to the Education and Finance Commissariats respectively. The other six administrative agencies received from 5 to 20 persons each. These figures show that the placement of the first civilian occupation group in government and administrative agencies had a military-political nature. When war broke out between Germany and the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941, this group fled back to the USSR.

The second group of Latvia’s civilian occupiers had the same characteristics as the first. Chosen and trained in Moscow in 1943, it arrived in Latvia in 1944 just behind the Red Army. Reports of the LK(b)P CK show that the official group included 390 Party and state officials.

The secret report of August 3, 1944, below, lists 878 NKVD Chekists sent to Latvia. Thus, the total influx was 1,268 officials, of whom 69.2% were Chekists.

Top secret

To comrade Ozoliņš, Latvian K(b)P CK, personally

In response to your request, I send this report on the Latvian SSR NKVD officials who have been sent to the liberated territory.

1. Officials sent to the liberated Latvian SSR territory: 878 persons. Of these, to the liberated districts:

- 1) Daugavpils – 67 persons total; including operational staff – 32 persons, technical staff – 35 persons.
- 2) Ludza – 25 persons total; including operational staff – 13 persons, technical staff – 12 persons.
- 3) Rēzekne – 24 persons total; including operational staff – 13 persons, technical staff – 11 persons.
- 4) Abrene – 25 persons total; including operational staff – 19 persons, technical staff – 6 persons
- 5) Bauska – 6 persons total; including operational staff – 6 persons.
- 6) Jelgava – 22 persons total; including operational staff – 13 persons, technical staff – 9 persons
- 7) Ilūkste – 11 persons total; including operational staff – 11 persons.
- 8) Tukums – 8 persons total; including operational staff – 8 persons.

2. (Latvian SSR NKVD) Central staff officials and also officials who are to work in districts still not freed from the fascist invaders are working in the liberated districts.

Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Latvian SSR
Colonel of State Security Sieks

[Latvian State Archives (LKP CK archive), Collection 101, Folder 6, Item 6, p. 57.]

But these NKVD Chekists were not the only ones to arrive in Latvia. There were also Chekists from the NKGB (*Narodny Kommissariat*

Gosudarstvennoy Bezopastnosti, People's Commissariat of State Security), GPU (State Political Administration), SMERSH (Defense Commissariat Counterintelligence), and others. There were Chekists and agents in every army unit. We do not know their number and probably never will.

One NKVD organization with the catchy name of "Latlag" had the combined functions of arresting inhabitants of the "freed" districts, enumerating the thousands of politically and socially dangerous "elements," setting up concentration and screening camps in Latvia, and administering the overflowing prisons. This all testifies to how widespread and active the NKVD was.

Latvia was deliberately flooded with Communist functionaries and Chekists. The mass terrorization of Latvia's inhabitants and their deportation to slave camps had begun.

With an order dated October 4, 1945, the NKVD of the Latvian SSR enlarged its staff in several cities and regions. Thus, after "liberation," the number of Chekists in nine regions rose to a total of 571, with 51 to 81 officials in each. In 1945, NKVD units also were formed to combat the national partisans, or in Communist terminology, "for the struggle against banditry."

Military units were formed in the power centers of the Communist occupation, the city and district (*rajons*) Communist party committees. Generally, they were staffed by demobilized officers with a low level of education. Of the 31 military unit leaders who commanded *istrebitelniy* (destroyer) units as well as Chekists in the fight against the national partisans, 71% had only primary school education and 58% were Eastern Slavs.

The third group of occupiers was formed as a result of the USSR government's decree allowing those demobilized from the Red Army to choose where they wanted to live from the entire USSR, and awarding them cash grants and housing. As can be seen from Kalnbērziņš' secret report to Malenkov on February 2, 1946, at that time 25,739 demobilized soldiers and officers had already arrived in Latvia. Of these, 15,416 (59.89%) had lived in Latvia previously, but 10,323 (40%) moved in from the "brotherly republics" and were given 4,855 apartments, mainly of owners who had fled into exile, joined the national partisans, or been deported to Siberia. By December 15, 1946, a total of 45,286 demobilized Red Army personnel had settled in Latvia. Of all who registered to live in Latvia, 19,686 (43.37%) arrived from the "brotherly republics." 12,624 (67.87%) of those who settled in Riga had never lived there before.

The people in this third group were called *ordeņņesēji* (order-bearers, those decorated with a military order). They received special ration cards allowing for larger rations in addition to the usual monetary grants and the fully furnished housing of exiled and deported Latvians. The “liberators” were also given jobs of their own choosing. Most of them joined the *istrebitelniy* battalions and continued serving in the military. Not giving a “liberator” a job was punishable by a large fine. Approximately thirty “liberators” became teachers or postgraduate students at the Latvian State University, although most of them did not have the requisite academic background.

Since so many of Latvia's inhabitants had been arrested and deported, this last group of occupiers caused changes unfavorable to Latvians in the demographics of its cities. The “liberators” were generally joined by the rest of their families, their relatives, and relatives of relatives. The Russification of the Western border of the Russian empire was in full force.



*Heinrichs Strods***THE CHEKA OPERATIONS ARMY IN LATVIA, 1941–1954**

Every totalitarian regime is characterized by having special internal military forces in addition to a large state army. The function of the special forces is to see to the security of the totalitarian regime and to control the state's inhabitants. In the German Third Reich, there were SS (*Schutzstaffeln*, protection squads) and SD (*Sicherheitsdienst*, security service) forces with special mission units in addition to the regular armed forces. In the Russian empire called the USSR, there were special forces of the NKVD and NKGB from the very beginning. These armies of secret police were used primarily to guard the slave labor camps known as the Gulag archipelago, deport people to their places of banishment, fight against internal "class enemies," and so on.

The Cheka army under the NKVD numbered in the hundreds of thousands. On March 4, 1941, USSR NKVD Top Secret Order No. 00247 separated out an operations army numbering 65,054 from the Cheka army. The Cheka operations army started arriving in Latvia soon thereafter and took an active part in the deportations of June 14, 1941. During the German–Soviet War, it grew quickly: from 79,892 soldiers in 1941 to 151,779 in January 1942, and to 254,797 on June 2, 1942.

The Cheka operations army was formed militarily and politically from the soldiers most loyal to Communism. To improve the nucleus of this army, on April 28, 1942, it was placed under the NKVD–NKGB Internal Army Chief Directorate. On May 19, 1951, it came under the MGB (*Ministerstvo Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti*, Ministry of State Security)–MVD (*Ministerstvo Vnutrennikh Del*, Ministry for Internal Affairs) Internal Defense Chief Directorate in Moscow. The first head of the Chief Directorate was Lieutenant-General Ivan Samsonovich Sheredega (1942–1944). He was succeeded by Lieutenant-General Moisey Josifovich Sladkevich (1944–1946), Lieutenant-General Pyotr Vasilyevich Burmak (1946–1956), and Lieutenant-General Taras Filipovich Filipov (1953–1954). These men also headed the Cheka army in Latvia.

During the German–Soviet War, the Cheka operations army was divided into three main groups. The first was the Internal Army, which

spied on inhabitants and made sure they stayed obedient to the Party and the government, guarded the slave labor camps, etc. The second group, formed in May 1943, was the Rear Guard, which operated behind the regular Red Army, shooting at retreating units and arresting deserters. The third group was the Special Service, which located underground radio transmitters and guarded government and army communications. The largest group was the second, the Rear Guard. It followed closely behind the Red Army and ruthlessly killed all the faint of heart. It was to a large extent responsible for the "Stalinist superhero" victories in the German-Soviet War.

Starting in 1943–1944, the Cheka operations army in Western Ukraine, Western Belorussia, Poland, and the Baltic states had a new assignment – fighting against national partisans. Additional duties included maintaining order in these countries' cities, guarding Party, state, NKVD, and NKGB organs, and carrying out operational assignments such as arresting suspicious inhabitants, guarding prison centers, and deporting persons to the "furthest USSR territories."

To carry out these duties, the 5th Special Task Rifle Division of the NKVD operations army was moved from the Leningrad front from April 21 to May 16, 1944, and stationed behind the Baltic front. The division was composed of five motorized and regular rifle regiments. They were ordered to follow the Red Army and set up garrisons in the "liberated areas" as well as "guard revolutionary order in the areas that have been freed from the fascistic invaders." The 143rd Rifle Regiment of this division arrived in northeastern Latvia only a few days after the Nazi army retreated. In August and September 1944, the 143rd's regimental headquarters were at Alūksne, where the regiment's 1st Rifle Battalion was stationed. The regiment's 3rd Company operated around Abrene, and the regiment's battalion was stationed in Gulbene. The 2nd Rifle Battalion of the 132nd Rifle Regiment brought "revolutionary order" to the area around Valka. This regiment had a lot of experience in the struggle against non-Russian nationalities: it had carried out special "USSR government missions in the Kalmikiya and Chechnya ASSRs," i.e., it had arrested and deported all these peoples to Siberia. The 36th Motorized Rifle Regiment of the NKVD operations army came into southern Latgale from Pskov to guard the LK(b)P CK and the Latvian SSR leadership in Ludza and Daugavpils, and later in Riga. It arrested everyone: those who had collaborated with the Nazis, "class enemies," better-off farmers, businessmen, members of former political parties, members of the National Guard, putting them all into hastily organized labor camps.

The regiment's headquarters were first in Daugavpils and then in Riga. To fight against the Latvian national partisans, the NKVD Prutas 24th Rifle Regiment (decorated with the Bogdan Hmelnick order) was transferred from Austria in November 1945. Headquartered in Talsi, it immediately started arresting inhabitants, taking hostages, and fighting the national partisans. The 260th Regiment of the 5th Division had the same mission in northern Estonia. The NKVD 288th Rifle Regiment was also stationed in Latvia.

In all, four NKVD army divisions were stationed in the Baltic states in 1944 and 1945. The 5th Special Task Rifle Division mentioned above was headquartered in Riga. From 1942 to 1949, it was commanded by Commissar of State Security Major-General Pyotr Aleksandrovich Leontyev. His assistant was Guards Colonel Feoktist Danilovich Maiboroda, who became the division commander in 1949. From 1950 to 1953, the division was commanded by Colonel Ivan Yakovlevich Ptashkin.

The NKVD Escort Army's 48th Division was headquartered in Riga to "operationally serve the Baltic republics." This division had three rifle regiments, two independent battalions, and the division's sergeant school. In July 1945, the division had 6,687 persons, who were engaged mainly in guarding camps and prisons in the Baltic states and transports of arrestees to Siberia. In 1945 the division's commander was Major-General Vasilii Lavrentyevich Blinov, and later, Major-General Kemerov. The 48th Division took an active part in the deportations of 1948 and 1949.

The NKVD Internal Army's 63rd Division was deployed mainly in Estonia, with headquarters in Tallinn, and the 4th Division in Lithuania, with headquarters in Šauliai. In all, the four NKVD divisions, with 12 to 15 regiments each, had a combined total of 25,000 Cheka soldiers fighting against counterrevolution in the Baltic states. A special NKVD war district was formed in the Baltics, with headquarters in Riga. On January 1, 1946, the USSR had 121,299 Cheka operations soldiers, divided into 13 divisions, 72 regiments, 12 independent battalions, and 9 independent special mission divisions. Almost a fourth of the NKVD operations army divisions in 1946 were found in the Baltics. That testifies to the fact that the (armed) resistance of these "brotherly republics" to the occupation was the greatest in the Soviet empire.

In January 1947 the Cheka operations army was transferred from the MVD to the MGB. The MGB operations army had one motorized rifle division, eight rifle divisions, three rifle regiments, twelve independent

special mission divisions, two independent rifle companies, and two rifle battalions, which were directly under the MGB Internal Army 9th Independent Chief Directorate. An additional 15,000 extermination battalion soldiers, under the command of the MGB, were stationed in Latvia. 2,000 of them were stationed in district centers, on constant alert. The Cheka's main assignment was to improve the fight against national partisans in the Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. They guarded the millions enslaved in the Gulag archipelago, were responsible for the construction of important state buildings, and were in charge of the government's communication network.

The Cheka army operated not just inside the Soviet empire, but also outside its borders. As late as 1951, ten Cheka army regiments were found in the German Democratic Republic. In 1951 the Cheka army was again reorganized in response to the necessities of the fight against national resistance movements. Ukrainian and Lithuanian military districts were formed. The suppression of the national resistance movements in Latvia and Estonia was overseen by a staff with the code name "2nd Section." In Belorussia it was known as the "6th Section." The 1st Unit was in Leningrad, the 19th Unit in Tbilisi.

This article will briefly characterize the arms and fighting methods of the Cheka army against "class enemies" in Latvia.

First, the Cheka army had many informers (*stukači*), who were under the 5th Special Task Division in Riga. Lists of this division's secret informers comprise 18 volumes in the division's archives, but in the spring of 1994 they were still classified "secret" and were inaccessible. Every regiment in the division had its secret informers. They were recruited from Latvia's inhabitants, mainly employees of agencies of the earlier German occupation, former policemen, members of the National Guard, leaders of rural districts, and inhabitants who had some authority in the area. The informers were formed into groups and given names such as "*salašņas*" (riffraff). They informed on partisan units and resistance groups. The head of each group was called the "resident."

Second, the Cheka army had special units about whose activities even the regiment leaders knew little. Members of these Cheka army units, dressed in German army uniforms, robbed inhabitants, travelers, and markets (for example, in and around Liepāja), operated in the forests as false units of national partisans, and shot national partisans from hideouts.

Third, in addition to the regular weapons and units, the Cheka army had armored cars (they were used in Vidzeme), large sniper units, and guns with silencers.

Fourth, regiments had special canine units, with trained handlers.

Fifth, as can be seen from the regiment commanders' orders, a Cheka soldier received a bonus of 100 rubles for every national partisan shot. Bonuses were also given for successful operations. Especially liberal bonuses were awarded for active participation in the deportations of 1949. Dozens were allowed to be photographed by the regimental banner; given ten or more days vacation, awarded money, promoted, had punishments for drinking on duty revoked, and so on.

During the Soviet occupation, much was written about the Arājs commando, which terrorized and shot civilians during the Nazi occupation. There is no statute of limitations on their crimes. Several members of the Arājs commando later became Cheka informers.

The size of the Arājs commando in the German occupation was not a hundredth the size of the Cheka operations army in Latvia, which shot, deported, and terrorized civilians. The activities of the Cheka army in Latvia from 1944 to 1956 clearly attest to the fact that it committed crimes against humanity for at least twelve years. It committed crimes that according to international law have no statute of limitations, just like the crimes of the Arājs commando.

Considering all this, one has to ask: do the former soldiers and officers of the Cheka army, some of whom still live in Latvia as pensioners of the former USSR Defense Ministry, have a right to enjoy social benefits in Latvia? Do they have a right to residency in Latvia and to Latvian citizenship? Should they not be tried and punished for crimes against humanity instead?



Nikolajs Balabkins

THE DESTRUCTION OF LATVIA'S ECONOMY, 1940 - 1941

How much do the Russians owe Latvia?

The late Modris Šmulders (1926-1994) was charged by the Economic Reform Commission to analyze the consequences of the almost 50-year long occupation of Latvia on its economy. His Russian-language work, *Kto komu dolzhen?*, was published in 1990.

I Modris Šmulders' calculations

I will start with two of Šmulders' figures as reference points. According to his calculations, goods worth 5.2 billion lats, then just under a billion US dollars, were taken from the inhabitants of Latvia from June 1940 to the end of June 1941. In 1939, US \$1 was worth 5.4 lats. This was a large amount of money.

Twenty-five years later, Professor Arnolds Aizsilnieks (1899-1982) wrote that in one year, "the Latvian people had almost all their private property taken from them, except for some personal property, some small city houses, and farm buildings. All the private property taken was kept by the state." Aizsilnieks summarized:

The Soviet government made the Latvians poor in one year's time, taking away all of their goods, with few exceptions, and giving it to the state [...]. The inhabitants' real income then shrank, and basic goods disappeared from the market. This had never happened in independent Latvia. Reaching this situation, the Latvian people were said to be free of the "capitalist yoke."

Modern Western economists would call this process the policy of deliberate economic contraction with declining income per inhabitant. Reorganized by the Soviet Union, the new social order and system of institutions promoted this process via the ruthless class struggle, shooting and deporting thousands of "social enemies" to the Siberian Gulag camps.

This took place sixty years ago. At that time, Latvia's inhabitants had goods valued at one billion US dollars taken away from them. What would this billion dollars be worth today, sixty years later? This depends on the interest rate. Let us assume that it is 6% per year. At this rate, one dollar becomes two dollars in 12 years' time, i.e., the value doubles every twelve years. Thus, the value in today's dollars of the goods taken in 1940 and 1941 is over US \$32 billion!

Unfortunately, the occupation of Latvia did not last just one year, but almost fifty years. Šmulders calculated in 1988 that the losses caused to Latvia by the Soviet Union were 63 billion rubles. This is a minimal figure that does not include all factors. As the ruble was then worth \$1.67, its value in dollars is US \$105 billion.

This total was based on the following considerations. First, Latvia lost \$2.2 billion when Soviet Russia disregarded the conditions of the 1920 peace treaty and did not return the industrial equipment, machinery, and rolling stock that were taken to Russia in 1915. Second, during the Communist terror and deportations, Latvia lost 105,000 people. Latvia deserves compensation for these victims also, about \$7.9 million. Third, the largest losses were caused by the forced transfer of large sums (profits, taxes, etc.) to the Soviet Union's central banks without compensation. Latvia has received back from the Center in Moscow only half of that which was taken. In the post-war years, Latvia overall transferred to the Soviet Union much more than it received back.

Again, the total calculated by Šmulders in 1988 dollars is US \$105 billion. Using the 6% interest rate, \$105 billion in 12 years would become \$210 billion. So in 2001, using Šmulders calculated figures as a base, Latvia was owed US \$210 billion by the Soviet Union for the 50-year occupation and the material losses it caused. That is a large amount of money. Professor Modris Šmulders was a distinguished researcher and a great statistician. He was also well versed in the sources of Latvian statistics and Soviet-era statistical lies.

II Totalitarian social engineering in Latvia

How was 5.2 billion lats worth of private goods taken from the Latvian people in one year's time?

I am from Daugavpils. Early in the morning of June 17, 1940, my mother woke me and had me take the family's valuables by bicycle to our summer place in Mežciems. With tears in her eyes, she said, "Now

our life has ended. Latvia is being occupied by the Communist army." Was that a premonition? One year later, our entire family was on the list of those to be deported. They did not find us, for we had already been driven out of our home. My father was a successful businessman, therefore, "a blood-sucker on the working people," a bourgeois. In Soviet Latvia he was a "socially dangerous element."

When I returned to Daugavpils, I met Haralds Muižnieks on the street. We had both been in Troop 13 of the Boy Scouts. He said despairingly, "Why aren't we resisting? Where is our army?" That same day he called together his high school classmates and founded a resistance movement in Daugavpils. Haralds Muižnieks and his classmates were later shot.

A day later, I was on the bus to Mežciems again. Soviet army forces were coming into Daugavpils from the direction of Grīva, over the Vienības (unity) Bridge. The bus had to wait by the bridge because of the large crowds. Suddenly Jānis (Ivan) Muzikantiks, a student at a trade school, ran up to the bus, and, looking at me and hitting his fist on the window of the bus, yelled loudly, "You damned bourgeois, now we'll show you!" I was then thirteen years old. I did not yet understand what they would show me and why I was a damned bourgeois. For me, that was the beginning of the totalitarian social engineering process in Latvia.

Analytically, a country's social order consists of three elements: the political, institutional, and economic systems. Until May 15, 1934, Latvia had a German Weimar Republic-type of parliamentary democracy with many small parties. For example, representatives of 20 political parties were elected to parliament in 1920, and in 1931-1934, the Fourth Saeima (parliament) had representatives from 27 parties. With its constant shifting of political alliances, this form of democracy, which could more correctly be called "partocracy," made government instability inevitable. In this atmosphere of "partocracy" governments came and went. In the first ten years of independence, Latvia had thirteen governments, meaning each government lasted barely nine months. With governments changing so often, day-to-day problems were solved by lower-ranking civil servants, who managed the tasks and responsibilities of state business as best they could. This form of government could be better called bureaucratic oligarchy.

After the coup of May 15, 1934, Kārlis Ulmanis became Latvia's authoritarian leader. He brought in a strongly centralized form of government, where he himself decided everything. Ulmanis was known for his kind-heartedness and moderation, but he was nevertheless an autocrat. He did not recognize or support any kind of theory of race, but

he did strengthen the definite national character of the government.

Latvia's political system acknowledged and legally protected private property rights to land and all means of production. In the Soviet Union, after the Communist revolution of 1917, owning private property was considered to be theft and a way of "exploiting the working people." There, owners of private property were shot or starved to death in the thousands of concentration camps scattered over the giant Red empire. After all, according to Communist ideology, these "socially dangerous elements" had no place in the Soviet Union, just as Jews had no place in the Third Reich. But in the small country of Latvia, there was private property and the standard of living was high. Until 1935, Latvia's standard of living was 15% higher than that of Finland.

After Latvia's occupation in June 1940, the market economy was quickly replaced by Soviet central planning, "according to plan and schedule." As every Soviet citizen was obligated to work, every inhabitant in Latvia had a regular income of introduced rubles, but with the earned rubles one could not buy what one wanted, when and where one wanted it. In the fall of 1940, Latvians started to use the word "get" instead of "buy." One had to stand in line for everything, all the time. This was the era of "deficit goods," which lasted almost fifty years.

The social engineering process was forced at an almost unbelievable rate, in conditions of Stalinist totalitarianism. Now, after sixty years, one has to know not just the chronicle of the process but also the spirit of the times, what the Germans call *Zeitgeist*, to understand Latvia's transformation into Soviet Latvia. A chronicle is nothing more than a listing of events or laws in chronological order, with no analysis. *Zeitgeist*, on the other hand, interprets events from various viewpoints and personal experiences, from different places and social strata. Latvia's chronicle of "sovietization" was published in Riga in 1995, listing the laws and decrees that radically transformed Latvia's socioeconomic system and changed all social strata beyond recognition. To fully understand this transformation, one definitely has to take into account the *Zeitgeist*, as is well shown in Arnolds Aizsilnieks' monumental work *Latvijas saimniecības vēsture, 1914–1945* (*Latvia's Economic History, 1914–1945*), published in Sweden in 1968. Aizsilnieks worked many years on this work, researching and collecting materials in the archives and libraries of West Germany, Sweden, England, and the United States.

We will mention only a few examples from Chapter VI, called "The destruction of Latvia's economy, 1940–1945." Seven days after the occupation of Latvia on June 17, the new Interior Minister in Riga

announced, "We have to clean the reactionary elements and enemies of the people completely and definitely out of all government institutions."

On July 14 and 15, 1940, the so-called People's Saeima was elected. Its term started on July 21. Beginning on July 22, all land, forests, and bodies of water were nationalized and became the property of the people. Latvia's inhabitants had to hand over all their valuables to the Bank of Latvia for safe-keeping. I remember that in July members of the Workers' Guard arrived at our apartment at 79 Raina Street and made my father open the safe. Not only were the means of production nationalized, but private valuables were also seized. On August 3, not quite six weeks after the start of the occupation, 804 of the largest industrial concerns were nationalized.

Aizsilnieks describes in detail Latvia's pauperization in terms of housing. First was the nationalization of private homes in cities, which started in October. Then came the decrees dictating how many square meters one was allowed to inhabit. Besides houses, all theaters, restaurants, and insurance companies were nationalized. All shares of stock, securities, and obligations were taken from people. Farmers had all their stock and implements taken away. The value of the nationalized goods was set at one third of its true value. On top of it all, the "nationalized" bourgeois had to pay a nationalization tax! This was done to take away their last penny. My father was not able to pay this tax, so they took everything from my family, including the kitchen sink.

The Workers' Guard took over the management of nationalized firms. These new managers herded the workers to endless meetings. For example, in a cement factory, all workers went to a meeting and left the hot kiln, which was by then the property of the people. After the meeting, the kiln, worth millions of lats, was of course no longer usable. The work ethic practically disappeared in the nationalized firms. The goods they produced were worthless.

After the occupation on June 17, Latvia's economy was literally plundered. Until June 15, 1940, the dollar was worth 5.40 lats or 5.30 rubles, respectively. From the outside it would seem that there would be no great problem in changing from one monetary system to the other. Unfortunately, the ruble had only a third the buying power of the lats. To show that the Latvian working people had a larger say than before, Kirchenšteins' government raised workers' wages, and in three months' time Latvia was literally cleaned out. The government started to dictate how much of a good each person could buy. Every piece of clothing bought was recorded in one's internal passport. A new word appeared in

the language – “*kaitnieks*” (wrecker or saboteur), used to describe those who dared to protest these absurdities.

After sixty years, it is hard to really understand this process of social engineering, which confiscated 5.2 million lats worth of goods belonging to the Latvian people.

III Latvia's occupation losses in light of international law

As mentioned, the present value of Šmulders' 1988 calculated figure for the Soviet Union's debt to Latvia is US \$105 billion. This figure includes not just material losses, but also the loss of Latvia's human capital, the destruction of human capital in the name of ideology.

In Soviet Latvia, Communist ideologues carried out a ruthless campaign against the “propertied classes.” Stalin thought that these people had no right to live in their own land. About 15,000 of these “wreckers of the people” were deported in 1941. In March 1949, an additional 40,000 Latvian farmers were deported, again in the name of class struggle. The hegemony of Communist ideology dictated that this prosperous class had no right to live in Soviet Latvia. According to figures given in *Das Schwarzbuch des Kommunismus (The Black Book of Communism)*, Stephen Courtois et al., München, 1998), the Soviet Union in its decades of existence exterminated 20 million people.

In the former Soviet Union and in the Russia of today, the extermination of these victims is merely considered to be “necessary for the building of socialism.” The people deported from Latvia, too, died of hunger and cold. Alexander Solzhenitsyn received the Nobel Prize in literature in the early 1970s for his *Gulag Archipelago* books. These mass crimes were perpetrated in the name of ideology, as interpreted by those in power during Lenin's and Stalin's rule. Boris Pasternak, the author of *Doctor Zhivago*, who was also awarded the Nobel Prize in literature but was forbidden by the Soviet government to travel to Oslo to receive it, defined ideology as “the might of the lifeless word.”

These examples allow one to precisely define the term “genocide.” This term was much debated in Latvia in 1991. In Latvia the term “repressions” (*represijas*) is widely used. In my view, genocide means depriving a people or social class of the right to live. “Genocide” has to be distinguished from “pogrom.” The author of the idea of genocide is Rafael Lemkins, a refugee from Poland who settled in the US. This word means coordinating the physical extermination of a race, tribe or social class. I call this process “taking away the right to live.”

After the Second World War and the Nuremberg war crimes trials, the West looked for ways to prevent genocide from happening again. In occupied Germany, Third Reich genocide investigation units were formed, and all Western Europe and America saw and heard daily about the genocide's consequences.

However, very little was heard about the mass deportations of the Stalin era and the Gulag punishment camps in the Soviet Union. Still, in 1948 the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Genocide and five of its forms were defined as *delicta iuris gentium* (crimes against humanity). Unfortunately, the Convention document was only a noble gesture, a normative declaration. The large Communist empires paid no attention to either the letter or spirit of the document.

In 1952 a new era began in the amelioration of genocide's material consequences. In West Germany, the government of Konrad Adenauer sought a way to make contact with Israel and with Jews in the Western world. Adenauer sought a way, as he himself said, *zur seelischen Bereinigung unendlichen Leides* (through never-ending suffering to a cleansing of the soul). In 1951 in the Bundestag, he promised, in the name of all Germans, to pay reparations to Israel and to Jews in the West for material damages. He did this for moral reasons. In 1952, West Germany and Israel signed the Luxembourg Treaty, which called for two kinds of reparations. First, West Germany agreed to pay Israel collective reparations for Jewish property such as schools, hospitals, and synagogues. This figure was calculated to be then 3.45 billion German marks, or one billion US dollars. As Germany at that time did not have reserves of convertible currency, payments were made in goods and settled over twelve years.

The second kind of reparation paid by West Germany to Jews was individual compensation. By the year 2000, Germany paid out US \$100 billion in reparations for the losses caused by the genocide. These payments represent a *res nova* (new idea) in international rights. Germany had admitted its guilt for the genocide.

In 1994, Russia passed a law about material compensation for those repressed who had not died in the slave camps. The law decreed that they could receive 180 rubles for each month in incarceration, but not more than 5,000 rubles in all. In 1999, a US dollar cost 25 rubles. So for ten years in the Gulag camps, the former repressed person would be able to receive US \$200. Of course, only if the Moscow budget could afford it.

Summing up, one has to repeat that the material and human capital losses done to Latvia in the long years of occupation until 1988 are calculated at US \$105 billion.

Russia today has neither the desire nor the convertible currency to pay its occupation debt to Latvia. Many in Russia, and also in Latvia, do not even want to mention the fact of the occupation and its acts of terror. Few are willing to admit and deplore the arrests and deportations of the Communist occupation. It is all simply passed over in silence, ignored and forgotten. Therefore, in the future, Latvia's youth will have to be taught every day to understand the existence and consequences of the 1941 and 1949 deportations. These are punishable acts. The men in power in Moscow should feel ashamed, as Germany has been for fifty years. Latvia's youth should also know that in 1993, the United Nations in Resolution 827 made the case for the trial of Milosevic as a war criminal in Yugoslavia. In the spring of 1999, the NATO air force attacked this Communist dictator, who practiced mass terror and deportations in the Communist spirit of Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, and Pol Pot.

In the 21st century this kind of *delicta iuris gentium* is no longer to be tolerated. Those who perpetrate these crimes will have to pay collective and individual reparations, as Germany has done. In the future, government officials and even presidents will be arrested and brought to trial. These are the new standards of international law in relation to genocide.



Jānis Riekstiņš

THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE

Working in the Latvian State Archives, I spend a large part of my days translating documents. Most of those written in the last fifty years are in Russian. The archives' documents provide information about how this dictatorship of one language arose, what attempts were made to deflect it, and what in the end came of it all.

The disestablishment of the Latvian language

After the occupation of Latvia in the summer of 1940, ever larger numbers of "leading persons" and "irreplaceable specialists" swept into the country. Newcomers from Moscow, Leningrad, and places further afield grandly settled themselves into Communist Party and state institutions, Councils of People's Commissars, various commissariats, the directors' chairs of plants and factories.

With their arrival, the Latvian language was forced out of meetings, conferences, assemblies, and even everyday management. For example, on October 15, 1940, the director of the Budget and Credit Department of the People's Commissariat of Finance, V. Bastjānis, requested in a telegram:

In relation to drawing up the draft budget for 1941, we ask that you immediately, by 2:00 this afternoon, send an account of your institution's state funds and capital in the Russian language to the People's Commissariat of Finance.

On December 7, 1940, the military commissar of the Jēkabpils region, Commissar 2nd Class Krasnov, notified the Jēkabpils region Executive Committee:

As of December 4 of this year, the Jēkabpils military region administration is liquidated. The Jēkabpils Region Military Commissariat has been established in its place. We ask that all corre-

spondence about military service with the Jēkabpils Military Commissariat and with the Jēkabpils military commissar be written in the Russian language.

On January 10, 1941, the secretary of the LSSR Council of People's Commissars, V. Yemelyanov, wrote to the Commissariat of Finance:

Henceforth all applications and attachments must have a Russian translation attached, as financial matters will be handled by comrade Bastin (from Moscow), who does not know Latvian.

Also significant is the letter written on February 11, 1941, by the head of the LSSR Supreme Court, F. Dombrovskis, to the LSSR Council of People's Commissars :

The USSR People's Commissariat of Justice sent to the LSSR Supreme Court several highly qualified officials to be members of the Supreme Court, including 3 Russian comrades who do not speak Latvian.

So that the comrades can fulfil their duties and utilize their theoretical and practical knowledge to raise the quality of work, the LSSR Supreme Court asks that 2 more translators be included in the personnel roster and a corresponding sum be allocated for their salary.

The widespread use of the Russian language was forced upon Latvia after the Second World War. Leading positions in Riga and regional institutions were taken by incomers who did not know Latvian, did not learn it, and issued all directives and notices only in Russian. Not infrequently, the local farmers did not understand a word of these.

The process of squeezing out Latvian was so widespread that even some fairly high officials raised objections to it. For example, the chairman of the central council of the LSSR Association for the Promotion of the Defense, Aviation, and Chemical Industries, E. Kusins, spoke at the June 1945 plenum of the LK(b)P CK. At the time, the association was involved in clearing mines. At the beginning of his talk, Kusins lamented that all the instructional material on clearing mines was in Russian and therefore not understandable to many young Latvians, who were getting blown up by mines and dying. Later, talking about the invasion of the Russian language into Latvia, he stated:

It is typical that those Latvians who have returned here from the USSR and who have long since forgotten their native language [...] do not care to regain the Latvian language [...]. When czarist Russia in the time of Alexander III decided to Russify the Latvians using deceit, promising them land, large numbers of Latvians converted from Lutheranism to Orthodoxy. But the Latvian language was nevertheless not outlawed, and even Orthodox church services took place in Latvian, because they did not understand Russian.

Many of the listeners criticized Kusins for his open and truthful speech. LK(b)P CK First Secretary J. Kalnbērziņš stated:

One has to say a few words about comrade Kusins' speech. Here comrades Ostrov and Marchenko have already given a correct evaluation of comrade Kusin's talk, calling it anti-Party. In point of fact, it is such.... In our republic there are no problems between Latvians and Russians. These matters are exaggerated by individual hostile elements, and you, comrade Kusin, are the megaphone for these elements.

To his credit, Kusins did not let this criticism silence him. Two years later, at the May 1947 plenum of the LK(b)P CK, he addressed the same problem:

Taking into account the small numbers in Latvia's Party organization [...] the CPSU CC has sent a large number of Communists with a great deal of experience in the practical work of the Party and the government to work permanently in Latvia. One can say that the best of the best were selected from the peoples of the Soviet Union. The majority are Russian comrades [...]. But the matter is moving ahead more slowly than could be desired [...]. These comrades do not try and do not want to acquire the most necessary tool [...] they do not learn the Latvian language. But, if they do not learn the language, then they cannot truly help in the re-education of the masses. Those comrades who have been sent to Latvia seriously and for a longer time, maybe even for life, have to learn Latvian. But the leading officials who have to learn the language [...] do not. They have even chosen secretaries, Russians, to isolate themselves and prevent the Latvian language from getting anywhere close [...].

This time Kalnbērziņš spoke harshly:

His speech is incorrect, even politically harmful. He was already told in an earlier plenum that his talk smacked of bourgeois nationalism. At that time he spoke of a "theory" that national policy towards Latvia and other border peoples in czarist Russia during the time of Alexander III was better than during the time of Soviet power [...]. Comrade Kusins' speech is very harmful. It definitely has to be punished [...]. I am of the opinion that he has slandered not only our Russian comrades, but also me [...]. That is the speech of a nationalist.

Of course, Kusins was harshly criticized and demoted. Everything continued on as before. Various purges of growing intensity were carried out in different classes of society, institutions, and enterprises, with the removal of politically unreliable local workers and the appointment of newcomers, who spoke not a word of Latvian, in their place. It happened everywhere, even in the countryside.

The secretary of the LKP Daugavpils district committee, Mukin, sadly reported in a high-level meeting in 1953:

It has to be considered the greatest error that most kolkhoz chairmen are not local people, but newcomers, who do not know the local language.

In one of the LKP CK plenums, the editor of the newspaper *Cīņa* (*Struggle*) in 1948, Ozoliņš, expressed the idea that state and Party workers should have to know the local language, and those did not know the language should have to learn it. Lacking support, this idea was rejected.

The consequences were grim. In 1953, the heads of only 23 out of 107 machine and tractor station political departments were Latvian; of 31 sovkhos directors, 5 were Latvian; of 31 sovkhos deputy directors, 6 were Latvian. Only 15% of management-level employees in the LSSR Ministry of Internal Affairs were Latvian. Only 4 of 56 district internal affairs departments were headed by Latvians. In the militia, there were 31% Latvians overall and only 17% in leadership positions. The central staff of the Ministry of State Security had 17% Latvians, but of this ministry's 58 city and district section heads, only 4 were Latvians. Some of these sections had no Latvians at all. In 1947, 46% of trade school students were Latvians, but in 1953, only 32%.

What this meant can be seen from an incident with the director of the Limbaži region sovkhos "Svētciems" ("Holy Village"), S. Chmelyevsky. This incomer carried the hatred and persecution of Latvians to such an extreme that even the LKP regional committee had to consider his case. The protocol of this committee's meeting of December 28, 1948, states (in Russian, of course):

On Chmelyevsky's part, large-state chauvinism against the inhabitants of the local nationality, Latvians, expressed itself in the following: from 1945 to 1947, 45 Latvians were dismissed from jobs in the sovkhos [...]. Chmelyevsky let go new specialists, Latvians, only because they did not know Russian, as happened, for example, with the agronomist Priedītis, whom the ministry had sent to work at the sovkhos.

Chmelyevsky received a reprimand, and that was all. The many Russian functionaries continued to hate and maltreat the Latvians and their language.

The imposition of the Russian language

The Russian language was especially strongly forced upon Latvians who had to serve in the armed forces of the USSR.

On June 7, 1941, the LSSR Council of People's Commissars debated the matter of preparing young men for call-up into the Red Army. The head of the 2nd section of the LSSR Military Commissariat, Captain Dvornikov, complained that Latvian youths learned Russian poorly and unwillingly. The Council of People's Commissars resolved to "institute a wide campaign to instruct those who are about to be called up and do not know Russian, so that instruction will be completed by September 1, 1941."

Immediately after the end of the Second World War, on May 30, 1945, the City of Rīga Executive Committee met in secret, without all members present. Its secret protocol Nr. 1, *About organizing the teaching of the Russian language in the city of Rīga to those citizens who are undergoing basic military training and do not know Russian* states:

To raise the fighting capability of the Red Army reserves, the LSSR Council of People's Commissars' decree No. 406 of May 16, 1945,

orders that as of June 1 of this year, those citizens who are in military training and do not know the Russian language are ordered to attend 90 hours of obligatory Russian language instruction. [...] The obligatory 90 hours of Russian language instruction for those citizens who are undergoing or have completed basic training is to be started after exams and graduation in the Riga city schools, that is, from June 20, 1945, and is to be completed by August 20, 1945.

According to an order by LSSR Military Commissar Major-General V. Malachovsky, 3,602 young men had to be drafted into the Red Army in the fall of 1945.

The education of the children of the USSR occupation army's soldiers was also imposed by decree. For example, Decree No. 046 of the Baltic Military District's Military Council, dated September 5, 1945, stated:

Regarding the units and sub-units of the armed forces of the Baltic Military District that have been placed in the Latvian and Lithuanian SSRs, the political organs have proposed that the republics' People's Commissariats of Education open Russian schools and classes where the armed forces are located. At the start of the school year, there will be more than 200 Russian elementary schools and partial high schools in the military district. [...]

In placing units and sub-units of the armed forces in those rural places and cities where there are no Russian schools, local authorities must establish Russian schools or separate classes to educate the soldiers' children.

The hardships caused by this decree can be seen, for example, in the report of the LKP Krustpils district committee dated October 29, 1956 to LSSR Council of Ministers' Deputy Chairman Plūdons:

The LKP Krustpils district committee asks you to influence the Baltic Military District command in regard to allocating resources for building elementary schools and kindergartens in the area of the Krustpils garrison.[...]

There are 200 in grades 1 through 4 of the elementary schools, and 16 soldiers' children in the city's kindergarten.[...]

In the city of Krustpils, there is an especially difficult situation with regards to placing those high school students who learn in Russian. The city's high school has only 250 places, but the number

of students, mainly because of soldiers' children, has reached 800.

The school's classes have been organized in three shifts, and about 50 of the city children are forced to go to a country school. The organization of classes into three shifts is extremely detrimental to students' progress as well as to teaching. Since the school has absolutely no free space from 8:00 in the morning until 23:00 in the evening, there is no possibility of organizing any supplemental educational activities.

Similar situations were found in the many other Latvian cities and towns where the USSR occupation army had located its huge garrisons.

At the same time, Latvians soon to be drafted into the USSR armed forces felt increasing pressure to learn Russian.

On June 11, 1973, Marshal V. Kulykov wrote a long report to the USSR Council of Ministers, including this observation:

In the schools of the trans-Caucasian, Central Asian, and Baltic republics, not enough attention is paid to teaching in the Russian language. Even the basic military training of young men in these republics takes place in the local language. For this reason a large proportion of those drafted into active service speak Russian poorly.

In response to this criticism, the LSSR Council of Ministers resolved at a meeting on January 11, 1974:

1. In the 1973/74 school year, instruction in Latvian for session 2 of specialist training is to be replaced by instruction in Russian (90 persons).
2. In the 1974/75 school year, transition to training specialists for the USSR armed forces with instruction in Russian (680 persons).
3. In the 1975/76 school year, the training of specialists for the USSR armed forces transitions to instruction in Russian (660 persons).
4. The question of further transition to instruction in Russian for the training of specialists for the USSR armed forces will be decided in January and February, 1976.

So the dictatorship of the Russian language continued to solidify its position, and not only for the draftees...

Heinrichs Strods

OPERATION «COASTAL STORM» (PRIBOY) THE DEPORTATION OF THE BALTIC PEOPLES 1949

The decimation of the Baltic states' inhabitants after their "liberation" in 1944 until 1954 is a part of the USSR's third Communist genocide of that time period, when the Communist Party bureaucracy held not only "class enemies" and "bourgeois nationalists" but also entire peoples under suspicion of insufficient submissiveness to the USSR. These suspect groups included also the Baltic peoples, who were given a special section in the Gulag lists — "Balts."

The third, post-war stage of the state-organized Communist genocide was carried out more on the inter-republic level, with top secret code names and a secret date ("D-1"), although the main thrust of the operation was against one republic. In the Baltic states, the largest inter-republic Communist genocide operation was the top secret operation code-named *Coastal Storm* (*Priboi* in Russian, *Krasta banga* in Latvian) of the USSR MGB Internal Army's 2nd Division in Šauliai, which took place on March 25, 1949. Operation *Coastal Storm* was decreed by the CPSU and the USSR Council of Ministers. The USSR Minister of State Security's Order No. 0068, dated February 28, 1949, directed that the operation be carried out by the MGB Internal Army Chief Directorate under Lieutenant-General Pyotr Burmak.

Operation *Coastal Storm* was rarely mentioned in the years before the Soviet empire disintegrated. With the publication of the lists of "special deportees" in the last ten years, it has been assessed as an act of genocide against the Baltic peoples. However, it is still not possible to research how this operation was organized at the top level of state power, i.e., by the Communist Party, as primary archive documents are still not accessible.

An important source in researching this topic was the archive of the USSR NKVD-MVD MGB Internal Army Chief Directorate, kept in the Russian State Military Archive (formerly the Soviet Army Central State Archive) in Moscow. In this many-branched network of documents relating to administration and divisions of the Internal Army and escort troops, I succeeded in finding an extremely useful file: *Materials on the*

USSR MGB Internal Army's Top Secret Operation "Coastal Storm," February 25 - August 23, 1949. The file contains 435 papers and maps.

Documentary materials about the top secret Operation *Coastal Storm* in the Russian State Military Archive can be divided into three groups, according to their accessibility. The first group consists of top secret plans, orders, and progress reports. One of this group's most important documents is the report on the mission by the operation's leader, Lieutenant-General Burmak, to USSR Deputy Minister of State Security O. Ogaltsov. The 21 typewritten pages of this document that are accessible reveal the operation's organization and workings.

The second group consists of maps of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, each about 1 x 2 meters in size. The deportation stations are marked, with notes for each about the number of wagons for those arrested and the number of persons to be deported. Red arrows mark the districts that are to supply the "special settlers," with notes as to the number of freight trucks to be used to bring the "special contingents" to each station. There is also a map of all three Baltic states showing the number of deportees and deporters (Chekists, soldiers, Party activists, government officials) by district in each country. The map is certified with the signature of P. Burmak, the operation's leader. Repeated requests in 1994 and 1995 for a copy of this map were denied.

The third group is operational material which had been in the hands of regiment and battalion commanders during the operation, and which was destroyed on August 23, 1949. The destruction commission, composed of Colonel Shimko, Major Kalistratov, and Major Kilyachenko, destroyed 182 documents and 66 topographic maps. Head of the USSR MGB Internal Army Chief Directorate, Colonel Velikanov, signed off on the destruction of the documents. My conclusions, therefore, are based only on accessible, undestroyed materials: documents from the divisions and regiments that participated in the operation, except for blank forms preserved for historical reference and military units' lists of agents that I was not allowed to see.

To fulfil the government directive mentioned above, the USSR MGB Internal Army organized the following temporary staff from personnel of the USSR MGB Internal Army Chief Directorate and USSR MGB Communications Forces Chief Directorate:

1. Chief of Staff P. Burmak – head of the USSR MGB Internal Army Chief Directorate,
2. Golovko – head of the USSR MGB Baltic Region in Riga,
3. Lieutenant-General P. Leontyev – head of the Internal Army in

Rīga,

4. Lieutenant-Colonel Kotov – head of Communications,

5. Lieutenant-Colonel Spektor – head of Transportation,

6. Colonel Rizhov – USSR MGB Internal Army representative.

Burmak worked out estimates of the manpower and matériel necessary for this secret operation by the end of February 1949. First he listed the existing USSR MGB Internal Army forces and matériel available for the deportation of 30,000 families from the Baltic states on “D-1,” a date to be selected by the six-person staff listed above. The MGB Internal Army’s 4th Division, stationed in Lithuania with headquarters in Šauliai, had 5,250 more than the necessary number of punishment force soldiers, but for strategic considerations it was not possible to relocate them to Latvia or Estonia. Therefore 8,850 soldiers were deployed from other areas, 4,350 to Estonia and 4,500 to Latvia.

The importance of the top secret Operation *Coastal Storm* is shown by the participation in the deportations of the F. Dzerzhinsky USSR MGB 1st Motorized Rifle Division, decorated with the Order of Lenin. This army unit, numbered 3111, was stationed by Moscow.

5,025 submachine guns and 1,900 rifles were supplied to the Baltics from Moscow as additional armaments for the Internal Army, Party activists, and government officials.

The USSR MVD Escort Army’s 48th Division (unit number 00149), headquartered in Rīga, was actively involved in the preparations for the deportations. The divisional order of January 6, 1949, shows that the division commander was Major-General Yevgeny Kemerov and the deputy commander was Colonel P. Kohanovsky. Chief of the divisional staff was Colonel Nagorny. Commanding regiments stationed in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, the divisional staff had three sections: 1. Operational section, 2. Preparatory section, 3. Communications section. The division’s secret intelligence group also worked as a section.

On March 4, 1949, in accordance with USSR MVD Order No. 588-41 and USSR MVD Escort Army commander’s Directive No. 02000 dated January 27, 1949, the division’s acting commander Kohanovsky issued Order No. 12 appointing 108 train commanders from the Escort Army’s 48th Division.

Forty-two escort teams were formed from the 244th Rifle Regiment that “served Latvia,” averaging 36 persons per train.

The USSR MGB paid special attention to the secrecy of Operation *Coastal Storm*. On Burmak’s request, USSR Deputy Minister of State

Security S. Ogaltsov on March 7, 1949, approved the *Plan for Guaranteeing the Secrecy of Armed Forces Concentrations in Operational Districts*. The order forbade informing soldiers sent from Moscow, Saratov, Leningrad, and Minsk of the location of their detail stations for Operation *Coastal Storm*. Unit commanders received their packet of orders personally shortly before arriving at their stations. The plan states, "To mislead the inhabitants, spring military training exercises are to be staged openly." Unit commanders were forbidden to use the word "operation" in any document; orders, receipts, telephone conversations, etc., had to use "training exercises" instead. The plan required the "preparation of special procedures for MGB army units on preparing and loading onto trains the basic materials necessary for training exercises, i.e., blank rounds, training grenades, etc."

Thus, according to the USSR MGB's plan, soldiers were not allowed to know the place and nature of the upcoming operation until it started, possibly to avoid rumors about a recurrent genocidal activity that could spread to the neighboring "camp of capitalist countries."

Based on the USSR MGB plan of March 7, 1949, plans were approved in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to ensure that Operation *Coastal Storm* remained confidential. On March 15, 1949, Latvian SSR Minister of State Security Major-General Alfrēds Noviks approved the *Plan for the Utilization of Military Units that Arrived for the Struggle against Banditry and for Training Exercises, in Accordance with the Internal Army Chief Directorate Plan*. The plan had been put together on March 10 by the commander of the 5th Special Task Rifle Division, Lieutenant-General P. Leontyev, and divisional chief of staff Colonel Lopukhin. The plan first of all proposed to intensify the fight against the national partisans in the Latvian districts "most polluted with banditry." The plan also called for stationing out subunits from March 16 to 19 for area reconnaissance and surveillance. During this time the USSR Internal Army and the secret police would confirm the existence and location of the "special settlers."

Besides the secrecy measures of Operation *Coastal Storm*, political, Communist Party, and Komsomol (Communist Youth) organizations intensified personnel preparation for the upcoming training exercises. Party and Komsomol meetings discussed the issue: *Communist (or Komsomol) duties in the upcoming training exercises*; they attended lectures titled *Observation – the main weapon of the Cheka soldier, Defending the honor and respect of the MGB armies*, etc. The campaign against drinking was stepped up and incidents severely punished.

Republic-level Party authorities based their work plans on Moscow's guidelines for the ideological preparation of MGB Interior Army soldiers. Estonia put together a particularly comprehensive *Plan for political activity to ensure success of the operation*.

Operation *Coastal Storm* was also provided the most modern communications. An additional 2,210 communications personnel were assigned to the operation. Radio communications were maintained with outlying MGB sections and with the railway "loading stations." Communications between the operation's leaders and the MGB at the republic level were ensured by radio and high-frequency telephone lines. Township MGB section communications with the republic-level MGB, district MGB sections, and operations groups took place mainly by telephone. As stated in Burmak's final report, all telephone exchanges were under the control of the MGB.

All soldiers, government officials, and Party activists were informed of this USSR government mission six to ten hours before the start of the operation on the morning of March 25, 1949. All those on duty at the Party and Komsomol Central Committees and township and district committees who asked for a telephone line to the republic-level MGB using the password "coastal storm" were connected immediately. Those who used the password "collection" were connected after a short wait.

76,212 persons took part in the deportation of the inhabitants of the Baltic states. 8,215, or 10.78%, of the "punishment administrators" were Chekists, mainly leaders of the operations groups. Two entire divisions – 21,206 persons, or 27.7% – were from the USSR MGB. 18,378, or 24.13%, were local Balts, soldiers in the Extermination Battalions. The largest number of "punishment administrators," 28,404 or 37.27%, were Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian government officials and Party activists.

Therefore, we have to discard the myth that we were deported by Chekists and MGB forces. In fact, 61.4% of those who carried out the deportation, the majority, were local Communists, Komsomol members, and government authorities. 46,791 Communists, Komsomol members, and Extermination Battalion soldiers participated directly in the operation's "punishment administration" expeditions. In addition to these "field workers," there were others on duty at the township, district, and city committees, the Party and Komsomol Central Committees, as well as those of the rural, town, and city councils. This could be explicated only by seeing full documentation from the Party CCs of each Baltic

state and from the CPSU CC, if it still exists. But it is clear that besides "field punishment administrators" there were also "office punishment administrators."

Reports of the USSR MGB give information on the "punishment administrators'" work in the field. The deportation was carried out by operations groups of nine or ten persons, each commanded by an MGB operations officer. Each operations group consisted of two MGB officials, two Extermination Battalion soldiers, and four or five government or Party officials. These local Communists were 44.4% to 55.5% of those who directly participated in the operation. Some were armed. They mainly served as guides, and, under guard of the USSR MGB soldiers, catalogued and took away the possessions of the "special settlers." On the average, each operations group deported fourty-four families.

12% of the families living within 15-20 km of the loading stations and "special settler" collection points were delivered there by freight trucks, but most were transported in 8,422 lighter vehicles, 3,412 (40.5%) of which were provided by the Soviet army and the Internal Army, and 5,010 (59.5%) by the local civilian sector. In addition, 700 Internal Army automobiles were used in preparing for the operation, transporting operations personnel and Internal Army sub-units.

2,000 military vehicles from the Baltic Military District, 1,202 from the Leningrad Military District, and 210 from the Belorussian Military District were used for "special transports," as well as 1,250 tons of gasoline specially brought in. The vehicles were first brought to the borders of the three Baltic states and sent in to their designated places only at the beginning of the operation on March 25. They had all been inspected beforehand by MGB officers. The "special transports" were commanded by 106 USSR MGB officers.

In addition to trucks, railroads were also used in transporting the "special contingents." 118 railroad stations were designated and supplied with 4,437 boxcars modified for transporting the "special settlers."

On March 25, 1949, in the Baltic states 29,974 families, 92,204 persons in total, were arrested and taken to departure and collection points for transport to Siberia. Burmak's final report states that by 6:00 pm on March 28, 89,874 persons were "picked up," of whom 87,589 (97.45%) were "loaded up" and sent in 66 trains (86.9% of the total number of trains sent). Families sent later may be those who managed to hide for a time, who were not sent earlier in error, etc.

Deportations from the Baltic states, 1949

Republic	Families	Persons	%
Lithuania	9,518	31,917	33.7
Latvia	13,624	42,149	44.5
Estonia	7,488	20,713	21.8
Total	30,630	94,779	100.0

The socio-economic and ethnic characteristics of the "special settlers," their education, number of children, and birth and survival rate in the "special settlements" is the focus of future research. However, some unverified figures are available that shed light on the gender, age, and place of settlement and work of the "special deportees."

Deportees from the Baltic states by gender and age, 1949

Number of persons	%
Men	25,708
Women	41,987
Children	27,084
Total	94,779

This table shows the nature of the Communist occupation regime. 72.9% of the "special settlers" were women and children under the age of sixteen. Over two-thirds of the "class enemies" deported from the Baltic states were women and children.

If one believes the figures given on September 23, 1988, by USSR KGB chairman Viktor M. Chebrikov to the CPSU CC Politburo commission on the repressions of 1930–1950, 195,707 persons were deported from the Baltic states to the USSR from 1941 to 1953 (not including those arrested and shot).

Information on their final destination has survived for 54.4% of the "special settlers" from the Baltic states. 23.8% of the Balts were sent to the Omsk region, about the same number to the Krasnoyarsk area and the Novosibirsk region, and 5.7% to the Amur region.

96.9% of the Baltic “special settlers” were forced to work in the Red Empire’s sovkhoses and kolkhozes, and only 2.1% in factories.

Of those deported in 1949, 4,123 (4.54%) died by December 31, 1950. This included 2,080 children (2.3%). 903 children were born in that same time period.

Operation *Coastal Storm* earned recognition. It was praised by the highest-level Communist organizations down to the republican central committees. District and city Party committees discussed the results derived from the operation “to remove special objects” and acclaimed a job excellently done. In March 1949, the Central Committee of Latvia’s Communist Party, with MGB Internal Army Major-General Golovko in attendance, discussed the operation’s splendid results in removing “kulak and nationalistic elements” from the Latvian SSR.

The USSR MGB Internal Army also received high praise for carrying out the “special government mission.” Operations Summary No. 002 of the Internal Army’s 24th Rifle Regiment states that on March 25, 1949, the regiment participated in “the operation to remove special objects” from 12 regions in Eastern Latvia. Per Order No. 00163 of the commander of the USSR MGB Internal Army’s 5th Rifle Division, titled *Regarding results gained in the operation due to the regiment’s participation in operations support and regarding advancement of personnel*, dated April 4, 1949, fourteen persons “were awarded a personal photograph taken by the unfurled regimental flag, seven received ten days’ vacation, and 272 soldiers and sergeants received official thanks. Punishment for Captain V. Pugachov, Captain V. Pavlovsky, and Junior Lieutenant Kostrikov was revoked.”

On May 12, 1949, Major-General Pipashev of the F. Dzerzhinsky USSR MGB 1st Motorized Rifle Division, decorated with the Order of Lenin and the Order of the Red Banner, requested that the head of Internal Army Chief Directorate Major-General P. Burmak approve awarding 84 officers of this division with war medals for courage and heroism shown in deporting the peaceful inhabitants of the Baltic states. The division summarized its work in Order No. 032 of May 30, 1949, called *Regarding the results achieved by the division’s escort units fulfilling the mission of escorting the special deportees’ trains*. All in all, the division’s regiments handled the “special deportees” excellently well.

The government of the USSR also thanked the leaders and most active participants of the “special mission” for its successful completion. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in its secret decree *Regarding advancement of generals, officers, sergeants, and soldiers of*

the organs and armed forces of the USSR Ministry of State Security and the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs for the successful execution of the special government mission awarded decorations and medals to more than a hundred persons. Parts of the decree were published in the newspaper *Pravda* on August 25, 1949, and also in September. Seventy-five persons were awarded the military Order of the Red Star, including some Latvians: VDM Colonel Jānis Vēvers, VDM Major Ovans Zujevs, Colonel Nikolajs Platkājis of the militia, Captain Pēteris Reinholds, VDM Major-General Augusts Eglītis. Most of the Chekists were awarded the Fatherland War Medal, First Class, but for unknown reasons publication of the list of names was discontinued.

For the past thousand years, the Baltic peoples and their countries have been repeatedly occupied by great powers — at least by countries that consider themselves as such. In the past century alone, Communists have “liberated” the Baltic peoples and countries three times. In the past fifty years, Communist genocide was directed against the indigenous population of the Baltics. This was the largest wave of mass destruction experienced by the Baltic peoples in their entire history, and the apogee of this destruction was Operation *Coastal Storm* in 1949.

Some conclusions

1. Operation *Coastal Storm*, the secret, mass punishment operation that deported about 100,000 persons from the Baltic states, was organized by the highest-level institutions of the Communist Party and Soviet government.

2. The similarities between Operation *Coastal Storm* and the Nazi death camps, such as Auschwitz, must be emphasized, especially the secrecy and precision of their planning and execution.

3. Most of the Baltic states' political, professional, and cultural élites had fled into exile in 1944 and 1945. Many others were already in the Gulag camps, still fighting in national partisan units, or had already been killed. Therefore, the mass deportation of 1949 cannot be considered the destruction of the “enemy class,” but instead ruthless revenge on the Baltic peoples for their active and passive resistance to the third Communist occupation.

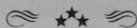
4. Thus, the mass deportation of the Baltic peoples of Operation *Coastal Storm* is a crime against humanity by the Communist Party and the Soviet government, an occupying power. There is no statute of limitations on crimes against humanity.

5. In carrying out Operation *Coastal Storm*, the Communist Party and the Soviet government sought to:

- a) completely suppress the Baltic peoples' armed and unarmed resistance to the occupation;
- b) facilitate the forced collectivization of agriculture in the Baltic states;
- c) clear the Baltic countries of their inhabitants to make it easier to colonize them with others.

Despite the rumors that circulated about deportation of "enemies of the working class," the USSR Ministry of State Security's policies of secrecy and disinformation in carrying out Operation *Coastal Storm* gave the desired results, because in fact their victims were on the whole completely unprepared for what happened to them.

Recently a collection of articles called *Blood Does Not Stain Executioners* (in Latvian, *Asinis nenotraipa bēdēdus*) was published in Moscow. This book details the barbarism of Communist power and lists its famous Chekists. There are also no bloodstains on the hands of the Chekists or their helpers in the Baltic states, where every third inhabitant suffered Communist atrocities during the Soviet occupation. Therefore, there is much research to be done in the Baltic states. Scholarly research, discussions, and conferences on armed and unarmed resistance are needed, and they have to be supported by state funding. It will not be possible to overcome the past of the occupation or renew democracy in the Baltic states without morally condemning the Communist regime.



*Sindija Dimanta
Indulis Zālīte*

STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE DEPORTATIONS OF THE 1940'S

The USSR's justification of the deportation and its executors

The repressive institutions of the Soviet Union started to deport the inhabitants of the Baltic states to the sparsely inhabited, furthest regions of the USSR just after the countries' occupation and incorporation into the USSR, and continued to do so regularly until the end of the 1950s.

The first large deportation took place in mid-June, 1941, mainly on one night, the 14th. The following references to specific Soviet decrees are found in documents of the NKVD of the USSR: Decree No. 1299-526ss, May 14, 1941, of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU CC) and the USSR Council of People's Commissars; plan approved by the NKVD/NKGB of the USSR on June 14, 1941; a note stating that "the deportations took place in accordance with Comrade Beria's decree of April 14, 1941, which he issued in accordance with the government decree." These decrees concerned Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Moldavia.

The deportations of the citizens of the Baltic republics from 1945 to 1949 were carried out in accordance with the following decrees: telegraphed order, June 16, 1945, of the USSR NKVD; USSR Council of Ministers' decree of January 29, 1949, on the deportation of kulaks and their families and the families of bandits and nationalists from the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian SSRs. The operations were prepared and carried out in complete secrecy. It is not possible at this time from the information available to identify and name those who prepared the lists of people to be deported for the state security apparatus. For the 1949 deportation, they were most probably local Party organizers and chairmen of the executive committees.

However, documents relating to the deportations allow the identification of those persons in the state security apparatus of the Latvian SSR who approved the deportations of Latvia's inhabitants in 1941 and from 1949 to 1953.

1941:

1. Semyon Shustin (1908-1978), LSSR Assistant People's Commissar for Internal Affairs – approved deportation of 6,646 persons;
2. Jānis Cinis (1911), LSSR Assistant People's Commissar for Internal Affairs – 2,479 persons;
3. Zinovy Krivickis /Zyama/ (1910), Chief of NKVD Special Unit 1 – 1,1915 persons;
4. Aleksandr Brezgin, LSSR Assistant People's Commissar for Internal Affairs – 1,138 persons.

1949 to 1953:

1. Alfons Noviks (1908-1996), LSSR Minister of State Security – 41,544 persons (1949);
2. Fotij Peshehonov (1913), VDM (*Valsts Drošības Ministrija*, LSSR Ministry of State Security) Assistant Chief of the Department of Investigation – 141 persons (1949-1953);
3. Jānis Vēvers (1899), LSSR Assistant Minister of State Security for Special Operations – 51 persons (1951-1953).

This information can be supplemented with the names of officials in the LSSR Ministry of State Security and LSSR Ministry of Internal Affairs who were awarded the Order of the Red Banner and the Order of the Fatherland War, 1st Rank, in 1949 for “successfully carrying out the government's special assignments.” These are war medals, awarded for achievements in military operations on the battlefield. This testifies to the fact that the Soviets placed great importance on the deportation operations.

In all, the Order of the Red Banner was awarded to 75 persons throughout the Soviet Union for “heroic deeds carried out during the deportations.” Soon afterwards, all 75 were also promoted.

Now, they are all dead.

The deported persons were divided into two groups: 1. administratively detained persons, and 2. arrested persons.

In 1941, after administrative detention, persons – generally male heads of families – were separated from their families, arrested, charged with the criminal offense of high treason (Paragraph 58 of the Russian SFSR Criminal Code), and sentenced mainly by *troikas* (three officials) to long prison terms or death. “Taking into account their danger to society, all to

be shot" – handwritten note signed by Semyon Shustin on a list of arrestees. In other cases, persons were arrested, deported, and then tried in their place of banishment.

Those arrested were charged on two counts, the deportation charge and the criminal charge. Most people were tried in Latvia, but the prominent members of Latvian society, such as government officials, diplomats, military leaders, and public officials, were tried in the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR).

What were the reasons for the arrests? Among others, they were: having been in the Latvian National Guard, police force, or the military, having been active in community affairs, and lack of a positive attitude or having a negative attitude toward the new order. These persons were labeled as "anti-Soviet elements" or "elements dangerous to society." In 1949, those arrested were supporters of the national partisans, "kulaks," nationalists, and others.

In 1952, the "special deportees" from the Baltic states were classified into four groups: "deported from the Baltics in 1941," "deported from Lithuania from 1945 to 1948," "deported from the Baltics in 1949," "kulaks deported from Lithuania in 1951."

They were also categorized as: deported for a given period of time (1941); deported for an undisclosed period of time (1945-1949); and deported for life (1949).

Up to now, research on the mass deportations of Latvia's inhabitants in 1941, 1949, and other years has been based mainly on reports of the institutions that carried out the operations, and has been limited by the data found in these reports. That research was done in Russia as well as Latvia.

Number of deportees

In our database, the number of deported persons in chronological order is:

- o from 1941 to the end of the war 14,428 persons
- o 1949 42,975 persons
- o counted after serving their sentence (persons forbidden to return to Latvia by decrees of the LSSR Council of Ministers) 1,376 persons
- o deported from 1945 to 1958, excluding 1949 514 persons

In all, 0.74% of Latvia's inhabitants were deported in 1941, and 2.28% in 1949.

Reasons for deportation

In practically all cases, persons were detained and then deported by administrative decree following lists that had been drawn up earlier.

In the 1941 deportations men detained by administrative decree were much more often arrested as a safety measure than in 1949 - 58% of the total number of men deported in 1941, and 7% in 1949, or 29% and 2% respectively of the total number of persons deported. 63.6% of the men arrested were between 30 and 50 years old, and 28% were between 50 and 70 years old. More than half, 54%, had been in the National Guard. Criminal charges were filed against those arrested.

42% of the men in 1941 and 85% in 1949 were deported with their families. In 1941, 43% of the families included male children under 10 years of age, and 35% included males from 10 to 20 years of age.

The arrests can be considered as the Soviet regime's attempts at making the 1941 deportations seem at least somewhat legal on the surface. In some cases the arrests were substantiated by the bringing of criminal charges. The criminal charge against an arrestee was also automatically ascribed to the members of his family.

In 1949, 5.2% of all deportees were appended to the lists of those to be deported some time after the basic lists were drawn up. This is another unique characteristic of the 1949 deportation.

Deportees by sex

In 1941, approximately equal numbers of men and women were deported. 0.80% of all the men living in Latvia and 0.69% of all the women living in Latvia were deported.

In 1949, more women than men were deported. Women were 58.1%, greater than the percentage of women in Latvia at the time, which was 56.2%. In total 2.35% of all the women and 2.18% of all the men were deported. In contrast to the men's deportation of 1941, this could be called the women's deportation.

Age structure

Using census data from 1935, we calculated the percentages deported in each age group. The 1941 deportations mainly affected men 40-50, 30-

40, and 50-60 years old (in decreasing order) and women 30-40 years old. 32.3% of those deported were under 20 years of age, and 17.4% were under 10 years of age.

Seven children were born and 28 persons died in transit to the place of banishment. Sixty children were born there up to March 1942.

The available data for 1949 shows only the deportee's age groups. The number of women deported aged 20-60 was very large, about 1.5 times that of the men, but that corresponds with the proportions of women and men in the population in 1949. 31.95% of those deported were under 20 years of age, 14% were under 10, and 7.56% were older than 70.

Ethnic composition

Comparison analysis on the percent of each ethnic group in Latvia deported is possible only for the 1941 deportations, because data about national ethnic composition in 1949 is not available. No censuses were taken from 1943 to 1959.

Calculations on 1941 were done using the 1935 census data assuming that the relative ethnic structure of the population in 1941 was the same as in 1935. Corrections were made in the German group, as there was a mass repatriation of the Germans in 1939.

In 1941, the group suffering relatively the most deportations was the Jews - 1.9% of all Jews living in Latvia were deported. For Latvians the figure is 0.8%, and for Russians - 0.4%. These figures disprove the common claim that the deportations affected all ethnic groups equally.

By occupation

In 1941 almost 23% of the deportees were farmers, 19% were students, and 13.7% were housewives. In 1949, farmers were about 52% of those deported, elementary school-age children and the elderly - about 18%, and students - 16%.

Decrease in the percentage of Latvians

This analysis of the number of Latvians born relative to the total number of births was done using data from the state register of inhabitants. From 1941 to 1942 there was a slight drop in the birth rate, about 3.6%, but this cannot be all attributed to the "Year of Terror" and the deportations. It is probably also significant that war started on Latvia's territory.

From about the 75% level, the Latvian relative birth rate fell sharply in 1944. In 1946 it stabilized at 40-45% and remained at that level until Latvia regained its independence.

Deportations - genocide against the Latvian people

Paragraph 2 of the United Nations' Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted December 8, 1948, defines genocide as follows:

This convention considers to be genocide actions that are done to completely or partially destroy a national, ethnic, or religious group:

- a) killing members of such groups;
- b) physically or psychologically harming member of such groups;
- c) intentionally creating living conditions for a group of people that cause the complete or partial destruction of the group;
- d) creating conditions such that children are not born to a group of people;
- e) forcibly giving one group's children to another group of people.

The deportations carried out in Latvia and their consequences have the characteristics of genocide set out in the Convention. Together with the rest of the Soviet regime's operations (the "Year of Terror" actions, forced Russification, the dissolution of Latvia in the infrastructure of the USSR, etc.), they are sufficient to show the policies that the Soviet regime carried out in occupied Latvia.

Summary

This article is about one the most painful acts of violence carried out against the Latvian people in this century, the mass deportations of the 1940s. On June 14, 1941, and March 25, 1949, 0.74% and 2.28% respectively of the total number of Latvia's inhabitants were taken from their homes and sent to the furthest reaches of the USSR by decrees of the Soviet Union's Communist Party and its state organs.

Structural analysis of the victims of the 1940s deportations in Latvia was done using various parameters: reasons for deportation, sex, ethnicity, age, and occupation.

In 1941, men (heads of families) generally were arrested (29% of

those deported), and the criminal charges were also automatically ascribed to their family members. In 1941, more men than women were deported. In 1949, more women than men were deported.

In 1941, 1.9% of all Jews, 0.8% of all Latvians, and 0.4% of all Russians living in Latvia were deported. In both 1941 and 1949 more than 30% of the deportees were under 20 years of age, and about 15% were under 10 years of age. In 1941, 0.69% of all women living in Latvia were deported, and in 1949, 2.35% of all women living in Latvia were deported.

Comparing the birth rate of Latvians and other ethnic groups over time, it was shown that from 1944 to 1945 the Latvian relative birth rate dropped from about 75% to 40-45%, and remained there until the renewal of Latvia's independence.



Frank Gordon

A TRAGEDY OF FALSE PREMISES

Just after the Red Army crossed the Latvian border from the east and the south, the fearsome Soviet proconsul, Andrey Vishinsky arrived in Riga. Vishinsky had been the prosecutor at the infamous Moscow trials of 1935–1938. In Riga he played the role that Hitler's first gauleiter, Seyss-Inquart, played in Vienna. Vishinsky implemented the sovietization of Latvia: the installment of a puppet government, mock elections, the deportation of the president, and finally, outright annexation.

Why did I title this article "A tragedy of false premises"?

Many Jews believed that Bolshevism in 1940 would be something different, something more moderate than in 1919, and that the Nazi threat would be fully eliminated with the arrival of the Red Army. Many Latvians believed that the Red regime was essentially Jewish and that only Germany could give them back a free and independent Latvia.

However, it must be realized that *before* June 17, 1940, the Latvian people were more inclined to be vaguely pro-Russian, rather than pro-German. Latvians well remembered 700 years of servitude under German knights and barons, czarist punitive expeditions in 1906 led by the German barons, the Latvian Riflemen's heroic battles against the kaiser's army in 1915–1917, the fledgling Latvian national armed forces' defensive fight against von der Goltz's Landeswehr and the German mercenaries' Iron Division in the summer and fall of 1919.

Pan-German Nazism was always unpopular in Latvia. Latvian boys would get into fights with young Baltic German Nazi sympathizers, in their black shorts and white socks. Few were sorry to see the Baltic Germans go, when in the fall of 1939 they were officially repatriated by Hitler. With them went some Latvians, who had suddenly discovered German relatives. In a radio speech on October 12, 1939, President Ulmanis contemptuously said: "If anyone wants to leave, go ahead. But don't come back."

But when the Russians (and, it seemed to many, Jews) were running the country, many Latvians longed for the flirtation between Stalin and Hitler to end, for it seemed their only hope was in Berlin and

Koenigsberg. They could not know what was happening behind the scenes. They recalled that in October 1939, Molotov ridiculed England and France for their intent to annihilate Hitlerism, calling it an attempt to renew the religious wars of the Middle Ages; they saw Britain and the United States helplessly standing by as not only Hitler, but also Stalin occupied one country after another. They could not know that London was formulating the Baku Project ("Military Implications of Hostilities with Russia"), which foresaw supporting uprisings among the peoples of Trans-Caucasia and Soviet Central Asia (see William Stevenson, *Intrepid's Last Case*, 1983), and that 60,000 British soldiers were prepared to invade Soviet territory from the Middle East. They only sensed that Stalin and Hitler were having differences of opinion over the division of the spoils, and that a conflict was developing between the two totalitarian giants.

During the summer and fall of 1940, the sovietization of Latvia progressed rapidly. In an article published in *Soviet Jewish Affairs* (vol. 5, no.1, 1975), Dov Levin writes:

Jews who had taken an active part in the Communist Party, in the Komsomol, and in peripheral organizations during the underground period (some of the only recently freed from prison) were appointed to responsible positions in the Party, in the trade unions, and in other organizations, especially in Riga. Particularly noticeable were those who had been active in the spheres of information and journalism (among them K. Berkovits, director of the propaganda section of the Central Committee of the Latvian Communist Party). A well-known Riga physician, Dr. M. Joffe, was appointed to the senior position of People's Commissar for Health. J. Blumenthal was appointed director of the state bank. Other Jews filled other high civic positions in Riga and provincial cities. [...]

Even more impressive for the self-esteem of the Jewish community was the comparatively large number of Jews serving in the police force, including the senior ranks. The custom in the armed forces was that Jewish soldiers who were promoted were given duties in the political apparatus. A number of young Jews were admitted to the officers' academy, which at the time was known as the Riga Infantry School.

Levin further points out a very significant fact:

Almost unlimited opportunities were offered to young Jewish men

and women to participate in security and military activities upon the establishment of the militant formation "Workers' Guard." The Guard, set up by a decision of the Central Committee of the Latvian Communist Party on July 2, 1940, was initially intended to serve as a kind of police auxiliary and support force for the government "in its struggle against counterrevolutionary groups." The organization, stationed in Riga and other large cities, was constituted on a military basis and comprised about 10,000 men and women.... Its members included not only Jewish Communists and Komsomol members, but also former members of the Bund, the left Poale Zion, and former members of the Zionist Socialist "hakhsharot." The organization's clubs and centers served also to promote ideological activities and social events. In some areas, most of the members were Jews, so their activities were conducted in Yiddish, at least for part of the time.

The conspicuous position of the Jews in the new regime and its political and administrative apparatus caused the Letts to identify the whole of the Jewish community with the hated Soviet regime, which had been imposed upon them by the Red Army.

Stalin and Beria crowned all that with a Machiavellian decree, appointing a Russian Jew, Semion Shustin, as People's Commissar (Minister) for State Security in the Latvian SSR. Many of his assistants, especially in the KGB, were local Jews, who knew both Russian and Latvian.

In May 1941, when the German-Soviet war had not yet started, Shustin ordered the shooting of my schoolmate, the very young son of the MEDFRO pharmaceutical plant owner Fronckēvičs, for alleged treason. Against which country? On June 26, 1941, while preparing to flee from Riga, Shustin took the time to sign Order No. 412, the death sentence for 78 Latvians. He used red ink, misspelling the Russian: "Considering the social danger they represent, all must be shot." What one must ask, is "social danger"?

Is it any wonder that the Latvian leader of the infamous "Arājs group," which shot Jewish civilians in July 1941 to oblige the Germans, was called "Shustin" by the group's members? And is it any wonder that Dov Levin, who interviewed hundreds of people in Israel and abroad researching the Jewish communities of 1939-1941 in Eastern European territories taken over by the Soviet Union, encountered numerous difficulties: "Even 40 years later, many of the Jews who played a public

role in the short-lived *occupation regimes* were reticent about revealing their cooperation with the Russian authorities, for fear of being cast as *collaborators*" (see *Newsview*, Jerusalem, August 10, 1980).

In my opinion, it is significant that in 1936–1938 Stalin, suffering from a persecution complex, ordered tens of thousands of Latvian Bolsheviks, trustworthy Communist Party members, to be shot. If he had not done this, a large group of Latvian "Chekists" (KGB agents) led by Jēkabs Peterss and Mārtiņš Lācis-Sudrabs would have entered Latvia along with the Red Army and proceeded to arrest, interrogate, and shoot their own "bourgeois" compatriots. As it was, there were no "national cadres" left in the ranks of the KGB, and the dirty work was entrusted to the Jews.

Latvians also worked with the Soviet occupiers during that year, the "year of terror" (*Baigais gads*). There were those who were naive, there were opportunists, cynics, careerists, toadies. Macabre incidents abounded, among them the following (from the memoirs of J. Kārklīņš). When the Bolshevik regime was established, a Mrs. Dāvis made the rounds of well-to-do families' summer homes, looking to appropriate choice pieces of furniture before the homes and goods were nationalized. The woman was the wife of the well-known teacher and pathologic anti-Semite Dāvis, who openly expressed his desire to eliminate the "Jewish scum" and during the Nazi occupation years published a series of pamphlets called the "Anti-Semite's Library."

Another side of the complex situation is given by Peggie Benton, a former chief of the visa office in the British consulate in Riga, who recalls in her book *Baltic Countdown* (London 1984):

... the streets were quiet. Not so our office, which spilled a queue of terrified applicants through the Consulate and out onto the path. Stories of Russian anti-Semitism had reached Riga.... With the escape route to the United Kingdom virtually cut, the demand for British visas eased, but now, in spite of the threat of Arab violence, the unfortunate Jews were determined to use any means of getting to Palestine.

In the spring of 1938, Peggie Benton was in Vienna and witnessed the *Anschluss*, the annexation of Austria to Germany. In Latvia in 1940, for the second time we had seen a country invaded and disrupted, and the suffering that this brought. But whereas in Vienna the Jews had borne the brunt of the German annexation and the tenor of daily life continued more or less the same, in Latvia there was

a total downgrading of the environment. For most people, it was the end of the pleasant life they had struggled to build up and the death of their hopes.

The effect of the two takeovers might be compared with that of a man attacking a meadow with a scythe, or one flattening it with a bulldozer.

Latvian Jews soon came to feel the effect of this bulldozer, and not just in the nationalization of industrial and commercial enterprises, which affected all inhabitants. All noncommunist Jewish organizations were banned, all "reactionary" Jewish books in public libraries, reading rooms, and clubs were confiscated, all Jewish schools had to change from Hebrew to Yiddish, and Max Schatz-Anin's newspaper *Kamf* and journal *Ufboj* carried out a vicious and slanderous campaign against rabbis and the Jewish faith. If such blasphemy had appeared in gentile papers, it would have immediately been labeled blatant anti-Semitism. Zionists, especially those active in the rightist Betar organization, were arrested and deported starting in the summer and fall of 1940. The famous historian Simon Dubnov, whose eightieth birthday, September 18, 1940, was celebrated by Jewish communities overseas, pursued his academic work at home, in almost total isolation.

Dov Levin writes:

On the night of June 13–14, 1941, there began a mass deportation of undesirable elements from the Soviet Latvia. From that night on, thousands of Jews, whose attitude to the new regime was considered to be hostile or at least reserved, were arrested and herded into goods trains bound for the Soviet interior.

Historians estimate the number of Jewish deportees from Latvia to be 5–6,000. After the Hitler–Stalin Pact of August 23, 1939, and the Soviet occupation of eastern Poland, the Baltic countries, Bessarabia, and Romanian Bukovina, some 1,900,000 Jews came under Soviet control. Of these, about 400,000 were deported to Siberia and central Asia (L. Unger and C. Jelen, *L'Express*, Paris 1985).

Among those deported were former deputies of the Saeima, including the representative of the Jewish Bund, Noah Maisel, also industrialists, rabbis, teachers, merchants, doctors, and completely apolitical people, who had been denounced by ill-wishers. My parents' best friends were H. Berlin and his wife, who with their two children – boys about my age – lived at 26 Tērbatas Street in Riga. The Berlin family was not rich,

they owned no land, no houses, no businesses. The head of the family was a smalltime textile salesman. However, he had good taste, and invested his modest savings in antique furniture, carpets, and tapestries, so the family's apartment looked quite luxurious. Apparently someone out of envy notified the authorities. The Berlin family was deported to Siberia. The parents died there of starvation; the fate of the boys is unknown.

Levin continues:

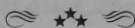
The day after the outbreak of the war (June 23, 1941), some 250 Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria, some of them Communists, were arrested and deported from Riga to Siberia. Some of them were accompanied by their Latvia-born wives.

This group included the historian Herbert Rosenkranz, an emigrant from Austria, and the philosopher J.A. Wohlgemuth, who was born in Berlin.

Many of the deportees were sent to the Solikamsk, Vyatka, and Vorkuta camps. Some of the women, children, and others were taken to Narym and Novosibirsk. I know that many of these Jewish victims of Bolshevism continued friendly relations with the Latvian deportees in the taiga and tundra, for they shared the same fate and had a common enemy, Red fascism.

The Memorial Hall of the Jewish communities of Latvia and Estonia is located not far from Tel Aviv, at the kibbutz Shfayim. The wall of the conference room is covered with memorial plaques inscribed with the names of prominent Jews and where they died – Rumbula, Biķernieki, the Riga ghetto, Bergen-Belsen, and also Petchora, Vorkuta, and Solikamsk.

Unfortunately, in those terrible days when 16,000 men, women, and children were torn from their midst, Latvians in Latvia noticed only that the perpetrators were not just Russians and Latvians, but also Jews – “again those Jews!” And this stuck in their memory.



Arnolds Aizsilnieks

THE EXPLOITATION OF LATVIA'S ECONOMY DURING THE GERMAN OCCUPATION, 1941-1945

(abridged)

On June 22, 1941, Germany started war against the Soviet Union. Germany captured Liepāja on June 28, Rīga on July 1, and all of Latvia soon afterwards.

Many Latvians greeted the German soldiers as liberators, thinking that the Germans came to help them regain their freedom. It soon became clear that this was not Germany's goal. Germany planned to incorporate Latvia and the other Baltic states into its empire and Germanize (*ein-deutschen*) their inhabitants. Those who turned out to be unsuitable for Germanization would be resettled into Russia's further reaches. Thus, the idea of colonizing the Baltic states again reared its head.

The first unit of the Swinemünde Economic Task Force arrived in Rīga on July 6, 1941. It was soon renamed the Rīga Economic Task Force (*Wirtschaftskommando Riga*), and started to organize Latvia's economy. To this end, it took up contact with the most prominent persons in the remaining Latvian state agencies.

On July 17, 1941, Hitler formed a special ministry for the Eastern occupied territories (*Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete*) and appointed Alfred Rosenberg its head. In another decree that same day, Hitler combined Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Belorussia into an administrative unit called Ostland. Reich Commissioner Heinrich Lohse was appointed its civil administrator.

The first German civil administration in Latvia started to function on August 20, 1941, under General Commissioner Otto Heinrich Drechsler. He was first based in Jelgava, but later moved to Rīga. German civil administration took effect in all of Latvia on September 1, 1941.

The General Commissioner had six regional commissioners (*Gebietskommissare*) under him: in Liepāja, Jelgava, Valmiera, Daugavpils, the city of Rīga, and the Rīga region. Each region in turn had district farm leaders (*Kreislandwirte*), who saw to it that farmers delivered the full measure of requisitioned products, as well as many other German officials. In all there were 25,000 German officials and overseers in Latvia.

There were several reasons for this large influx of German officials into Latvia. First, in light of the planned Germanization of the Baltic peoples, some German agencies tried to get in as many Germans as possible even while the war was still going on. Second, as will be seen later, the German agencies tried to squeeze as many goods as possible out of the Baltic states, especially food products and raw materials necessary for industry. To carry out and monitor this process required a large number of persons loyal to Germany. Third, Germans themselves wanted to live in the Baltic states, as living conditions were better and the standard of living higher than in Germany. Not to mention that one could avoid the front lines of the war.

Latvia also had a so-called "Directorate" or "Self-Administration," headed by General Oskars Dankers, which was strictly subordinate to the German civil administration mentioned above. The Directorates in the Baltic states were officially constituted on March 7, 1942, and evidently were meant to create the impression that each of the three Baltic states had its own independent self-government.

The Latvian Directorate consisted of several General Directorates, corresponding roughly to the agencies that had existed in independent Latvia except for defense and foreign affairs. At the head of each General Directorate was a General Director, a Latvian. In a decree dated August 15, 1942, the General Commissioner defined the rights of the Latvian General Directors as follows:

1. The General Directors are authorized, within the boundaries of the rights given to the General Commissioner, to promulgate decrees and executive regulations with the force of law.
2. The decrees and executive regulations in each and every case require my (i.e., the General Commissioner's) approval beforehand.

This meant that the General Directors' only purpose was to carry out the General Commissioner's directions.

The Latvian General Directors functioned in Rīga until September 27, 1944, when they transferred to Liepāja. Soon thereafter they had to leave for Germany, as the Soviet army took Rīga on October 13, 1944.

It was only in February 1945, when the Baltic states except for the small area called "Fortress Kurzeme" were again occupied by the Soviet army, that the German authorities decided to allow Latvians to form something resembling a government, to raise the fighting spirit of the

Latvian Legion. This "government" was called the National Committee, and on February 25, 1945, the Latvians in Germany chose General Rūdolfis Bangerskis as its leader.

The German army capitulated to the Allies on May 8, 1945, and as a result, all of Latvia again came under the domination of the Soviet Union.

The economic policy of the German occupation

Despite the fact that there was a one-man dictatorship in Germany, it is hard to discern a uniform, consistent line in the German economic policy of the occupied Baltic states, except perhaps for one: to squeeze absolutely as much economic good as possible out of the occupied states.

First, Hermann Göring, the head of Germany's Four-Year Economic Plan (*Vierjahresplan*), assumed that war with the Soviet Union would last only a few months, and in his secret "Green Folder" recommended that the occupied territories be milked dry. At the November 8, 1941, session discussing the Four-Year Plan, Göring proposed that overall the occupied Eastern territories be used like colonies and colonial methods be employed there. The Four-Year Plan and Göring himself were of great significance in the formation of the economic policy of the occupied Baltic states.

As will be seen later, this Plan's administrative agency created and directed large monopolistic firms whose purpose was to ruthlessly take food products and raw materials out of the occupied territories. The firms received their directions straight from Berlin and were independent of the commissioners appointed to the occupied territories.

A second institution that tried to form economic policy in the occupied Baltic states was Alfred Rosenberg's ministry, which had been formed to govern the Eastern territories. Rosenberg thought that the occupied territories should not be merely plundered, but their production capabilities should be utilized so as to get more out of them in the long run. The territories were closer to the front than Germany, so their industry would be able to supply the army faster and easier than Germany's industry. To this end, he envisaged setting up private companies there that would be rationally managed to make a profit.

The third group of importance in the making of economic policy in the occupied Baltic states was the German military complex. In his March 13, 1941, plan for the administration of the occupied territories after Operation Barbarossa (the invasion of the Soviet Union), the Head of the German Armed Forces High Command (*Der Chef des Ober-*

kommandos der Wehrmacht) Wilhelm Keitel provided for special armed forces officers (*Wehrmachtbefehlshaber*) to operate in the rear. Their duties included diverting the economic wealth of the occupied territories to the German economy and supplying the armed forces as per orders of the army's commander-in-chief. These decrees took precedence over decrees of the Reich Commissioner or others.

The German war economy in the occupied territories developed according to Keitel's plan. The aforementioned tasks were done by a special war economic task force (*Wehrwirtschaftskommando*). One group operated in Rīga, and in its reports and bulletins repeatedly stressed that its mission was to manage the exploitation of Latvia's economy for the needs of the German war effort.

All the above tendencies could be seen at times in the various branches of the occupying power's economic policy in the occupied territories.

Reich Commissioner Lohse made clear the basic principle of the economic policy in his first speech:

The Bolsheviks captured Latvia and nationalized all property, such as houses, farm buildings, factories, etc. Everything became the property of the Soviet Union. [...] Driving the Bolsheviks out of Latvia, Germany takes over the property of the Soviet Union as spoils of war.

It was a big job to inventory and take over all the spoils of war the Germans gained in Latvia. They started immediately after Latvia's occupation, hurriedly attempting to inventory and appropriate stores of food and raw materials, as these would be the first to disappear.

The Germans also immediately started transferring these goods to Germany. The Rīga Economic Task Force in its monthly report states that the following had been sent to Germany in August 1941:

1. By sea: 49 ships with 8,000 t soybeans; 280 t butter; 1700 t plywood; 16,500 m [evidently should be m³] wood for paper production; 1,500 standart cut timbers; 1,700 t grains and other goods.
2. By rail: 95 t butter, and also 70 railcars with sugar, cement, and benzene.
3. By road: 860 t butter; 150,000 ea. eggs; and special wood materials for building airplanes.

The report further states that food products from Latvia were not only sent to Germany but also used to supply the army, while Latvia's civilian population was allotted only the minimal amount necessary. Henceforth the army would be provided with 200 cattle and 900 pigs a week. From the middle of July until the end of August, the German army in Riga alone was provided with 400 tons of butter, and, in addition, at least three times that amount was provided to the army directly from the dairies. In order to provide the army with sugar, sugar rationing had been imposed on the civilian inhabitants.

The German occupying authorities emptied Latvia not only of foodstuffs and raw materials, but also of factory equipment and machines, which they also regarded as the spoils of war. Almost every daily report written by the Riga Armaments Task Force (*Rüstungskommando Riga*) enumerates electric motors, traction engines, planing machines, and other equipment that had been found in closed businesses and sent to the German forces in Pskov and other places.

Factory equipment was also sent to Germany itself. For example, the Economic Task Force sent of 71 munitions machines from the firm Vairogs to Germany in September 1942, and sent five peeling machines from Rigas plywood factory to help rebuild a burnt plywood factory in Vienna, then part of Germany, in July 1943.

The German occupying agencies did not spare those firms that were not state property and therefore could not be regarded as legitimate spoils of war. As one example, in February 1944 German officers visited Latvia's dairies and confiscated equipment, spare parts, and containers that contained tin.

The management of state property

To manage the property left by the Soviet authorities and taken over by the German occupation authorities, the Reich Commissioner established the Fiduciary Administrative Board (*Treuhandverwaltung*). This board managed all property that had been held by the Soviet regime, except that belonging to governing institutions and that taken over by the armed forces. The Reich Commissioner appointed commissioners who were to manage this property like regular businessmen. Selling, mortgaging, or leasing the property required the permission of the Reich Commissioner.

Some of the industrial firms were leased or placed under the fiscal trusteeship of individual large German firms.

To promote the creation of German enterprises in the Baltic states, the Reich Commissioner decreed on January 26, 1942, that Germans could form joint stock and other companies, cooperatives, and unions according to German law, excepting only mutual insurance companies. These companies were listed in a special German enterprise register, which also registered sole proprietorships. Since in wartime nothing to speak of could be built privately, the newly-registered German firms in one way or another took over the earlier state-owned firms, or at least their buildings and offices.

On the other hand, the "natives," the inhabitants of the Baltic states who were not Germans, had practically no way to get at the larger private enterprises. On November 29, 1941, the Reich Commissioner did issue a decree about creating new companies, but it stated that starting a new company, buying shares in a company, or acquiring developed or undeveloped land was forbidden without the permission of the German civilian government. The first regulations clarifying this decree, dated April 25, 1942, stated that permits to start new companies in all the important economic sectors (i.e., industry, wholesaling, insurance, transportation, anything involving credit, etc.) would be issued only by the Reich Commissioner himself.

Reprivatization of property

Latvian businessmen, members of the board of the Chamber of Commerce that existed during the authoritarian regime, arrived at the *Wirtschaftskommando Riga* on July 17, 1941, to discuss the Chamber of Commerce and also, of course, the renewal of private enterprise in Latvia. They received the answer that at the moment there could be no discussions about renewing private enterprise, and with that the question of the Chamber of Commerce was moot. The businessmen also proposed that, at the least, companies' former owners be hired to manage the businesses that had been taken away from them. The answer was that it could happen in certain individual cases, after extensive investigations of the persons.

It turns out the greatest opponents of reprivatizing nationalized companies were Göring as head of Germany's Four-Year Economic Plan, Reich Commissioner Lohse, and several other General Commissioners, who as far as can be determined, had plans to give the enterprises to others.

Evidently this was the reason that the first reprivatization, which affected only small businesses, took place in a disguised manner that

avoided the use of the word "reprivatization." It took place on a very small scale, based on a decree by the Reich Commissioner dated October 17, 1941, entitled "Decree on the Reorganization of Crafts, Small Industry, and Small Trade."

The enterprises to be privatized were to be given, if possible, to the former owners or their family members. Small industrial enterprises were defined as those having not more than 20 workers. The decree also liquidated the unprofitable craftsmen's artels founded during the Soviet occupation, and reorganized the profitable ones into cooperative companies. In privatizing the small industrial concerns, the former owners were not given back their buildings or land. These had to be rented.

In his report of October 31, 1942, the Reich Commissioner noted that several persons who had expressed an interest in the reprivatization of small industrial concerns did not formally request them back after all, the reason being that due to the great lack of material goods, turnover would be low, and the prices they would be allowed to set were so low as to make it impossible to turn a profit. The same reason serves to explain why the German civil administration wanted to reprivatize those enterprises in the first place.

Reich Minister Alfred Rosenberg issued a decree on restoring private property in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania only on February 18, 1943, after the Germans suffered their great defeat at the Volga and their chances of winning the war started to fade. The decree stated that "in general, it is again permitted to have private property" in the territories mentioned. Reprivatization, however, could not occur if it conflicted with the common good or the interests of the war economy. This meant that the German civil administration could limit reprivatization at will. Former owners would also get back their nationalized land, both built-upon and vacant. Priority would be given to those persons deemed politically and economically worthy.

It seems that the German civil administration had most success in reprivatizing city lots. By April 1944, 6,489 lots, or approximately 90% of those marked for privatization, were privatized. It is not known how many nationalized lots the German civil administration did not want to privatize. Statistics indicate that only about 25% of farms were returned to their former owners.

Money

Germany had worked out a special system for currency in its occupied

territories. Stefan Szende in *I guldets trollkrets* (Stockholm, 1941) describes it perhaps a little sharply, but accurately:

'Wherever the German occupation army arrived, the reichsmark was set at a favorable rate. The rate always far exceeded the true buying power of the mark. The rates were set higher in lands that showed their hatred of nationalsocialism with armed resistance than in those where the Germans hoped to gain the populace's sympathies with special concessions.

For example, the reichsmark exchange rate was set more favorably for the Dutch gulden and Norwegian krone than for French or Belgian franc, not to mention the Baltic states currencies. Wherever they went, German soldiers paid with special notes, whose value in marks was set much higher than the occupied countries' currency.

That is how German soldiers in France were able to buy silk and weavings, jewelry and clothing for a fourth or a fifth of the prices in Germany. In a few months, each occupied country was plundered of its goods in this way. The foreign country's goods were simply cleaned out for paper notes whose value was set at gunpoint. What a great, modern method of thievery! It was not allowed to simply loot and rob, as the Germans did earlier in Rome and the Crusaders in Byzantium.

No, now they paid for everything, they paid in reichsmarks. But these reichsmarks were not the same as the reichsmark notes in Germany. These were paper notes specially printed for the occupied countries. It was forbidden to bring them into Germany, but they could be used to buy goods in occupied lands, which could then be sent to one's family in Germany.

The German occupying power did the same in the Baltic states. From the beginning of the occupation, the Soviet ruble and German *Reichskreditkassenscheine* (Reich treasury credit notes) were declared to be legal tender. It was forbidden to bring the latter into Germany, which used reichsmark banknotes, and reichsmarks in turn were illegal in the Baltic states. The exchange rate between ruble and reichsmark was set at 10 rubles = 1 RM. In establishing this monetary system, the German occupying power at the same time forbade raising prices and wages above the level that existed before July 5, 1941. It decreed:

Prices and any other payment for all kinds of goods and services cannot be higher than the level of June 20, 1941. [...] Wages, pensions and other remuneration for work cannot be higher than the level of June 20, 1941.

The German author Otto Bräutigam states in his book (*Überblick über die besetzten Ostgebiete [...]*, Tübingen, 1954) that to German soldiers and civil servants the Baltic states, with their unbelievably low prices caused by this monetary policy, seemed like a veritable Eldorado. This undeniably attests to the fact that the main purpose of this monetary policy really was to give the German occupiers a legal way to plunder the Baltic states.

Returning again to the Germans' feverish buying of goods in Latvia in the first months of the occupation, it should be noted that this took place mainly with Soviet ruble notes, and by the end of July 1941, *Wirtschaftskommando Riga* in its daily report wrote that farmers were no longer accepting ruble notes as payment. If one assumes that German soldiers received their pay in Soviet rubles and that the retreating Soviets did not leave behind large stashes of rubles, the logical conclusion is that the German occupying power was printing Soviet ruble notes.

The *Wirtschaftskommando Riga* documents contain the following note: "Latvian attempts to restore the free economy and their desire to reintroduce the old Latvian currency have been firmly denied right from the beginning."

Over time, the *Reichskreditkassenscheine* became the main vehicle for payment in Latvia.

On November 29, 1941, the Reich Commissioner issued a decree on the trading of foreign currency. A permit was required to buy foreign currency or to take any kind of currency out of the country. Gold, precious metals, foreign currency, and currency requests from abroad had to be registered by January 15, 1942, and surrendered on demand.

As the quantity of good available in stores fell, the inhabitants, especially German soldiers and officials, accumulated more and more currency notes, with which it was impossible to find anything to buy. This created great inflationary pressure in Ostland, which led to a well-developed black market and then to a barter economy, as money could buy almost nothing. In 1942 the local Rīga newspaper wrote that the philosophy "money doesn't mean a thing" was widespread and that for the Ostland person, goods were better than money.

With the rise of the barter economy, there were new things to pay with, instead of money. Frequently, especially when buying goods from the Germans, these were butter and salt pork. Another widespread currency was German permission slips to buy gasoline, which were issued as rewards to those farmers who regularly delivered requisitioned goods. These slips had "backing," while the widespread paper money had none. Cigarettes served as the coins for this currency of gasoline slips.

Taxes

As soon as the *Wirtschaftskommando Riga* arrived in Rīga, it decreed that all businesses, organizations, and private persons had to continue to pay all taxes imposed by Soviet regime in the same manner and on the same timetable as before. It stressed that businesses had to prepay sales tax and payroll deductions immediately.

Soon after taking office, on October 18, 1941, the Reich Commissioner decreed that all taxes were to be paid according to laws issued by the Soviet regime, unless these laws were changed by German agencies. The only tax no longer to be collected was the heavy Soviet farm tax, which was replaced by a land tax.

Then came an unending and complicated cycle of changes, additions, and replacement of Soviet taxes. In shaping the tax system, the German occupying authorities followed the principle that not only did the agencies of the occupied lands have to make do with their own incomes, but as much as possible was to be put aside for Germany.

This overview of taxes would not be complete without noting that the German civil administration used forced labor and requisitioning widely, especially in the rural areas. With the Reich Commissioner's decree of September 17, 1941, forced labor was required of all Ostland's inhabitants, including juridical persons. Payment was set for these *corvée* practices, but it never covered any where near the expenses incurred.

Conclusion

An American author, Karl Brandt, shows in his book *Management* that both the Soviet and German armies used a scorched-earth policy in retreating to delay the attacking army. The Soviet Union's first line of defense was Stalin's order to use detonators, sledgehammers, and dynamite to destroy anything that could be of use to the enemy, and to take away all persons who knew any trade. Latvia saved itself from such

destruction mainly because the German attack was so sudden that the Soviet army had to retreat almost before they realized they were being attacked.

Brandt also states that the German army received a similar order from Hitler when it had to retreat. Reich Marshall Göring, following Hitler's order of September 7, 1943, issued a secret order to remove from the front areas all agricultural products and equipment and all machinery that would be useful in producing foodstuffs. Consumer good factories and all stored goods were to be destroyed. Persons involved in agriculture or food production were to be removed.

This is what happened in Latvia wherever the German retreat was not too rapid and unexpected. On August 24, 1944, *Wehrwirtschafts-kommando Riga* reported that machinery, work tools, half-finished goods, etc. from various Riga factories had already been sent to Germany. These businesses also tried to take with them as many qualified workers as possible.

Summing up this chapter, one has to conclude that the losses to Latvia and the Latvian people caused by the German occupation are gigantic. A special commission of the Soviet Union estimated that losses reached 20 billion after-war rubles. It further calculated that 5,790 industrial buildings were destroyed, and 399 steam boilers, 923 locomotives and internal combustion engines, 9,755 electric generators and motors, 3,367 metal-cutting shops, and much other industrial equipment was destroyed or taken to Germany.

Latvian economists have calculated that losses caused by the German occupation authorities and the German army were close to US \$660 million in 1940 dollars. In comparison, A. Šmulders calculated that the losses caused by the communists in 1940 and 1941 were US \$1 billion.

Of course, such estimates are extremely difficult to make, as data is still lacking on goods taken to Germany and given to the German army. It is difficult to estimate the worth of the material destroyed and taken, and even harder to estimate the worth of the economic opportunities taken away from the Latvians during the years of war and occupation, not to mention the many Latvian lives that were taken.



Mirdza Kate Baltais

BALTIC CONSCRIPTS, LABOURERS AND REFUGEES IN GERMANY

The number of Lithuanians, Estonians, and Latvians who reached Germany either of their own free will or who were taken there by force during the Second World War is an estimated 680,000 men, women, and children. This figure comprises 300,000 Lithuanians, of which a large percentage were forced labourers, 115,000 Estonians, and 265,000 Latvians, among them civilians, personnel engaged in and by the Wehrmacht, concentration camp prisoners, and prisoners of war. Well under one-third of those Balts who, to use Renate Czollek's term, were "lost to Germany" (that is, fewer than 200,000 of the 680,000) became registered as displaced persons in the Western zones of occupied Germany and Austria.

As already indicated, broadly speaking, there were three groups of Balts who became displaced persons, and all three were recruited through the auspices of the Third Reich's Labour Deployment Program. These three groups arrived in Germany sequentially. First, labour was recruited for civilian work, for example, in factories and on farms. Second, from 1943 on, in a series of call-ups by age groups, labour was conscripted for both civilian employment and for the military, with the military having priority. Through these call-ups the Estonian (20th Division) and the Latvian (15th and 19th Divisions) legions were mobilized; Lithuania did not have a legion in the Second World War, but it did have men serving as Wehrmacht auxiliaries and in other units. In the war's final days of combat the 20th (1st Estonian) division surrendered mostly to the Red Army, although some units managed to surrender to the Allied Expeditionary Force, as did units of the 15 (1st Latvian) division. Most of these men immediately were made prisoners of war.

The third, and largest group of people from the Baltic countries who became displaced persons included some deportees, but it was comprised mainly of refugees fleeing and/or being evacuated their home countries from mid-1944 on, when Soviet forces succeeded in winning their way back into the Baltic lands.

Civilian Conscripts

With Operation Barbarossa Germany immediately took possession of the Baltic countries, which the previous summer had been occupied and annexed by the Soviet Union. In the Nazi administration, the territory called Occupied Eastern Europe came within the purview of the Reich's Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories (*Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete*).

As part of the Occupied Eastern Territories was the *Reichskommissariat Ostland*, and it was headed on-site by Hinrich Lohse. Within the *Reichskommissariat Ostland* were the three former Baltic countries, each now designated as a General District (*Generalbezirk*): Estonia was administered by Generalkommissar Karl Litzmann, Latvia by Generalkommissar Otto Drechsler, and Lithuania by Generalkommissar Adrian von Renteln.

Fairly soon the German administration started pressing Balts into work for Greater Germany. Workers from the east were called *Ostarbeiter* (Eastern workers). From late 1941 on in the Baltics, labour was conscripted for civilian jobs, including for the *Reichsarbeitsdienst* (RAD). Some of these people returned home to Estonia, Latvia, or Lithuania after their (usually one-year) contracts were up, for others the contracts were extended or indeed were not completed when Germany capitulated to the United Nations Allies.

In many parts of the occupied Ostland, by the end of 1941 recruitment was already taking the form of mass deportation. Sometimes the Germans overdid things and left the occupied country with insufficient people for it to continue to function. This happened in the Baltics where, for example, in the summer of 1942 so many hands were deported that there were not enough for the harvest — and so some 400 individuals had to be brought back from Germany for the necessary agricultural work.

The war of attrition progressed to total war as Hitler announced on 24 February 1943. On 29 March 1943 it was decreed that everyone in the occupied areas between the ages of 15 and 65 had to register with the nearest local labour office or face imprisonment. In the occupied Baltic countries, total war meant that their men were to be conscripted into the army. In fact, recalling Sauckel's arrangement with Keitel, the military was to have first call on the recruited foreign labourers and with the establishment of an Estonian and then a Latvian legion; this indeed became the case for the Balts.

Military Conscripts

How is it that there were Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians fighting in German uniform in the Second World War? In short, the overwhelming majority of them were conscripted. Some volunteered. Conscription was carried out by the German occupation authorities, in the end phases with the help of, that is, "fronted by" the indigenous (that is, Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian) leadership.

Balts bearing arms with the Germans can be considered within two broad phases: before and after Hitler ordered the formation of "voluntary Waffen SS legions". This demarcation date for Estonia was 28 August 1942; for Latvia, 10 February 1943; and for Lithuania, 26 February 1943—although the Lithuanians for various reasons never did form a legion. If one were to generalize, and that is all that is possible at an initial overall level of analysis, even after all these years, the earlier the date of the formation of any particular unit, the larger that unit's percentage of volunteers—and the earlier it was that any individual joined the unit, the more likely it is that he was some kind of volunteer. Exactly the reverse is the situation from the time of the formation of the legions: we know this from the German documents on the call-ups. It is possible that some individuals volunteered for service in the legions, but those that did, did so within the framework of overall conscription orders for entire age groups.

Early in the German occupation, Latvian and Estonian volunteers were recruited for police units; the same happened in Lithuania. Before the legions were formed there were already combat units in all three Baltic countries. These units were called police battalions, formed as rearguard units to defend the local area from the Soviets mainly, and, as they were reformed into combat units—to fight on the eastern front. According to David Littlejohn, who has published on Hitler's foreign legions: "It is difficult to see in what respects the Police 'Front' battalions differed in function from the normal infantry battalions of the German Army since they were combat rather than constabulary formations. Indeed, many of their personnel were eventually absorbed into the Legion or Waffen SS."

In Riga, on 20 July 1941—less than three weeks after taking over from the Russians—SS-Brigadeführer and Generalmajor der Polizei Walter Stahlecker, did three things: he ordered the disbandment of any remaining indigenous Latvian self-defence units, he issued a directive

forbidding the wearing of any type of Latvian uniform, and he ordered the formation of an auxiliary police force (*Ordnungs-Hilfspolizei*). This police force was to maintain order and safety in the city and county of Riga. It consisted of 3,000 men: 1,500 for police duties in Riga, 240 for police duties in the county of Riga, 100 for railway police duties, 260 for harbour police duties, 400 as prison guards, and 500 reserves.

The reserves were formed into five companies which actually became the first Latvian military units in the Second World War. The five companies were formed into a battalion, and two more battalions were formed. At that time there were sufficient volunteers to form the two new battalions and, in fact, many volunteers had to be rejected. The first Latvian police combat battalion was formed in September 1941, the 16th Zemgale Battalion. It left Riga on 22 October 1941 to be used on the Eastern Front at the discretion of the Wehrmacht.

The Eastern Front had ground to a halt at Leningrad. Army Group North wanted reinforcements: perhaps some help could be had from some Baltic formations? Hitler agreed, but made it clear that no such unit was to be larger than a battalion. On 23 November 1941 Himmler issued an order renaming the *Ordnungs Hilfspolizei* "Schutzmannschaft," abbreviated "Schuma." More Schuma battalions were needed for the Eastern Front, and from February 1942 in Latvia they were recruited by the Latvians themselves. Until then, the recruiting and formation of Schuma units had been handled by Germans.

In the winter of 1942-3 Field Marshal von Kuechler, as Commander of Army Group North, made repeated requests to Reichs Commissioner for the Occupied Eastern Territories Rosenberg for a general mobilization in the Baltic countries for military service.

For a long time Hitler had not wanted to allow foreigners — non-Germans, that is, to Hitler people of lesser races — to fight for the Reich. In laying out the plans for taking over the Eastern Territories, in April 1941, Hitler had declared, "An iron rule must be and remain: Never is it to be allowed that anyone other than a German carries weapons." Nevertheless, when it became necessary to do so, the Fuehrer changed his mind. On 10 February 1943 the following directive was signed by Hitler: "I order the formation of a Latvian SS-Volunteer Legion. The size and kind of formation depends upon the number of available Latvian men." Himmler ordered conscription for the "Voluntary Waffen-SS" of male Estonians and Latvians born in the years 1915 to 1924; in 1944 this was broadened to include the age groups 1906 to 1926.

There had even been indications from the native self-administrations

that they would provide the "volunteers." But at that point the Germans were not willing to give any concessions, such as more privatization of property nationalized during the Soviet occupation, or, above all, promises of independence, however eventual. For political reasons, that is, to keep the population as calm as possible, the German authorities, under the direction of Reichskommissar Ostland, Hinrich Lohse, decided to conduct the call-up within the framework of the Reich's compulsory labour service regulations.

All suitable men were first assigned to the legion, less suitable ones to the Wehrmacht commander as helpers for Army Group North, and among those remaining the ones able to work were given to Sauckel. In accordance with a 16 February 1943 regulation, suitable for the legion meant men over 168 cm in height; those who were shorter were directed to the Wehrmacht, but any trades' specialists and those unsuitable for the Army were given over to the labour service.

Altogether between 110,000 and 150,000 Latvians fought on the side of the Germans in the Second World War. On the basis of reports available to Latvian General Rudolfs Bangerskis, Inspector-General of the Latvian Legion, Legion Chief of Staff Colonel Arturs Silgailis in his calculations reckoned that Latvian combatants numbered nearly 148,000.

It is ironic that the Germans might have been able to obtain a legion entirely of volunteers had they been able to give the Latvian self-administration some political bait. The same could be said in the case of Estonia, and even Lithuania. The Latvian self-administration, under the directorship of General Oskars Dankers, was in fact in the process of trying to negotiate terms for the formation of a voluntary legion had not the German conscription orders, of late February - early March 1943, pre-empted any such further discussions. The Latvians wanted two things: to see that the Soviets were defeated and to once again have an independent country. The self-administration would support fighting to this end, even by taking the intermediate step of fighting on the side of Nazi Germany. They asked that the new division be commanded by a Latvian. They did not get this. For a few days in March 1943, the Latvians were led to believe that the to-be-formed legion would be commanded by one of their own, former Latvian Minister for War, General Rudolfs Bangerskis. But orders came from Germany that this was to be denied on the ground that in German law the commander of a German division had the status of a judge in a court of law, and in German law a judge had to be a German citizen. As a compromise, Bangerskis was made Inspector-General of the Latvian Legion.

The call-up was ordered by the Germans. However, the Latvian self-administration took the position of supporting it, particularly from 1944. The self-administration defended their position on this by insisting that the men were called to arms in defence of their country, Latvia. No one has ever tried to argue that the Soviet Union would have restored Latvia to independence at the end of the Second World War. But it was thought by some at the time that, perhaps after it had defeated the Soviet Union, Germany would help Latvia be independent again. Perhaps both the Soviet Union and Germany would be defeated, and then the Western Allies would help the Latvian (read: Baltic people's) situation. The experience of the after the First World War apparently gave many Balts the hope or even belief that history, as experienced by them in their own lifetime, would repeat itself—that the Western Allies would once again come to the aid of the Baltic countries and help them (re)gain their independence. On this they were wrong.

Completely disregarding this rationalization, the fact remains that the German authorities ordered, repeatedly, call-ups by age group of Latvians, Estonians, and Lithuanians to serve in the German war effort. At first these were published as orders to report for work for the German Labour Office, after which some of the men were put into units of the legion. The draft orders were issued in the local languages, as well as in German. To the man being drafted, this was not volunteering. He could either accept the draft or not. In not accepting, he could either disappear, for example, by hiding in the forests (and people did) or face the legal consequences, namely, a court martial.

Now let us look at the nature of the conscriptions and how successful they were—at least in the eyes of the Germans. The military conscriptions in the Baltic countries were carried out under the direction of the local labour offices. This connection has not really been worked out in the secondary literature, that is, the connection between the labour offices—or Sauckel's overall labour recruitment and deployment operation—and recruitment for direct military purposes. Historians who write about the *Waffen SS* do not say much, first, about the foreign *Waffen SS* divisions (especially the Eastern divisions), and, second, about how their recruitment came about. Historians writing about Germany and its foreign labour policy speak of civilians and prisoners of war, but not of the recruitment directly into the military. Only Kangeris and Myllyniemi discuss this connection, and then only as a subtopic of what they are actually writing about. Unfortunately, in my research study, too, the connection is only a subtopic of my overall topic — U.S. Army policy

regarding Baltic displaced persons — and so a full-fledged study of how the Balts were recruited to fight in German uniform continues to await its writer. Nevertheless, for our purposes here quite, a detailed picture of the recruitment can be gleaned from even a small selection of the German wartime documents.

There is a significant link to be made between the German Reich's policies of foreign labour recruitment, including recruitment for the military, and (later) policy on Baltic DPs. To qualify for United Nations DP status it was essential that it could be assumed by the authorities occupying postwar Germany that the particular individual seeking such status, and who had served in German uniform, had served because he was conscripted — and not because he had volunteered. This was especially a problem for those who had served in the Estonian or Latvian "Voluntary Waffen SS" legions. For this reason it is required to have some understanding of how this category of DPs came to be.

A significant document predates the formation of the Baltic legions by more than thirty years, namely, the 1907 Hague Convention on Warfare. Accordingly, it was against the laws and customs of war on land to force the inhabitants of an occupied country to serve the occupier. The precise words of the relevant portion of the Hague Convention of 1907, under the heading "Military Authority over the Territory of the Hostile State" are in Article 45: "It is forbidden to compel the inhabitants of occupied territory to swear allegiance to the hostile Power." Thus, if the inhabitants, in this case, Estonians and Latvians, of an occupied territory did serve in the forces of the occupying power, in this case, Nazi Germany, they were doing so because either the occupier was acting in flagrant disregard of the laws and customs of war on land, as spelled out in the Hague Convention, or some other mechanism enabled them to so serve. Some other mechanism could be that they — the Estonians and Latvians — volunteered to serve. Did they?

The Germans called the Latvian Legion the *Lettische Freiwilligen Waffen-SS*. In English this translates to the Latvian Voluntary Waffen-SS. The Estonian legion was called the *Estnische Freiwilligen Waffen-SS*, or Estonian Voluntary Waffen-SS. This German name has caused the soldiers who served in these divisions a lot of grief to this day. Therefore, it is important to look at just what exactly this name means, starting with the term "voluntary".

In 1943 there were two call-ups in the Baltic countries: one beginning in March, and a second in October–November. The legal basis for the call-up was the decree on labour obligation: Sauckel's decree of late

1941 ordering registration for compulsory labour service. In Latvia for the first call-up, in March 1943, including the age groups born in 1919 to 1924, the order had specified that 29 per cent of the recruited were to go to the legion, 42 per cent to the Wehrmacht, and 29 per cent to the labour service. From the beginning, the commissions did not hold to these figures and did their best to favour the legion. Thus, that first call-up resulted in 35,719 conscripts, of whom 17,971 (50.3 per cent) were allocated to the legion, 12,979 (36.4 per cent) to the Wehrmacht, and only 4,769 (13 per cent) to the labour service. Call-ups continued right through to early 1945, and by the end included all men born between 1906 and 1929.

To return to the question at the beginning of this section: How is it that there were Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians fighting in German uniform in the Second World War? As we have seen, in 1941 the Baltic countries were taken by the Nazis from the Soviets who had taken them over the summer before. Whereas Germany had been recruiting foreign labour by force from the beginning of its occupation of Poland in the autumn of 1939, by 1942 a Reich-wide administration had been set up for the recruitment and deployment of labour, both civilian and military.

The military phase of foreign recruitment went into full swing by early 1943, as Germany became so desperate for manpower that it even forced foreigners into the *Waffen* (Armed) SS — which should on no account be confused as identical or equal to the SS properly so called.

In 1943 there were two call-ups by age group — forced mobilization of Balts — and one in early 1944, finally applying to all males born in the years 1906 to 1926 inclusive.

Altogether, some 270,000 Balts fought in German uniform in the Second World War. Why? In the overwhelming majority of cases — and in the default case in the absence of evidence to the contrary — because they were conscripted.

As the Soviet front moved westward in two thrusts in the late spring and the autumn of 1944, another group of civilians started to head for Germany, any which way they could. These civilian fugitives of war constitute the third, and by far the largest, category of Baltic displaced persons when classified by origin.

Refugees

It is somewhat astonishing that even as the Germans were conscripting more men to arms, children as *Luftwaffe* helpers, and women to work in

the Reich, as early as 18 February 1944 Reichsminister Rosenberg was letting it be known — to Hitler and Keitel, among others — that in the event of the Germans having to clear out of the Baltic lands, the local inhabitants should be taken out, too. Rosenberg gave four reasons for this:

- (1) He felt that Estonians and Latvians had been in general positively disposed to the concerns of the Reich and should therefore be protected from complete extermination by the Soviets; to not so protect them might give the Reich a bad name.
- (2) These people would probably take flight in face of the coming Soviets and this would disturb German combat operations.
- (3) If the people were to be abandoned to the Soviets, the legionnaires would lose or even abandon their willingness to fight.
- (4) Leaving these people behind would certainly strengthen the Soviets.

Reichskommissar Ostland Lohse was one of the recipients of this communication from Rosenberg. On 11 February 1944 Lohse had had a meeting with the General Commander of Army Group North. Two eventualities had been discussed: "Plan A," evacuation in the face of great pressure from the enemy, and "Plan B," evacuation to be carried out in the span of half a year or so. Further, there were the so-called RLZ Plans (Räumungs-, Lähmungs-, und Zerstörungsplanung), that is, plans for evacuating, paralyzing, and destroying (an area), separate from plans that involved the evacuation of the population, together with its livestock and agricultural machinery. Total destruction, or a "scorched earth policy," had already been announced for the Occupied Eastern Territories the previous autumn.

The Red Army advanced too quickly for the six-month plan to be implemented. Nevertheless, between July and October 1944, more than 500,000 Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians were transported to Germany under the evacuation provisions. This involved about 100,000 Estonians (including military personnel) and perhaps 180,000 Latvians; among Lithuanians we know that some 300,000 reached Germany to the end of 1944, among whom, according to Soviet sources, some 200,000 arrived there as slave laborers.

The people in question — the local inhabitants — were under no circumstances to be told of any plans for evacuating them, and the entire project was to be kept top secret. In fact, it has been kept essentially secret to this day. In their accounts of how they left their homelands,

Baltic DPs mention their flight only as voluntary, self-directed, and entirely using their own wits and resources. If, however, you read the accounts of the evacuation provisions, you can see that the flights of the refugees were facilitated, when not outright ordered, by the occupying German authorities, providing both exit visas and transportation.

The flight out of the Baltic lands, whether forced or merely assisted by German evacuation measures, ended in early 1945. On arrival in Germany, these people were registered, given ration cards, and those who could work were put to work — abruptly leaving their employers when the war in Europe was over. The refugees provided the largest contingent of Baltic displaced persons, by origin, including all men, women, and children of all ages.

Baltic Displaced Persons in Spring 1946

As already stated, “displaced persons” designated people who for reasons of the war found themselves in a country other than their own. More specifically, displaced persons came to mean people registered by and receiving care from the armies and UNRRA. To qualify for the status of UN DP an individual had to be in a designated group of people that both the armies and UNRRA approved of. Thus, German or other ex-enemy nationals could not be DPs receiving Allied army and UNRRA care; Baltic Germans were ineligible. Army and UNRRA care was extended only to nationals of those countries that had fought on the side of the United Nations, been neutral, or at least not been an enemy. Thus, we can see how from the beginning Balts presented a special and controversial case, especially concerning the Baltic men who had fought in German uniform. Because the Soviet Union chose not to have UNRRA assistance with displaced persons found in its zones of occupation, any such people in the Soviet zones do not appear in DP counts (they were never registered as UN DPs). DP statistics, therefore, mean DPs in the Western zones of Germany, Berlin, and Austria. For the purposes of this report, DP statistics apply only to the Western zones of Germany.

Because that is when their numbers peaked, before declining again as a result of screenings and resettlement, spring–early summer 1946 is a good time to get a view of Baltic DPs. The highest number of registered Baltic DPs for any postwar month is 183,163 for June 1946. This was up by more than 50,000 (23 per cent) from January 1946, when the total number of Baltic DPs was 140,716. Just over 50 per cent of the Baltic DPs were Latvians; of the remainder, one-third were Estonians and two-

thirds were Lithuanians. In June 1946 there were 29,446 Estonian, 96,464 Latvian, and 57,053 Lithuanian DPs in Germany. Of the 680,000 individuals from all three Baltic countries, this represents about 25 per cent of the total population of Estonians, 30 per cent of the Latvians, and also about 25 per cent of the Lithuanians "lost to Germany" (Czollek's term) by the end of the Second World War.

Half of the Baltic UN DPs lived in the U.S. zone, just over 3 per cent in the French zone, and the remainder in the British zone. By nationality, the proportion of all registered Baltic DPs residing in the U.S. zone in June 1946 ranged from a high of 55 per cent of Estonians to a low of 47 per cent of Latvians, with 52 per cent of Lithuanians. The percentages of Balts in the U.S. zone had risen slightly for all three nationalities since the previous December (when the Americans had in their care 50 per cent of the Estonian, 45 per cent of the Latvian, and 50 per cent of the Lithuanian DPs). In the French zone in 1946 the proportion of all Baltic DPs by nationality ranged from a high of 4.7 per cent of Lithuanians to a low of 2.6 per cent of Latvians, with 3.0 per cent of Estonians. Thus, in the British zone in June 1946 could be found 42 per cent of Estonian DPs in Germany, 50.4 per cent of Latvian DPs in Germany, and 43.3 per cent of Lithuanian DPs in Germany.

In spring 1946 there were 359 DP assembly centres in Germany: 144 in the U.S. zone, 179 in the British zone, and 36 in the French zone. The ones in the U.S. and French zones were all administered by UNRRA. In the British zone, as well as 109 centres administered by UNRRA, there were also 18 centres administered by voluntary agencies and another 52 administered by the military. Assembly centres could include one or more displaced persons camps within their administrative jurisdiction. DPs largely lived in camps, grouped by nationality, but also in private housing requisitioned by the army for their use. In the U.S. zone about 82 per cent of Estonians lived in camps, and 18 per cent out of camps; 87 per cent of Latvians lived in camps, and 13 per cent outside; 84 per cent of Lithuanians lived in camps, and 16 per cent outside. It is not known to what extent these proportions were comparable in the French and British zones; however, it is known that in those zones, too, there was both in camp and out of camp housing for DPs.

Age and sex data were tabulated for Baltic DPs by nationality in April 1946 by UNRRA. The categories are children under 6 years of age, children from 6 to 18, and women over 18 — everyone else being men over 18; there is no breakdown by sex for the children. Less than 10 per cent of Baltic DPs comprised children under the age of 6 years: The

proportion in this category ranged from a high of 9.8 per cent for Lithuanians to a low of 8.0 per cent of Estonians, with 8.2 per cent of Latvian DPs. Less than 15 per cent of all Baltic DPs in Germany in spring 1946 were children between 6 and 18 years of age, ranging from 14.8 per cent of Lithuanians to 12.6 per cent of Latvians, with 13.5 per cent of Estonians. Adult men comprised 45 per cent of the Lithuanian population, 42.9 per cent of Latvian DPs, but only 33.4 per cent of Estonian DPs. Adult women, however, were 45.1 per cent of the Estonian DP population, 36.3 per cent of Latvian DPs, and only 30.3 per cent of Lithuanian DPs. Thus, while both the younger and older children's groups are relatively similar in proportion among the three Baltic nationalities, there are considerably fewer Estonian adult men than adult women (approximately 9,000 to 12,000) and far fewer Latvian and Lithuanian adult women than adult men (33,000 and 16,000 to 40,000 and 24,000). It would be interesting to read something about how these ratios and their differences played out in the postwar history of these communities in their resettlement lands.

In May 1946 UNRRA personnel undertook a survey to classify employable Baltic DPs by occupation. *Employable persons* were defined as "all persons over 16 years of age excluding those physically or mentally disabled and those responsible for the care of dependents." The survey was based on results from three Baltic centres and the sample size was 10,000 participants. The results were then projected for the entire employable Baltic DP population, calculated as being 104,800 individuals: 61,900 men and 42,900 women. According to the UNRRA survey 66 per cent of employable Baltic DPs could be classified as white-collar workers (51 per cent of the men and 87 per cent of the women), while 33 per cent could be classified as blue-collar workers (49 per cent of the men and 13 per cent of the women). White-collar occupational categories included administrative, clerical, and commercial; health and sanitation; special services (unfortunately, with no explanation for what that means); and professional and arts. Blue-collar occupational categories included chemicals, and processing; construction and maintenance; agriculture, forestry, and food processing; communications, transportation, and supply; metal trades; and miscellaneous processing.

Finally, in terms of the sketch, a survey was taken in May 1946 inquiring as to the repatriation intentions of Baltic DPs. The percentage of Balts not saying "yes" to repatriation was 99.8. Of 134,676 Balts surveyed, 269 (less than 0.2 per cent) answered that they wished to be repatriated; 120,458 (89 per cent) replied that they did not desire to be

repatriated, while 13,949 (10 per cent) gave no answer — for whatever reason. By the end of May 1946 from the U.S. zone 2,052 Baltic DPs had been repatriated: 465 Estonians (2.6 per cent of May 1946 population in U.S. zone), 1,349 Latvians (2.8 per cent), and 238 Lithuanians (0.7 per cent). By June 1946 from all three Western zones in Germany, a total of 2,930 Baltic DPs had been repatriated, representing 1.6 per cent of the total Baltic DP population that was in the Western zones of Germany at the end of June 1946.

In summary, in the spring of 1946 the population of Baltic DPs totaled about 180,000 individuals, of whom about one-quarter were minors, leaving a count of approximately 135,000 adult DPs from Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia. About half of Baltic DPs were Latvians (96,464), roughly 30,000 were Estonians (29,446), and almost 60,000 were Lithuanians (57,053). There were roughly three Estonian men (9,000) to every four Estonian women (12,000), while close to the reverse was the case for Latvians (4.0:3.3 men to women) and Lithuanians (3:2 men to women). About 3 per cent of Baltic DPs lived in the French zone, with the rest roughly equally distributed between the British and American zones, with somewhat more of them in the American zone. Two-thirds of employable Baltic DPs were classified by UNRRA as being white-collar workers, and one-third blue collar. Of Baltic DPs surveyed in the spring of 1946, more than 99 per cent did not wish to be repatriated, although by mid-1947 a total of 2,930 had been returned to their home countries.



Andrew Ezergailis

HOLOCAUST

Hitler alone would not have been sufficient, but without Hitler there would not have been a holocaust in Germany or in the rest of Europe. The doors to murder swung open only when Germany's government was taken over by extremists. The holocaust occurred by order of the German government. The holocaust, like the war, could not have started without Hitler. The destruction of Jews did not happen anywhere outside of the German occupied zones. And no country occupied by the Germans, including Denmark, remained without Jewish victims.

This truth has to be repeated again and again, for in recent years the idea has spread, especially in Germany itself among the so-called revisionist historians, that Eastern European countries, including Latvia, were indistinguishable from Nazi Germany in their hatred of the Jews. From the Eastern Europeans point of view, this idea is absurd. It does not allow for any differences between imperialistic and occupied countries: the holocaust in Germany allegedly resembled the holocaust in the conquered lands.

Two currents of ideas, anti-Semitism and a unique ideology of revenge, flowed together over a time period of twenty years in Germany to create favorable conditions for the murder of Jews. Hitler was the catalyst for these two currents. Anti-Semitism could be found in most countries of the world, but in Germany at the end of the Weimar Republic it reached a level never before seen in Europe. The other current, revenge for the "stab in the back" that had festered in the German soul since the end of the First World War, intermixed with anti-Semitism. In Germany, hatred culminated in the desire for murder.

This German theme of revenge, connecting the myth of the "stab in the back" with the Jews, was not found anywhere else in Europe, including Eastern Europe. From the very beginning the core of the Nazi Party considered itself a "self-defense" party, which would not only defend the German people from a repeat of the "stab in the back" but would also start a war of revenge against the alleged stabbers themselves, i.e., the Jews.

Though the first Nazi terror actions in February 1933, when Hitler's party took over the reins of government, targeted Communists and

socialists, they also affected Jews. One month after taking power, the Nazis organized the first concentration camp in Dachau. From May 1933 until 1938, Hitler's government passed a series of laws limiting the social, political, professional, and citizenship rights of Jews in Germany. First, all Jews were barred from government jobs, then they were forbidden to work as lawyers or doctors. In 1935 the Nuremberg laws were passed. These deprived Jews of citizenship, which meant that they were no longer protected by the laws of the state (*Rechtstaat*). The Nuremberg laws defined a Jew as a person who had three Jewish grandparents. With the expansion of Greater Germany, all of these laws were to a greater or lesser extent adapted to the conquered territories, including Latvia.

An important step in excluding Jews from Germany's society was the formation of a special Jewish association, *Reichsvertretung der Juden im Deutschland*. This organization's duplicity was expressed in the fact that it became an institution that on the one hand defended the Jews, but on the other promoted anti-Jewish Nazi laws and directives. Similar organizations called *Judenrat* were formed by the Nazis in their conquered countries, including Latvia, for the whole duration of the holocaust.

Some historians consider *Kristallnacht* (the "Night of Broken Glass"), November 9, 1938, to be the start of the holocaust. Jews started to be physically attacked; they were to be completely eradicated from Germany's social and economic structure. In a 24-hour period more than 195 synagogues were burned down in Germany, and about 20,000 Jews were imprisoned in concentration camps. The Nazis charged the losses of *Kristallnacht*, caused by Hitler's followers, to Germany's Jews at 1 billion reichsmarks. *Reichsvertretung der Juden im Deutschland* had to collect this money.

Starting with *Kristallnacht*, it can be seen that Hitler entrusted the solving of the "Jewish question" to Himmler's deputy Reinhard Heydrich, head of the SD and later chief of the mobile killing squads, the *Einsatzgruppen*.

Kristallnacht and the beginning of the physical annihilation of Jews on June 22, 1941, is separated by the Polish interlude, which was, in a sense, a time of gathering strength for the final solution of the "Jewish question." With the occupation of Poland in September 1939, Germany acquired about 2.5 million Jews, which from the Nazi point of view made the question more acute in a new way. Ghettos were organized in Poland, concentrating the Jews into delimited areas of the larger cities. Immediately after the army arrived in a Polish city, the Germans ordered

prominent local Jews to organize a "Jewish council" (*Judenrat*). The council's task was to transmit German orders to the Jews. Ghetto formation started in Wartheland in the west of Poland, a region the Nazis had decided to ethnically cleanse of non-Germans. The Jews from Wartheland were herded into the newly-formed ghettos of Poland's cities.

Until 1941, the more or less official Nazi stance was to encourage Jewish emigration out of Greater Germany, and to use Jewish workers to further the war effort, as in Poland. Ghetto formation was double-edged. On the one hand, the ghetto supposedly had a Jewish self-administration and even police force, but on the other hand, the concentration of Jews in a small area facilitated their transport to the death camps.

The first phase of the physical annihilation of Jews started with the attack on the Soviet Union. Hitler's secret order to exterminate the Jews in the conquered territories completely and without delay took effect on June 22, 1941. In addition to this secret order directed against Jews, the highest German authorities also issued a partly open order to kill communists, especially commissars. The main initiators of this order were Hitler, Himmler, head of the SS, and Heydrich, head of the SD. In the occupied Eastern European countries, nothing occurred that had not been planned and ordered in the center of Greater Germany.

The first phase of Jewish extermination was carried out by the top Nazi leadership, who planned *Kristallnacht* and created ghettos in Poland. The SD organized the *Einsatzgruppen A, B, C, and D* – special mobile units that operated in the rear of the conquered areas. The purpose of these units was ostensibly to maintain security in the conquered countries, but in practice their main activity was organizing the shooting of Jews. Although the *Einsatzgruppen* had special German shooting units, their first gambit – to use chess terminology – was to create the general impression that "native anti-Semitic" groups themselves were killing "their local Jews." As this provocative move was unsuccessful, the *Einsatzgruppen* leadership activated the killing apparatus. The apparatus was formed partly of units brought in from Germany and partly of forces organized locally. The theory of spontaneous killing of Jews in Eastern Europe, claiming that local inhabitants started shooting Jews without German leadership, is not supported by the documentary evidence.

Latvia came under the control of *Einsatzgruppe A* in the first days of the war. It was headed by *Brigadeführer* Walter Stahlecker. Criss-crossing Latvia, Stahlecker organized several Latvian SD auxiliary units, the main

ones being Mārtinš Vagulāns' auxiliary unit in Jelgava and Viktors Arājs' auxiliary unit in Rīga. Vagulāns' unit was disbanded after Jelgava's Jews were shot, but Arājs' unit continued to operate until the end of 1944.

The *Einsatzgruppen* alone are calculated to have killed more than a million Jews in Eastern Europe. Stahlecker entered into his accounts that about 31,000 Jews were shot in Latvia up to October 1941. Civilian authorities took over in September, and the *Einsatzgruppen* ended operations in Latvia. "Settling" the Jewish question was taken over partly by the German civilian administration, partly by the SD structure and partly by the highest police and SS commander in the Northeast, Friedrich Jeckeln.

The Jews of Rīga, Daugavpils and Liepāja were driven into ghettos. In October 1941, there were still about 35,000 Jews alive in Latvia. The gates of Rīga's ghetto closed shut on October 25.

The number of Jews still alive in the Baltics, especially in Rīga, did not make Himmler happy. At the beginning of November, he transferred Jeckeln to Latvia with the assignment to "clean out the ghetto." The so-called Rumbula actions, in which about 24,000 Jews from Rīga were shot, took place on two days, November 30 and December 8. Smaller actions took place in Liepāja, the coast of Šķēde, and Daugavpils by Poguļanka. Before the death camps were built at the end of 1941 and the beginning of 1942, about 21,000 Jews from Germany and Austria were transported to Latvia. Although all were fated for death, only about half were shot at the beginning of 1942. By April 1942, the mass killing of Jews in Latvia had ended. About 10,000 Latvian and European Jews were transported to camps in Germany in mid-1944.

At the very beginning, when the *Einsatzgruppen* harvests of death had not yet ended, those who filled Hitler's orders started to plan more modern and effective methods of killing. Almost all of the Jews of Europe, including those of Poland, were still alive in December 1941, when Latvia's Jews were already liquidated. The Jews of the Western countries, including Germany, were for the most part still living in their own homes.

Hitler and his henchmen knew by the summer of 1941 that the "Jewish question" could not be solved by the *Einsatzgruppen* alone. As soon as the war started, the Germans started to plan and build special extermination camps. One could say that the Germans built and equipped extermination factories, using industrial methods to exterminate people – for example, the conveyor belt principle. These factories consisted of two parts, gas works and crematoria. Seven such death camps were built: Auschwitz, Birkenau, Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec, Maidanek, and Chelm-

no. So as not to create a negative atmosphere in Germany, all these camps were in Poland.

The death camps started operating at the beginning of 1942 and reached full capacity by the end of the year. In February 1942 Heydrich organized the Wannsee conference to coordinate the transports to the death camps. Transports started in 1942 and continued until 1945. The Jews of Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia were transported to the death camps first. Deportations from France, Holland, and Belgium started in the latter half of 1942. Then came Jews from Yugoslavia and Greece. In 1944, there was still a large, untouched group of Central European Jews in Hungary. To gain control of these Jews, with Germany's strength in the East weakening, the Germans occupied Hungary.

The destruction of Europe's Jews was still not complete in 1945 when the Red Army started to liberate the death camps. The German authorities ordered the weakened inmates of the camps to march to Germany, in the freezing cold. Thousands died in this death march.

The extermination of Jews in Germany and its occupied lands started in June 1941 and ended on May 8, 1945. The number of Jews killed is estimated at between 5 and 6 million. This figure includes about 62,000 Latvian Jews.



Juris Dreifelds

THE DEGRADATION AND PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN LATVIA

The degradation of the environment in Latvia during the Soviet period had many of the same features historically found in many industrialized countries of the world. This degradation involved a decrease in the quality of air and water, an increase in environmentally related morbidity and death, a growth in direct and indirect economic losses, and severe diminution of the aesthetic pleasures and restorative powers associated with untampered natural settings. These negative dimensions alone are usually enough to create a formidable challenge to any regime. In Latvia, however, between 1986 and September, 1991 when Russia recognized Latvia's independence, several socio-political aspects added immeasurably to the complexity and intensity of the problem. During the late 1980's many Latvians began to perceive the assault on nature as a direct threat to the continued viability of the Latvian nation. The land and waters that sustained Latvian ancestors for many thousands of years were widely perceived to be at risk. The concept of "ecological genocide" was introduced. In the post-Chernobyl period of ecological consciousness people began to fear that the very setting in which Latvian culture found its inspiration and was developed could become dangerous enough to force wide-scale evacuation to safer areas outside the republic. Such a calamity could threaten ethnic survival. This concern was well articulated by a Latvian official in December 1988 when he defended his nation's legitimate right to be apprehensive about the state of the environment without being cast in extremist garb.

Close attachment to nature is an important ingredient of Latvian culture. Tens of thousands of folk songs depict nature as a friendly refuge and as an endowment to be cherished, protected and befriended rather than tamed, exploited or civilized. The most important forms of recreation for a great majority of the population include fishing, berry picking, mushroom gathering and simple hiking in the woods or the countryside. Close to a half of ethnic Latvians live in rural areas. Most of the others have access to cottages or "garden houses" outside urban settings. Because of this proximity to nature Latvians did not need to be convinced

by specialists that their rivers, lakes, seashores and forests were losing their natural beauty and were becoming sullied by refuse and off-scum of a Moscow directed industrial infrastructure. While profits went to the centre and scarce locally manufactured commodities were distributed throughout the Soviet Union, pollution was left entirely in the hands of the locals. This ecological inequity was reinforced by other negative aspects of production. Latvians were dismayed by the influx of hundreds of thousands of migrant workers and the creation of a Russian atmosphere in factories, on the streets and in state and party institutions. The synergy of these concerns created a very powerful base for mobilization. In view of the limitations of freedom and the reputation of the organs of repression it is not surprising that the growing antagonism to demographic dilution, linguistic russification and political repression found its outlet in an assault against the ecological shortcomings of the regime.

A direct political confrontation against the republic communist establishment no doubt would have failed immediately. A subtler and more indirect mobilization of discontent based on ecological concerns presented a more complicated challenge to Communist decision makers. The regime did not respond with its usual alacrity and harsh methods traditionally used against dissidents. The instinct of immediately reacting against non-sanctioned groups was restrained by the ambiguous political situation created by glasnost and the wide resonance of the issue itself. As well, the Latvian Communist Party was divided with many members sincerely committed to a clean environment.

The first major organized Latvian ecological group, the Environmental Protection Club, was able to exploit this political uncertainty at the top and provide a protective umbrella for a wide range of concerns, which were at the same time ecological, political and spiritual, converging into a powerful unifying stream of concern for Latvian national survival. Not surprisingly this club became the "womb" for the birth of several Latvian nationalist organizations including the Latvian National Independence Movement and it was one of the principal catalysts for the creation of the Latvian People's Front.

The first leader of the Front, Dainis Ivans, in October 1988 described the seminal role and effect of the environmental issue:

In Latvia everything began with the movement to save the environment. The Environmental Protection Club was formed. Individual fighters arose – prophets who were guided by the conviction and unbending faith in the justice [of their cause]. Slowly ever

more people joined and assembled around it. It seemed as if people were slowly arising from deep slumber. The people became active in the discussion of the most varied social and political questions. The big awakening had started.

The agendization of nature protection made the issue a favourite reference point in the first three open elections in Latvia (March 1989, December 1989 and March 1990). In March 1990 seven of eight candidates running for the Green Party were elected to the Latvian Supreme Council.

Without a doubt the issue of the environment was used as a successful battering ram against the legitimacy of the Soviet system and Moscow-style federalism. In addition, it eroded the credibility of socialism and state ownership bringing with it an attendant idealization of the effects of economic competition, free enterprise and the "western style" of doing things.

With the advent of independence the ecological movement slowed down and then almost stalled. Other issues pre-empted the political stage. Concerns about economic survival and especially about energy, food and paper production nudged ecological concerns lower and lower on the agenda. As well, new considerations came to the fore. Production profits no longer flowed to Moscow and previously vilified industries were now widely perceived as cornerstones of a viable Latvian economy.

Dimensions of the Problem

Latvia faced major environmental problems, which did not differ much from those of Western Europe and Scandinavia but of thirty years earlier. While Scandinavia, for example, had been able to diminish its problems by active and effective counter measures, Latvia's efforts were plagued by the shortcomings found in all Soviet systems: unsystematic financing, erratic planning, non-specialized equipment manufacture, sloppy workmanship, ad-hoc repairs, lack of trained personnel and reliance on secrecy, rhetoric and public relations gimmicks to allay criticism.

The assault on the environment in Latvia came from many directions. The most pressing concern was water quality. Air pollution was less of a problem because automobile transportation, which provides over two thirds of the volume of pollution was then significantly less developed than in the West. As well, cleaner natural gas and electricity in most instances, had replaced dirtier fuels such as coal by the 1980s. A major problem involved toxic wastes and the haphazard unmonitored burial of

industrial and commercial garbage. Radioactivity was not considered to be a hazard except in foods imported from areas around Chernobyl. Abandoned explosives and military detritus, however, did become a major source of apprehension.

Water Pollution

Water pollution was by far the primary concern of environmentalists in Latvia. Latvia had much more water per capita than most of the other former Soviet republics. The positive aspect of this was that there was greater potential for dilution and self-purification of wastes. The negative aspect, however, was that this abundance created a lethargy in the introduction of water saving and recycling devices and processes. For example, in 1989 almost twenty years after accepting the goal of total recycling of waste water, Latvia was only recycling 59% or far below the Soviet average of 72 percent.

The abundance of water created other problems as well. It attracted industries that produced large volumes of effluent. Because these industries were clustered in certain confined localities rather than located evenly throughout the country their cumulative impact on specific regional water basins was often excessive. This factor of industrial concentration was further exacerbated by the fluctuations in the quantity of available river water from month to month and from year to year. Waste water volumes, however, did not follow these rhythms of nature and were dumped into receiving rivers regardless of natural water quantity or quality.

The construction of three hydroelectric dams on the largest river, the Daugava, mitigated some of the worst fluctuation cycles in that river but the dams brought new problems. The dam just above the city of Riga, which was completed in 1976 was opened only during a few hours a day to satisfy peak electricity demands. This impeded the proper flushing and dilution of Riga city sewage discharged below the dam. The dams also eliminated the many rapids and fast water sections of the Daugava River that formerly helped oxygenation and self-purification processes. Another aspect of water resource distribution affected pollution control in Latvia. Over 60% of the yearly water volume of the six largest rivers was collected outside the republic, mostly in Belarus and Lithuania. For effective pollution control, close cooperation among these republics was an obvious necessity, otherwise downstream users would have to bear the costs of upstream pollution. Indeed, in many instances, Latvia had to

cope with unwanted trans-boundary pollutants. The most serious case of such trans-boundary pollution occurred in November, 1990, when a polymer complex in Novopolotsk in Soviet Belarus accidentally spilled 127.9 tons of hydrocyanic acid and the extremely dangerous poison "acetone cyanhydride" (both derivatives of cyanide) into the upper reaches of the Daugava (Western Dvina) River. For three days, downstream inhabitants, who use the Daugava as a source of drinking water, were not warned of the looming danger by either the chemical plant or its controlling Soviet ministry. Only the appearance of dead fish alerted Latvian authorities to the deadly danger leading one Latvian official to wonder about the deadly consequences to peoples lives if the river had been frozen and the dead fish had floated invisibly under the ice. Belarus also accounted for over a third of nitrate and phosphorus pollutants to the Daugava.

A combination of high precipitation levels, frequently sloping and hilly terrain and the introduction of large, unbroken fields after collectivisation produced severe problems of soil erosion. Heavy runoff from fields resulted in serious silting of rivers. In addition, this runoff washes away large quantities of chemical fertilizers and pesticides that entered the water system and created serious problems for water organisms, fish and ultimately, man. It has been estimated that over one third of applied chemicals were lost in this manner. Such "non-point" sources of pollution are extremely difficult to neutralize and only prophylactic methods such as increased soil conservation and reduced use of chemicals can ameliorate such a problem. Chemicals, however, became fashionable for intensive agriculture and their use grew many times over in the last two decades of communist rule. During the 1980s there were over 140 chemicals applied and "not always correctly" according to one critic. Fertilizers often were stored in makeshift, non-standardized warehouses. Agricultural chemicals contaminated ground water as well. A Latvian professor of chemistry studied samples of spring-water in the highlands of Vidzeme where he found "unbelievably high levels of pollution" including nitrates, chlorides and potassium ions. The mass production of chickens, pigs and cattle in confined settings presented another potential hazard for water bodies. Animal wastes were discharged into water bodies or spread on fields in very high concentrations. The volume and impact of animal droppings were often not fully appreciated. It has been estimated that one cow or steer produces excrement having an environmental impact equivalent to that produced by 16.4 human beings. One pig fattening complex in Latvia decided to avoid the high

costs of purification devices by piling 90,000 cubic meters of pig droppings on surrounding farms where the smelly substance polluted the soil and ground water. Here water pollutants were found to be several hundred times above acceptable standards.

Many waste neutralizing devices in rural areas were overloaded or abandoned and many farming units had not yet introduced biological cleaning devices by 1990. Of the approximately 20 gigantic pig and cattle breeding complexes in Latvia in 1990, only one had introduced anaerobic digestion facilities to treat animal excrement and obtain biogas and fertilizer.

A Scandinavian funded research project investigating the environmental situation in Latvia in 1990, (the Nordic Project) also undertook detailed environmental project identification as one of its goals. This study found that several thousand large state and collective farms, fertilizer storehouses, pesticide storage units and oil storage facilities were located too close to water bodies, that is, less than 200 meters away from the water line. They noted that only 20% of the 2000 manure storehouses and 160 of 500 oil storage depots had sufficient environmental safeguards.

While agriculture was creating serious water pollution problems from non-point sources, it accounted for only 2.7% of total volume of untreated wastewater from point sources. The threat to pure water originated from many other locations and transgressors. In 1990 only 113 million cubic meters or 31 percent of total polluted effluent was adequately treated before being dumped into Latvian waterways. Among the former Soviet republics Latvia's purification rate was one of the lowest, ranking only above that of Russia and Lithuania. In 1990 the bulk or 86 percent of all inadequately treated waste water originated from commercial discharges, but this figure probably did not reflect the real situation because many factories in Latvia simply attached their industrial outfall pipes to commercial sewage trunk lines without reporting this to government officials.

The most seriously affected water bodies were the rivers Daugava and Lielupe as well as the Gulf of Riga. Daugava is the largest river in Latvia and the recipient of the most massive volume of polluted effluent accounting for about three quarters of total such discharges before 1992.

Eutrophication is a natural ageing process in most water bodies, which over many thousands of years transforms pristine clear lakes into swamps. This process of ageing can be intensified by the actions of man. The addition of limiting nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen from

agricultural run off, municipal and industrial waste waters and the atmosphere have changed the Baltic Sea from a clear oligotrophic to a less translucent mesotrophic water body. The water contains more phytoplankton and many more fish than before World War II, but this brought with it thick unsightly and sometimes dangerous algae and under certain conditions these could cause serious dead water zones where few living organisms could survive.

Significant progress in water pollution control was achieved between 1980 and 1985. Ironically, during the period of glasnost and heightened ecological consciousness from 1985 to 1990 the share and also absolute volume of treated wastewater decreased. This came about partly because of the growing volume of Riga effluent and the lack of any major sewage purification system in this city. In addition, previously constructed systems in smaller cities and towns were breaking down or being overloaded because of insufficient initial capacity and poor design as was the case with Liepaja and Daugavpils. The total potential or theoretical capacity for wastewater treatment in Latvia was 320 million cubic meters in 1989 but only 110 million cubic meters were being adequately treated.

The Nordic Project found that much needed to be done to bring Latvia's water purification systems up to acceptable standards. They suggested many detailed concrete measures.

According to microbiological indicators Latvia's waterways on average could be classified as clean to moderately polluted. Nevertheless, besides microbiological indicators, other criteria are also important. A 1991–1992 Swedish engineering firm found that all five major rivers as well as many small rivers and streams were "nutrient rich" to "very nutrient rich", as a result of extremely high concentrations of phosphorus and nitrogen. Such rivers also held low concentrations of oxygen and decreased fish populations. These rivers were placed into the highest nutrient class used in the Swedish classification system, that is, eutrophic-hypertrophic aquatic ecosystems. Quantities of other polluting substances fall within the range of "moderately polluted" although with respect to heavy metals and some organic compounds the classification was considered "high to very high".

In 1992 a task force associated with the Helsinki Commission (Helcom) prepared a study highlighting the areas of greatest immediate concern within the Baltic Sea catchment basin that were to be addressed between 1993 and 1997. Within this Phase I list of 132 "hot spots", 47 were selected as requiring highest priority. Most of the problem areas

and all priority areas were found in the former Communist states. The three Baltic republics were responsible for 38 "hot spots", 16 of which were rated as "top priority". The estimated total cost of cleanup for the entire area was about 9.8 billion ECU's (European Currency Units). The Baltic republics had to spend 2.5 billion ECU's: Estonia 1.6 billion, Lithuania 512 million and Latvia 427 million. About half of Latvia's estimated cleanup costs were to be financed from abroad and the rest locally. Latvia was responsible for the management of 10 hot spots, 7 of which were of highest priority. In addition, Latvia's rivers carried pollution from Belarus and Lithuania.

Air Pollution

Air pollution levels in Latvia did not change significantly in the period 1985-1990. The total discharge of pollutants by weight in Latvia was significantly smaller than in the neighbouring Baltic republics in 1989, reaching only one third of Estonia's and two fifths of Lithuania's levels. In 1991, the total discharge of air pollutants in Latvia was about 515 thousand tonnes or about 200 kilograms per head of population. The major share or 72 percent by volume was provided by motor vehicles; stationary sources accounted for the remainder. Among the main stationary polluters were thermal power plants, food industry (sugar, milk canning), building materials (cement and lumber), municipal heating plants and the steel plant at Liepaja.

In 1990 only about a third of factories ejecting harmful substances into the air in Latvia had purification devices and of these every fifth one was not fully effective. As well, only 60 percent of factories had received maximum allowable emission standards. Greatest gains had been achieved in dealing with solid emissions (dust) with a 93 percent rate of success. In the more dangerous category of gases and evaporated liquids only a meagre 3 percent, however, had received treatment. Indeed, there were only 40 gas purification facilities in operation in 1990. Thus as one source pointed out "the atmosphere receives the most harmful chemical substances". This fact should also place in perspective the unqualified claims of seemingly great progress, which for years appeared in Communist Latvian statistics annuals.

A serious problem developed as a result of Lithuanian industrial emissions near Latvia. Most of the emissions of the Mazeikiiai petroleum refinery and thermoelectric plant and Naujoji Akmene cement plant were carried north across the border. Together these industries emitted 130

thousand tons of pollutants a year and provided large doses of heavy metals such as lead, cadmium, chrome, vanadium, manganese, nickel, cobalt, strontium for their surrounding population and for their Latvian neighbours. After a serious accident in Mazeikiai, which discharged 150 kilograms of sulphuric compounds, no investigation was initiated until after the Latvian Republic made a protest. In order to assess the actual damage and impact of these polluters, Latvia erected monitoring stations in several of its southern districts adjoining Lithuania.

The major air quality problem was created by transportation vehicles that in most instances used leaded gasoline. According to the Latvian Republic Environmental Committee, Soviet built vehicles did not have catalytic converters to clean exhaust fumes and were not built to be gas efficient. Motor repairs and tuning were generally of low quality increasing the volume of gases from incomplete combustion. For several years the lack of control over gasoline sales also allowed the use of fuel of extremely poor quality and high toxicity. This problem was finally controlled in 1994.

Other serious pollutants included formaldehydes, textiles, leather, synthetic fabrics and gasoline. The concentrations of ammonia phenols, hydrogen sulphides and methyl alcohol are also above the norm in certain cities. Riga and Jurmala regularly had the highest air pollution indexes.

The Nordic Project in its summary pointed out that capital investments for air protection projects in Latvia had been very small. They suggested that Latvia required a minimum of 180 new gas purification facilities in industrial plants and 650 flue gas purification units in boiler houses.

Other Environmental Hazards

The accident in Chernobyl made radiation a sensitive topic in all of Northern Europe. Latvia was fortunate that the emitted radiation particles did not descend on its territory; there was no precipitation when radiation clouds passed over the republic. This radiation cloud continued its journey north and settled mostly in Lapland where moss became contaminated. Soon thereafter, reindeer, the staple product of the region, had to be destroyed. Everyone in Latvia knew how close calamity had passed them by. A normal rainstorm could have wrecked Latvian agriculture for decades and caused many problems in the process.

By 1990 the republic had erected 46 radiation control points but all measurements were found to be within acceptable limits. The most menacing future danger was seen as originating from the Ignalina nuclear

power plant in Lithuania. This energy station with two Chernobyl-type nuclear blocks has been plagued by many technical problems including fires. It also lies close to a tectonic fault zone that experienced severe earthquakes in 1908 measuring a high of 7 on the Richter scale. This nuclear station is located less than 10 kilometres away from the Latvian border but even more importantly, the surrounding watershed flows into the Daugava River. There are many urban areas on the shores of this river including the second largest city of Daugavpils and the capital city of Riga. In case of accidental or terrorist induced radiation a large part of the Latvian population might have to be evacuated for many years.

A more serious environmental risk factor but one, which is not receiving the attention it deserves, is the fate of toxic wastes. Only a minute quantity of hazardous waste is disposed properly. According to a study by the Nordic Project, industrial enterprises generated 247,647 tons of hazardous waste a year, most of which were dumped untreated alongside household waste landfills or in "other unsuitable areas", thus damaging soil, ground water and atmosphere. In their estimation about 20-70 thousand tons of "extremely hazardous waste" required treatment every year. They recommend that a chemical waste management centre be constructed near Riga, which would include an incineration plant, physio-chemical treatment plant and a residuals repository. The capital costs alone have been estimated at over 130 million dollars.

Non-hazardous industrial household waste also became a serious problem. The Nordic Project found 78 registered landfill sites but "several hundreds of unregistered and uncontrolled dumping sites". These sites were seen as a serious threat to ground water. As well, surreptitious toxic substances were sometimes imported through "porous" Latvian borders and simply dumped into these uncontrolled dump sites.

The Baltic Sea was the recipient of more than 40,000 tons of dangerous German gas bombs dumped by the Allied Commission between 1945 and 1947. One of the locations was close to the port city of Liepaja. No one as yet knows the condition of these substances whose existence was only revealed in 1992 by the "greens" of St. Petersburg, Russia. The danger of old explosives also arises from World War II ammunition stored by the Red Army helter skelter near inhabited areas including Riga. The port city of Ventspils had to contend with another type of legacy. During the 1960's, Occidental Petroleum of the USA, better known as "Oxy", helped construct a chemical depot within the boundaries of the city. There is a possibility that the storage tanks could explode and cause enormous damage to the population and the

environment.

Acid rain is a worldwide scourge. The Latvian Environmental Protection Committee claimed that the republic received "neutral" rain in 1990. The Nordic Project, basing its assessment on data collected from 1982-1987 by the Latvian Hydrometeorological Board claims that "it was established that acid precipitation falls on the majority of the Republic, mainly in the uplands region."

One of the current concerns of world environmentalists has been biodiversity. In this respect Latvia appears to have retained an edge on most of its West European neighbours. More through neglect than conscious effort wildlife and plants were able to find favourable niches in deserted and overgrown farmlands that had been abandoned during the Communist period. For example a rare species of woodpeckers was being studied in order to introduce several pairs to Sweden. Latvia also had many nesting pairs of the extremely rare black storks.

The abundance and diversity of Latvian wildlife and biota in general have surprised Nordic biologists visiting the republic. But there are warning signs that many plants and animals are on the verge of disappearing as attested by Latvia's "Red Book" of threatened species. The improvident introduction by Communist leaders of the "yenot" or racoon-dog in 1948 to provide a useful fur-bearing animal turned out to be a calamity for local wildlife.

The threat of polychlorinated biphenyls (P.C.B.'s) was first discovered on the shores of the Baltic Sea. Yet, in Latvia until 2002 almost no information could be found on the effect of this and other toxics such as dioxins whose negative presence is measured in parts per trillion. Only in 2002 was dioxin "discovered" in local fish, but no warnings about eating Baltic Sea fish have been declared. It appears improbable that given the high concentrations of mercury, oil and heavy metals along the sea coast that fatty fish have not bio-accumulated unsafe levels of these chemicals. Evidently the problem until recently has been the lack of sophistication of Latvian measuring laboratories and new studies will most probably corroborate the wider poisonous legacy of the past in present day seafood.

Effects of Pollution

The Latvian media began discussions on the linkages between pollution and health with the advent of Gorbachev's policy of glasnost. According to a collective letter by medical personnel to Padomju Jaunatne November

25, 1988, Latvia placed first among Soviet republics in deaths due to "genetic anomalies" and second in the rates of cancer. These medics described their concerns about the negative changes they had observed, "In the past few years there has been a striking increase in the number of sickly or stillborn babies. There are more women patients with diseases involving internal ovary secretions. We increasingly encounter conditions of infertility, miscarriage and virilism syndrome (among women) ...mostly from cities where there are broadly developed industries hazardous to health: Ventspils, Riga, Liepaja, Daugavpils, Olaine, Ogre, etc." These studies also pointed out that Latvia held second place in the chemical pollution of drinking water.

A 1988 study of morbidity rates in the city of Ventspils found that in the last ten years the incidence of child genetic pathology had increased by 3.5, bronchial asthma 2.0, Down Syndrome 1.5, anaemia of pregnant women 10.0, premature births 1.7, allergic dermatitis 2.5, and endocrinal illness 1.6 times.

There were serious economic losses due to pollution. The closing of the Jurmala seaside resort beaches to swimming since the summer of 1988 followed a long list of water bodies closed in earlier decades, which had been popular recreational areas (e.g. Lielupe since 1981, Kisezers, Daugava). Fish populations decreased dramatically and many of the fish in the Baltic Sea most probably contain high levels of carcinogens. Many salmon spawning streams were sullied or blocked by a variety of barriers such as the Riga Hydro Dam. In the Gulf of Riga alone the fish catch decreased by three to four times in the 1980s and valuable species all but disappeared. Some trees in and around Riga and Jurmala have died from air pollution. Serious effects on trees and crops were being felt in other areas, in particular in south western and central Latvia because of gases and dust carried from neighbouring Lithuania.

Glasnost and Environmental Activism

A new period for Latvian environmentalism began with the confrontation over the construction of a dam on the Daugava River at Daugavpils in 1986. For Latvians this occasion was seen as a rematch of the 1958-1959 attempt to stop the construction of another dam on the same river but at Plavinas. The forty-metre dam at Plavinas was constructed in spite of the mobilization of thousands of people, the publication of many articles, and the signing of numerous petitions. As a result of this victory of the Soviet engineers, water covered many important historical

landmarks and especially the Staburags, a cliff whose importance parallels that of Die Lorelei in Germany. This cliff with its perpetual water spring had become a feature in Latvian myths, epic poems, songs and books. It should be noted that opponents to this scheme did not fight the exploitation of hydro power, but rather suggested that two separate smaller dams be built, thus preserving the ecologically sensitive areas and historical and nature monuments. In 1986 once again the shortsighted Soviet engineering minds were confronted by the "meddling non-specialists" for whom ecological, aesthetic and historical values were more valuable than the marginal cost increases of electricity. This time the hydropower specialists and officials lost.

The architects of mobilization for this cause were two journalist investigators, one of whom, Dainis Ivans, was later elected President of the Latvian People's Front. Their article in *Literatura un Maksla* published October 17, 1986, energized a previously apathetic society, which responded with demonstrations, meetings and tens of thousands of letters protesting the dam. For the first time in nearly half a century, Latvians savoured a collective success.

The most influential and broadly based group emerging from this period was the Environmental Protection Club (V.A.K.), which was founded February 28, 1987 by poet and forester Arvids Ulme. It essentially co-opted the membership of a monument protection group whose activities had begun in 1984. V.A.K. was begun as a movement with a very broad mandate to alter fundamentally the orientation of people. It set out to protect not only monuments and ecology, but also "humanistic relations", a category that was described as including the fostering of friendship, unity, peace, love and democracy, the perfection of one's own soul and that of the nation. Its manifesto boldly defined the correlation between poisoned air, water and earth and poisoned individual relations, thoughts and hearts. Love, tolerance and compassion were to be the main counterforce to environmental degradation.

The greens attained their greatest influence between 1987 and 1989, but thereafter and especially since the victory of a Latvian People's Front Parliament in May 1990, lost momentum.

Unfortunately, as in the rest of the world, public concern about nature protection has been diluted by other more pressing problems. This ebb in interest has its political consequences as pointed out by the Minister of the Environment, Indulis Emsis in 1993: "At the present time nature protection in Latvia is a waif because there is not much pressure from society".⁹

Nature Protection Implementation Bottlenecks

For four decades of the Soviet period, various organizations responsible for nature protection were created, disbanded, shuffled from one ministry to another, reorganized or recreated and almost always these moves were followed by criticism of the "weaknesses" of the previous structures. In Latvia as in the rest of the former USSR there was a mystical belief that the most important element of environmental protection was finding the "perfect" organizational structure. Once this magic arrangement had been discovered it was felt that the basic problems would be resolved. In Latvia there were major administrative reorganizations in 1958, 1961, 1965, 1988, 1990 and 1993.

A daunting variety of problems had to be overcome. Latvia and other Baltic republics did not have specialized pollution control equipment manufacturing centres. Indeed, the entire USSR until a few years before its dissolution had no such centre. The duty for creating equipment documentation and construction was then undertaken by firms whose specialty lay in totally unrelated fields. Their finished environmental pollution control products in most instances reflected the ad-hoc nature of their approach and required repairs or adaptations soon after installation. Moreover, equipment was often devoid of sophistication and could satisfy only part of the originally envisioned clean-up functions.

The installation and on site construction of purification devices requires specialized labour. There were no construction companies specializing in this field in Latvia. Moreover, labour discipline was notoriously sloppy. To compound these problems maintenance and cleaning did not receive high priority attention. The low status of "sanitary" engineers often resulted in novices or "blacklisted" personnel being assigned to such duties. In view of the many difficulties it was easier for polluters to plan for the minimal needs of the present without worrying about future growth and changes in production. Thus one of the most frequent problems was the under capacity of pollution control works when production outputs increased.

Not surprisingly, many managers decided to pursue the path of least resistance by paying fines. The sums charged were not large in comparison to pollution control outlays and almost no one had to pay from their personal pockets. Very few bonuses were lost because of pollution and the corporate culture among most managers saw environmental demands as grossly exaggerated. In the face of outside

criticism managers found solidarity and a strong support system among their own kind – the people that mattered for their social and status well being.

Numerous laws and regulations to protect the environment were passed in Latvia but as the World Bank noted “a transition is required from a system in which environmental laws represent a statement of goals to a system in which those laws provide operative requirements for the control of potential sources of environmental risk”.

Conclusion

It appears that Latvia alone will not be able to resolve its problems of environmental degradation. Ironically, rapid positive gains have already come from the inevitable slowdown or complete shutdown of large factories created originally to supply the entire Soviet Union. The Nordic countries and Germany in particular have focussed on the environmental issue in Latvia.

Latvia since March 3, 1994 is participating as a member of the Helsinki Commission (Helcom) to develop strategies for a cleaner environment as envisioned by the Helsinki Convention.

In April 1991 Latvia joined its neighbour republics (Russia, Belarus, Estonia, Lithuania) in the Eastern Baltic Commission (Eastbaltcom) to organize and coordinate undertakings for nature protection. There is also a Baltic republic coordinating mechanism to facilitate closer cooperation in this field. New opportunities have also been explored through the United Nations and its various organizations.

Very few of Latvia's environmental problems will be resolved in one year or even one decade. One of the most pressing needs is detailed information on the actual dimensions of pollution problems.

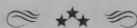
In the longer term Latvian factories will have to adjust to western standards of production using far less water and energy in producing more ecologically sound goods and strive to achieve the goal of environmentalists in the world – “wasteless technology”.

One unplanned but positive side effect of the decrease in production and the shutdown of factories such as the Sloka Pulp and Paper Mill has been the improvement of Latvian beaches along the Baltic Sea. By the summer of 1993 many areas were considered safe for swimming, although depending on wind, tide and currents other areas were found to be unsafe.

Presently the political aspect of environmental degradation has

become muted. Already the narrow technological minds are discussing the possibility of constructing the Daugavpils hydroelectric station and a new atomic station.

The issue of environmental safety and purity may have disappeared from the front-page headlines yet the realities of an ecological threat to the survival of Latvians is still an acknowledged possibility. As in most other countries of the world when ecological movements dissipate the professionals carry on until the next explosion of public concern. No one, however, can predict what incident or what factors will create the wave of new mobilization in Latvia. Given the ongoing assault on nature and the legacy of Soviet era toxic chemicals, it is fairly safe to predict that sooner or later this issue will again dominate the political agenda and the concern of most Latvians who have a very deep attachment to the land of their ancestors.



Arturs Liepkalns

THE DECLINE OF ETHICAL VALUES IN LATVIA

The years of the Communist occupation in Latvia were filled with tragic events and experiences. The great suffering caused the Latvian people during this time resulted in psychic deformation.

The USSR violently re-occupied Latvia when the Second World War ended. The occupation continued for almost fifty years. In considering the history of these years, one has to come to the painful conclusion that a fairly large number of Latvians consciously or as in a spell served the Communist powers. Communist methods of psychological influence, carried out over 50 years, were stronger than could have been expected. Despite German barons and the yoke of serfdom, Latvians for four centuries had preserved their national honor and customs.

The first years of independence of the renewed Latvian state testify to the people's oppression in the half-century long terror of occupation. These first years have given Latvians an internationally recognized national independence and also palpable freedom of association and communication, but wages, pensions, and economic conditions characterize poverty. The large number of *nouveau riche* in Latvia testifies to criminal corruption. The *nouveau riche* are created by the materially-oriented top class of Latvians and foreigners, including also government politicians.

Once, in 1941, in political courses as a new recruit, I listened to a lecture about Communist ethics. I understood then that Communist ethics had nothing in common with Christian ethics, which was the basis of religion classes in the schools of independent Latvia.

The ethical norms of our forebearers called for each person to act honorably. A Latvian had to guard his and others' honor. Like Christian ethics, the ancient Latvians had their Golden Rule:

The sun shines for me everywhere,
When the sun has risen,
There are good people for me everywhere,
When I myself am good.

The decline of ethical values during the Soviet occupation of Latvia has to be judged from the viewpoint of Christian ethics, based on the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments. Most crimes done by man are sins against God's commandments.

Latvia's schools under Communist power

It did not take long after the start of the first occupation in the summer of 1940 for the Soviet regime to drastically affect Latvia's schools. I was one of the new teachers that experienced the great changes that transformed Latvia's schools into Soviet schools.

The newspaper *Soviet Latvia* in 1940 had extensive articles about the purpose of schools and teachers, punctuated with snappy slogans such as: "Schools are the most important weapon in the socialist revolution! Teachers have to become the main army of social education!" It was difficult to conform to the demands of Soviet education and teaching. The disappearance of the pictures of Latvia's president and freedom fighters from the walls signalled that everything in the school would be different. No reminders of the previous Latvian school system were allowed. Schoolrooms were now decorated with Lenin's and Stalin's portraits. The "Red corner" and the "wall newspaper" were new developments.

The 379 days of the Soviet occupation accurately called the "Year of Terror" greatly damaged Latvia's schools. Many teachers, students, and their families were arrested and deported; some were killed. The list of those deported, missing, or killed attest to the Soviet regimes ruthlessness against Latvia's youth and their teachers. In 1940 and 1941, the first phase of Soviet occupation, Communist lies and violence systematically destroyed our nation's unity and the social-ethical bases of society.

The German occupation started at the end of the school year. It cannot be denied that the occupation by National Socialistic Germany also resulted in a large number of victims. Forced military service in the Latvian Legion resulted in the deaths of many of Latvia's sons. But it has to be realized that the compulsory military service unleashed the Latvian's national spirit and determination to resist the Soviet Union's second occupation. The Latvian Legion fought heroically against the hated Red Army. Only people who have a lofty goal and a sense of duty to their people can fight in that manner. German National Socialism was not the driving force for the Latvian Legionnaires. On the Eastern front and in "Fortress Kurzeme," the Legionnaires were led by the love of

their homeland, which inspired them to fight heroically for a free and independent Latvia. Weapons and other matériel from the Germans were the only things that connected the Latvian Legionnaires to Hitler's Germany. The Legionnaires considered Hitler to be as hateful as Stalin, maybe even worse.

Soviet schools were able to psychologically influence Latvian youth, and also older persons, and dispose them in their favor. This phenomenon is evident to anyone who has had the slightest acquaintance with Latvian mentality in the years since the regaining of freedom.

However, one cannot deny the courage of those Latvian Communists in the Supreme Soviet who declared Latvia's independence on May 4, 1990, and August 21, 1991.

Independent Latvia now exists, but it cannot be compared to the Latvia born November 18, 1918. Schools still have no national spirit, and Latvia is no longer an ethnically homogeneous country. The long Communist occupation succeeded in imposing Soviet ideology.

The confusion of ethical values in the renewed Latvian state

The almost 50-year-long subjugation by utopian Communism deflected Latvia from its path of development to a secure future. Many of the values inherited from our ancestors were lost, evil overcame good, the national spirit lost its ability to resist.

Observing what is happening in our motherland at its rebirth, one needs to ask the question posed by the prophetic Latvian poet Andrejs Eglītis: "Is night really over in the people's soul?" As if answering this question, the poet says the bitter words: "There are such wounds in a people that will never heal – there is always some stranger to tread them underfoot."

Consequences of the Soviet occupation and colonization

During the Soviet occupation, the Latvian people suffered difficult years of systematic re-education in the Communist way, which was very effective.

I would compare the Latvian people's yoke during the Soviet occupation with life in the Nazi concentration camp Auschwitz, as described by the Viennese professor of psychiatry Viktor E. Frankl, who spent three years in the camp. Frankl coined the psychoanalytical theory called "logotherapy." Under the Soviet regime, life for the Latvian people was

similar to life in a concentration or forced labor camp.

Frankl's experiences in the death camp are heart-rending. Still, he survived the horrors, by being as if under the sword of Damocles and trying to find meaning in life in the camp. He survived the physical sufferings, having accepted the doctrine that a prisoner cannot lose faith in the future. In his book *Man's Search for Meaning*, he simply and clearly reveals the meaning of faith:

A prisoner who lost his faith in freedom was destined to die. Having lost his faith in the future, he also lost his hold on life; he gave in to decline and submitted to spiritual and physical collapse.

The goal of the Soviet regime was to intimidate the Latvian people and take away their faith and hope in the future. Increasing fear and the lack of hope for the future deadened awareness and the sense of freedom in most people. When the independence of the state was declared again on August 21, 1991, and the opportunity existed to regain complete freedom, there was a marked lack of the enthusiasm expected by Westerners. Germany's concentration camp inmates reacted in the same way when liberated by the Allies.

Dr. Frankl ends his tale of suffering in the concentration camp with deeply moving words: "The zenith of emotional experiences for one who returned home is the feeling that, after all the suffering, there is nothing more to fear but God."

The emotional experience of the Latvian people at the end of the Soviet occupation must have been similar to those of Frankl and his colleagues in the concentration camps. The Latvians' dreams of freedom and their faith in the future had lost their meaning. Latvians and their neighbors, the Estonians and Lithuanians, will have to reacquire the sense and meaning of personal and national freedom, and will also have to regain their faith in God, for true liberty is only "where the Spirit of the Lord is" (2 Corinthians 3:17).

During the years of the occupation, the Latvians lost much of their national spirit, as shown by all three Saeima elections so far. A negative aspect is the fact that Soviet-era functionaries and former Communist party members are getting into the government in large numbers. Voting results show that more than half of Latvians have not yet freed themselves of the fears inherited from the Soviet occupation.

Latvian sociologists have been studying the changes in the country's ethnic structure caused by the long period of large-scale migration, the

transformation of Latvians from a majority to a minority. They recognize the fact the "Latvians were considered a minority in their own land and were forced to suffer the negative consequences of the Soviet regime's ethnic policy." Latvia's historical and cultural development was interrupted, the national awareness of the Latvians was crippled. Even though independence has been regained, it has not freed itself from the burden of the past.

Liquidating the negative consequences of occupation and colonization: successes and failures

One has to wonder at how little the governments of the renewed state of Latvia have tried to inform the world about the horrors suffered by the Latvian people in the long years of the Soviet occupation. Remaining silent about Communism's atrocities in Latvia is unforgivable. We know that Jewish organizations and the state of Israel respectfully honor Jewish victims and conscientiously search for those guilty of crimes, but the Latvian government stays silent.

In his recent book *Again Under the Russian Boot?*, journalist and politician Visvaldis Lācis offers thoughtful opinions about Latvians' lack of national awareness, for example:

The attitude toward Russia and the colonist majority in Latvia shows that many Latvians, after more than a half century of occupation, have destroyed their souls. They are afraid to tell the truth, afraid to fight to make truth a part of society .

A person who has lived for a long time in fear continues to be afraid as long as there is any power that makes demands that, if not met, would result in the loss of some promised good, such as being accepted into the European Union. It is inappropriate to be afraid of today's purportedly democratic Russia's demands and threats, because Moscow is just continuing the former Soviet Union's great power play. The government of Latvia should not be afraid to expose the wrongs done to the nation during the years of occupation.

Unfortunately, the government of today's Latvia is doing little to restore the self-respect which was taken from the Latvian people in the years of occupation. There are many former Soviet officials in Latvia's current government, who exploit their position for their own personal good but do not work for the good of the people. Some of them perhaps

are now ashamed to act openly against their Communist beliefs, or acknowledge their mistakes and their offenses against their people and against humanity in general.

One can get free of one's sins only by repenting them, confessing them openly and truthfully. It is a pity that so few Latvian Communists have done this.

Those who served internationalism during the occupation did not have an easy time returning to their people when the Soviet regime ended. Visvaldis Lācis states in his book:

Unfortunately, Latvia's politicians are so far removed from the people that they do not see the Russian threats. Unfortunately, we are lacking in courage [...]. The threats to the existence of the Latvian people do not come just from Russia and the Russian-speakers. They also come from Latvian cosmopolitans, from Latvians who have no patriotic feelings and who have become strangers to their own people.

Historian and diplomat Arnolds Spekke had similar thoughts: "Only a nation that respects and takes care of itself spiritually has its own unique tomorrow, and only those peoples that grow remain on history's stage."

Schools in renewed Latvia are functioning. There has been plenty of time for a rebirth of Latvian nationalism in the schools, if not in the society. Unfortunately, this has occurred only rarely. One cannot fault the schools or teachers. One can justifiably accuse the government and the Saeima, that still obstruct the back to the Latvian way of life. The Latvian spirit is still in decline, while the oppressive Communist regime has not disappeared but is still present in the people's daily life.

Cultivating national awareness, Latvians do not have to become haters of other peoples – ultrapatriots or chauvinists. The characteristics of Latvian nationalism are: "love of one's people, faith in one's people and a national consciousness that holds one's people higher than any other, putting one's own people's interests and their cultural development first." For small peoples, national self-awareness in its positive form, not taken to extremes, is a question of their survival and their nations' future existence.

In the first period of independence, Latvian schoolchildren were taught not just academic subjects but also piety, the love of one's country, and positive values. Even if not everyone grew up to be a perfect Latvian or perfect person, most schoolchildren still could tell right from wrong.

During the occupation, it seems that moral education was abandoned. There was no place for religion or religious ethics in a state obsessed with Communism. There were also no positive examples in the governments of Latvia and the Soviet Union. What kind of example could one find in a country whose leader was a criminal and his myrmidons in the Cheka? Their hands were stained with the blood of innocent people.

In the first years after the fall of the Soviet regime, there should have been serious attention paid to religious and ethical schooling. The teaching of ethical values in schools has not been done systematically and rationally. At the start of the 1977 school year the well-known educator Eduards Silkalns wrote:

If, for example, religion is not taught in schools, then the pupil grows into adulthood with the feeling that either there is no God or God is not important, for if He were important, there would have been classes about Him in school. The same with a love of one's country: if this love, this national awareness is not nurtured in the schools, the adult later does not think that his country is an important entity, nor that one should be faithful to it, serve it, help guard it and protect it.

These are not good times for patriotism in Latvia. There is also no interest in teaching religion in schools. Unofficial statistics show that very few pupils study religion, especially in the middle schools. It is surprising that neither the Lutheran nor Catholic Church has published detailed statistics about the teaching of religion in schools. Ministry of Education and Science figures from 1977 show that of Latvia's 1,300 non-specialized schools, only 194 teach religion or ethics, reaching 13,766 pupils, 4% of the total. Still, one must be thankful that religious teaching is again allowed in schools, as it was completely forbidden during the Soviet occupation.

A sociological study on old teaching in a new situation shows a basic truth about the state of education in renewed Latvia, that "one has to take into account the inheritance received from the Soviet regime." The Soviet education system was centralized, standardized, and highly regulated. Now the individual can freely choose and decide what he wants to achieve in life.

The speaker of the 7th Saeima, Jānis Straume, stated in his speech to the Saeima on November 18 that the wounds caused by the Soviet regime

still are not healed: "We are forced to remember again and again the destruction caused Latvia and the Latvian people over 50 years by the occupation power, and from whose consequences we are still not completely free."

The Soviet regime did not allow the formation of a democratic society. The dictatorial regime defined and formed by force a society that blindly submitted and worked in the interests of the state. With no rights, the people were not able to influence or form the governing structures. The state literally belonged to the Communist Party. There was no constructive interaction between the state and the people. Therefore, the people did not actively take part in the process of the rebirth of the state, even though most sympathized with the independence movement.

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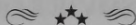
In almost fifty years of occupation, the Soviet regime stole the Latvian people's spiritual values, which had been guarded and preserved for centuries, and its determination to preserve its Latvian spirit and soul, which derived from the heritage of the ancient folk songs (*dainas*) and the Christian faith. Books, articles, and personal experience show that people in the renewed Latvian nation are in a state of ethical shock. Most are having difficulty recovering from the experiences of the occupation. Many former Communist Party members, who should have voluntarily renounced political activity a long time ago, have exploited the insecurity of the people in a free society. The Saeima and the government should be comprised of Latvians who have Latvianism in their hearts and minds, who realize that friendships cannot subvert the interests of the people, who place the people and the country first. I am convinced that there is no shortage of such Latvians in Latvia and in the exile community.

Latvia must have a government that is concerned with regaining a sense of Latvianness and patriotism in children and young people, starting with the family and continuing in the schools. Let mothers instill the Latvian spirit and language into the hearts of infants with cradle songs, as in ancient times! A nationally disposed government has to do everything in its power to double the number of Latvian children born!

Every Latvian, young and old, has to know his people's history. It is a grave educational error to teach Latvia's history not separately, but together with general history.

Latvia's history has to be taught in schools as a separate subject, and courses have to be offered in the cities and the countryside, where Latvians could freely learn their people's history. I want to point out the remarks made at a Toronto, Canada, conference by the former US special adviser on Baltic affairs, Paul Goble. He said that "many Latvians believe that all problems would be solved if Latvia would become a member of NATO and the EU [...] when everything would be decided by others, because Latvians themselves are not capable! Latvia has to start to save itself. The Estonians have taken up with the Finns, the Lithuanians with the Poles, the Latvians have remained alone, and Moscow has shown interest in Latvia." He also warned that Latvia's situation overall is very insecure. Corruption, bank scandals, and the insignificant amount of the state budget allocated to defense keep Latvia from being accepted into NATO and the EU.

The poet Andrejs Eglitis has best understood and characterized Latvia's present situation: "I have returned to my homeland, because today I am needed there more than in other countries. Latvia is not yet free, forward, sons of the fatherland!"



Armins Rūsis

CHURCH AND STATE IN SOVIET LATVIA

I. GENERAL

No special laws have been issued in the Latvian S.S.R. dealing with the relations between church and state. Basically, the situation is not essentially different from that in Soviet Russia, for the relations between church and state in the Latvian S.S.R. are governed by the principles of the laws enacted by the Soviet regime in the U.S.S.R., which laws profoundly affected the conditions indispensable to the normal life of a religious community. Although the constitution of the Latvian S.S.R. (article 96, identical with article 124 of the U.S.S.R. constitution) provides for the freedom of conscience, religious worship, and antireligious propaganda, freedom of religion, according to reports hereinafter cited, exists only on paper and the practice of religion is reduced to terms of bare survival by the antireligious propaganda sponsored and supported by the Latvian Communist Party.

II. PERSECUTION OF RELIGION AND THE CLERGY AFTER THE SOVIET OCCUPATION

The material available for this research shows that, as soon as the Soviet regime was established in Latvia on July 21, 1940, persecution of religion and of the church of whatever denomination began. Prior to the occupation of Latvia by the Red Army on June 17, 1940, teaching of religion was mandatory in all primary schools in Latvia. Religious instruction after that date was discontinued in all schools; the denominational schools were closed and their property confiscated, and all religious publications were suppressed. Testimony before a congressional committee revealed:

As soon as Latvia was incorporated into the Soviet Union (August 5, 1940) the puppet government issued laws and decrees, which brought about the end of the freedom and liberty of Latvia. All property of the church was nationalized, all Catholic organizations, as well as all religious orders, were closed and their property confiscated. The work of the faculty of the Catholic theology was disrupted (August 5, 1940), and premises of it, as well as of the Catholic seminary, were nationalized. The Catholic schools (at Aglona and Jaunaglona) were closed. Only state schools were

permitted. The teaching of religion in the schools was prohibited. Antireligious instructions were made a compulsory subject in all schools.

Other testimony before the same committee disclosed the following series of facts concerning the persecution of religion and antireligious propaganda:

In order to express disdain of all holy things, the committee immediately issued an order forbidding to capitalize the word "God." Newspapers had to spell the word "God" with small letters.

Schools were forbidden to teach Scripture and Christian ethics. These were substituted with antireligious propaganda. It was forbidden to explain religion to children under the age of 16, while antireligious schooling of children was greatly encouraged. Teachers and Communist propaganda workers taught antireligious subjects. ... All religious publications were discontinued in order to give the people only antireligious literature and propaganda in the newspapers. ...

Shortly before the Communist invasion, the Latvian Evangelic Lutheran Church had 18,000 copies of hymn books printed which had to be bound before distributing. The Bolsheviks immediately confiscated these books and later ordered them sent to political prisons for use instead of toilet paper. Bibles and other religious books were removed by the Communists.

The consecrated cemeteries were liquidated. The Christian symbol, the cross, was removed everywhere they found it. The church and its bodies lost status of juristic persons and had no longer the possibility to defend its interests before the authorities. Sundays and religious holy days were replaced by workless days. The Catholic places of worship with all their appurtenances, including even the holy vessels and vestments, were declared to be property of the state (March 20, 1941). The state reserved for itself the right of permitting its further use by the faithful. The rent which they had to pay for the use of the churches was 10 times more than that of rents paid for housing space. The churches and places of worship which were not returned for use to the parishioners were used for storage (the Capuchin Church at Vilaka), as halls for dancing (the church at Ozolmuiza), for archives (the church at Cesis).

The intent to desecrate the holy places of worship was evidenced by the fact that the newly erected church in Ludza was converted into a movie house, the Riga Anglican Church used as a warehouse, many churches were transformed into atheistic museums, bowling alleys, Red Army clubs, and one church in Liepaja was even turned into a circus.

In addition to the above mentioned, the Soviet authorities used arrests followed by deportations or executions to eliminate the clergy. "During the 9 months of the first Bolshevik rule (1940–41) 41 clergymen suffered death at the hands of the Bolsheviks, were reported missing, or were deported to Soviet Russia." In June 1941 alone, the Communists assassinated six Catholic priests, four of which were tortured before their killing. One of them, Vladislavs Litaunieks, murdered in prison of Daugavpils on June 21, 1941, "was found with a crown of barbed wire around his head, and a cross burned on his chest by a burning iron". Many clergymen died in the forced labour camps of Siberia to which they had been deported.

Persecution of the Catholic clergy in Latvia after World War II is exemplified by the fate of Kazimirs Dulbinskis, Bishop of Riga. One year after his consecrations as bishop by Metropolitan-Archbishop Antonijs Springovičs, Bishop Dulbinskis was deported to Siberia. After 2 years of detention he returned to Latvia, but was again arrested and had to remain approximately a year in prison. After being released from prison, he was forbidden to reside in Riga, but lived more than a year in the small village of Viļaka. In 1959 he was again deported, this time to the Byelorussian S.S.R., where he had to work as a carpenter on a collective farm. Archbishop Springovičs, who died at Riga on October 1, 1958, at the age of 81, was succeeded by Bishop Pēteris Strods, appointed by the Holy See as Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese Riga and the Diocese Liepāja. The Soviet Government made it very difficult for him to exercise his official duties. After his death, which occurred on August 9, 1960, in Riga, there was no officiating Catholic bishop in Latvia.

Other cases of persecution of the clergy include the following:

O. Baltiņš, (a Lutheran) pastor at Ļaudona, was arrested in 1962, and given 5 years forced labour for "resisting antireligious propaganda."

The imprisoned pastor of Ventspils, Grīvāns was released under the 1955 Law on Amnesty, and then again arrested and deported to Siberia, completely physically broken.

III. SUBORDINATION OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH TO STATE AUTHORITIES

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Soviet Latvia was headed by Archbishop Gustavs Tūrs elected for life on March 14, 1948, by the

General Synod, which elected also the Supreme Church Board. According to a non-Soviet source: "The pastors and the delegates from the congregations (only those accepted by the Communist Party were present) had to accept 'unanimously' the candidates proposed by the Committee for Religion and Worship. Three pastors who dared to vote against the official candidates were later arrested." The Archbishop was also president of the Supreme Church Board. In this capacity he appointed the two other members of the Presidium of the Supreme Church Board. The Presidium transacted all current business because the Board was convened very seldom. The Supreme Church Board was subordinated and accountable to the Council of Religious Worship Affairs of the Ministry of the Interior.

IV. STATE INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF CONGREGATIONS

Close control was kept over persons belonging to a church: all members of a religious congregation had the duty to report such membership to the local city or rural soviet. In order to be active, a religious group required at least 20 members. However, it had been shown that the executive committee of the local soviet may arbitrarily increase the required minimum number of members and thus, in effect, stop the activity of any congregation. So, in 1950, the local executive committee of Varakļāni, a place with a predominantly Catholic and Greek Orthodox population prior to the Soviet occupation, ruled that a minimum of 60 members form a Lutheran congregation, well aware that this requirement could not be met; as a result, the right to use the church building was withdrawn. The executive committee also had authority to dismiss members of the Board of Administration elected by a congregation. Special observers sent by the Party or Soviet Government visited divine services and reported to working places, schools, and atheist clubs the names of those attending.

V. EXORBITANT TAXES IMPOSED ON CHURCHES AND CLERGYMEN

Exorbitant taxation was one of the routine means used to destroy the church in Soviet Latvia. For instance, a small country congregation in Vecpiebalga had to pay, in 1952, almost \$5,000 (18,000 rubles) in taxes. The levy of exorbitant taxes was coupled with the charging of excessive rent for premises used for religious purposes:

Congregations were often unable to meet the high tax requirements and therefore could not pay the rent for their church. A statement of Msgr. Edward Stukelis disclosed that the rent which Catholics had to pay for the use of their churches was 10 times more than that of rents paid for housing space.

Catholic clergymen in charge of a parish had to pay annual income taxes up to 30,000 rubles, while income taxes were levied upon vicars in sums up to 15,000 rubles. Reportedly, the highest tax in the amount of 40,000 rubles was paid by the Catholic priest of the famous pilgrimage place Aglona. It has been reported that, in one case, a Lutheran clergyman with an annual income of 1,200 rubles was ordered to pay 1,100 rubles in income taxes, leaving for himself and his family 100 rubles. To quote another case of such taxation:

The pastor of the congregation of Mazsalaca/Staicele, Ozols, received a sentence in December 1962: he was accused of concealing his annual income, which was estimated at 500 rubles according to the new value (5,000 old currency), an unbelievably high sum considering the smallness of the parish.

VI. RECENT CASES OF THE USE OF CHURCHES FOR SECULAR PURPOSES

The following instances show diversion of church property to secular uses:

Religious objects in churches were destroyed, and the churches were used for secular or even antireligious purposes:

The altar had been removed from Riga Cathedral, seats had been turned to face the opposite way, and since 1962 it had been used as a concert hall and antireligious museum.

The church of the Holy Trinity at Liepāja was converted into a concert hall in 1963.

Ādaži Church had been converted into a club and dance hall for the collective farm.

Burtņieki Church had become a grain storage.

Dubulti Church had been used as a museum since 1962.

Elkšņi Church was used as a farm building by the collective farm since 1960.

Ludzas Church was a cinema.

A chapel at Rozēni was a club, dance hall and cinema.

The Cross at Vārakļāni Church was pulled down by a tractor in 1950, and the church was converted into a club and dance hall.

VII. EDUCATION OF NEW CLERGYMEN

Soon after the establishment of the Soviet regime in Latvia all three denominational theological faculties – the Lutheran, the Roman Catholic, and the Greek Orthodox – of the State University of Latvia at Riga were closed by a special decree. It was not until 1956 that the supervisory agency for religious affairs attached to the Ministry of the Interior of the Latvian S.S.R. authorized the Supreme Church Board of the Lutheran Church of Soviet Latvia to open theological courses for the training of Lutheran clergymen. In 1960 20 persons, including one woman, attended these courses, the age of the oldest being 72 years. However, according to information received from Latvia in February 1962, the Soviet Latvian Government had ordered the cessation of the above mentioned theological courses attached to the Supreme Church Board of the Evangelical Lutheran Church at Riga.

The Seminar for Catholic Priests at Riga was also subject to restrictions in a manner detrimental to its activities and making questionable its future. The Soviet Latvian Government initially limited the maximum number of Catholic candidates for the priesthood to 60. However, in 1961, this number dwindled to 13. New students were no longer admitted to the Riga Seminar for Catholic Priests.

VIII. ATTITUDE OF THE LATVIAN COMMUNIST PARTY TOWARD RELIGION AND THE CHURCH

The Communist party of Latvia was openly hostile to both the church and religion. The Soviet Government-controlled Riga radio station broadcasted on July 17–18, 1948 an appeal to the members of the Communist party and the Communist Youth Organization to destroy the last remnant of religious “prejudices” and to fight the preachers and defenders of religion. The aims of Communist education in the Latvian S.S.R. have been spelled out in the following words by a member of the propaganda division of the Latvian Communist Party in his antireligious speech broadcast May 30, 1952 by the Riga radio station:

“One of the essential tasks of Communist education is the erasing of the remains of religious morality from the conscience of Soviet peoples. The Soviet Union has developed a new individual,

a new moral, which is contrary to the morals and ideology of the capitalistic countries. ... The church tries to persuade its members that moral is to be considered something eternal, something that stands over the classes and cannot be changed, a virtue given by God. There is no God and therefore there can be no moral given by God. ... The church has always approved and blessed all acts of force directed against the working peoples and at the same time preached love for neighbour and enemy. ... These examples prove that the moral of the church is hostile to and unacceptable to the Soviet people, the constructors of communism. The working peoples prefer the moral of communism to the moral of the church. The basis for Communist moral, teaches Lenin, is the struggle for defending and developing communism. This is also the foundation of communistic education."

To mention a few examples among many others: the Young Pioneers, i. e., members of the Communist Youth Organization, were urged by a Riga radio dispatch of October 23, 1953, to fight the Christian belief about the creation of the world by God: the atheistic and anti-Christian lecture by Professor Gagarin, broadcast over the same radio on June 30, 1954, called for a more active atheistic propaganda campaign and antireligious system of education in the school and the family. The stepping up of antireligious propaganda recorded in *Cīņa*, the official organ of the Communist Party of Soviet Latvia, the following:

The Party organizations of the [Latvian Soviet Socialist] Republic and the association for political science and popularization of science have recently considerably promoted anti-religious propaganda. Young specialists have grown up. The several-day seminars for lecturers on atheism held at Riga, Liepāja, Daugavpils, Rēzekne, Gulbene, Valmiera, and Talsi, were stimulating.

In order to strengthen the antireligious aspect of Communist education, the Peter Stučka University at Riga added an elective subject under the name of "Fundamentals of Scientific Atheism" to the curriculum. Students were not too eager to take this subject and some among them justified their negative attitude by stating that they do not believe in religion. Thereupon the newspaper of the Latvian Communist Party officially stated that the course on atheism was not intended for religious believers, but that it was aimed to train students as well-qualified propagandists of atheism. It added that in the future students will increasingly be assigned duties of propagandists and agitators.

IX. ACTIVITIES OF ATHEIST CLUBS

On May 27, 1959, a group of students of the Teachers' Institute at Daugavpils founded a "fighting atheistic club" at this institute. The administration of the Pedagogical Institute sent the first members of the club to the Museum for the History of Religion and Atheism of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Science in Leningrad to study antireligious writings and exhibits. Winners of prizes in a contest for the best 12 atheistic essays were also sent to Leningrad to study in the special school for atheist propaganda. Atheist clubs have been established throughout the country, several of them in Riga, the capital of the Latvian S.S.R. Activities included antireligious lectures, exhibitions, and showing of atheistic films. The atheist clubs also organized antireligious courses for teachers, economists, the legal and the medical professions. Participants were divided into four groups: the first group studied the dogmas of the Catholic Church, the second, the basic problems of the Greek Orthodox Church, the third, the problem of the Evangelical Church, and the fourth, problems of the various religious sects.

X. THE MILITANT ATHEIST COUNCIL OF SOVIET LATVIA

In Soviet Latvia a "Militant Atheist Council of the Republic" has been formed with branches in all regions of Latvia. These branches are closely linked with local rural and urban administrative bodies. Special groups for "atheistic teaching" were active in every factory and collective farm. These groups had the right to make use of all State administrated units: cultural and educational centers, the press, radio, and TV.

The President of the "Militant Atheist Council of Soviet Latvia" Eglājs was a member of the Communist Party. In February 1962, he took part in a meeting of the All-Soviet Atheists in Moscow at which questions of antireligious propaganda were discussed (*Skolotāju avīze* [The Teachers' Journal], March 21, 1962).

They did not advocate peaceful coexistence with religion, but aggressive destruction of religion:

"We cannot wait until the old-time (religious) remains die out, we must fight against them. In this age of the construction of Communism we must seek and apply all kinds of strategy and weap-

ons in our fight against the darkness of religion" (*Jaunas grāmatas* [New Books], 1963: 2, p.10).

XI. NEW ATHEISTIC CUSTOMS

In an effort to eliminate acts of public church worship, the Communists had undertaken a campaign against church holidays of saints, Christmas, and Easter as well as against the inveterate custom of the Catholic part of the population to give children names of saints and to celebrate their namesdays. In the first place, this campaign was directed against baptism, first communion, confirmation, and celebration of religious marriage in its action to replace them with athe-istic customs. A special commission had been established in Riga to draft "lay ceremonies" at baptisms, marriages, burials, and cemetery re-unions. Composers had been commissioned to compose appropriate melodies, and poets to write "contemporary" verses to replace the religious rites. In Riga, a "Bureau for Lay Burials" had been set up which had choirs, opera soloists, and orchestras at its disposal, and provided speakers as well for burial ceremonies. The atheist customs replacing ecclesiastical rites were "name giving" instead of christening; "citizen's initiation" or "majority initiation" ceremonies to replace first communion or confirmation; "Socialist marriage ceremony" instead of religious celebration of marriage; "spring festival" to replace Easter; and "winter solstice" to replace Christmas. All such Socialist customs and festivals were of an atheistic nature and were directed against the Church and religion.

Padomju Jaunatne, the official publication of the Latvian Communist Youth Organization, has characterized the antireligious nature of these new atheistic customs in the following words:

"...It is not a secret that the new Communist customs have the purpose to annihilate the religious ritual of the Church and to replace it by new corresponding atheistic customs... We firmly believe that in the course of time the words 'Christmas' [and] 'Easter' will disappear from the language of the people... In the days of yore the Church did replace all national customs by religious rituals. Now we shall in turn again repeal the ecclesiastical customs and introduce in their stead new customs which are in line with the Soviet spirit... Any tradition, which is created only by the Soviet people, is in line with the spirit of the people, it is the only and

the genuine tradition. The new communist customs must be developed to their full value and spread among the population: because they are the sharpest weapon against the church virtue and the religious customs...”

XII. RELIGIOUS AND ANTIRELIGIOUS PUBLICATIONS

During the 18 years of the last Communist occupation of Latvia, there had been only one recurrent publication of the Lutheran Church, *Ev.-Lut. Baznīcas Kalendārs* or Calendar of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, published since 1948. It contained neither the names of pastors, nor the statistics of congregations as was the case with church calendars prior to the Soviet occupations. The 1962 edition was printed in only 6,000 copies, many of these were sent abroad for distribution. In 1954, a revised version of the Hymnal was published in 5,000 copies with a new additional section containing “work and peace” songs. In 1960, the New Testament with Psalms was published in 5,000 copies, 1,500 copies were sent abroad for distribution. The remaining number of 3,500 would seem to be disproportionate to the needs of the 500,000 practising Lutherans reported by the World Council of Churches in its August 15, 1962, press release.

At the same time, the number of antireligious books for the most part Latvian translations of works by Russian authors, was increasing every year and several of these works had been published and republished in a large number of copies.

Source: The Church and State Under Communism. A special study of the subcommittee to investigate the administration of the internal security act and other internal security laws to the Committee on the Judiciary United States Senate. Volume IV – Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. U.S. Government printing office, Washington, 1965.



Ādolfs Šilde

PASSIVE RESISTANCE IN OCCUPIED LATVIA

After the Second World War, armed resistance in occupied Latvia was doomed by the boundary of time. "The third way remaining to an oppressed people in its fight for independence is resistance without using violence." These words by Martin Luther King were spoken about boycotts. The classic example of passive resistance was given at the beginning of the 20th century by Mahatma Gandhi. He believed that passive resistance could completely replace armed uprising.

Analyzing the methods of passive resistance against Soviet power in Latvia, Rasma Kārklīš points to two basic forms:

1. Efforts to preserve Latvian national structure and culture, together with patriotic demonstrations;
2. National Communism as a form of protest.

We will first consider overall expressions of passive resistance in Latvia. Passive resistance both goes against the entire Soviet system of power as such, including its ideology, ruling decrees, orders and symbols of power, and also is directed against imposition of this foreign power and Russification. Over time, passive resistance found its focus precisely in deflecting Russification.

The first protest actions were carried out by young people. From the first Soviet occupation (1940-41), schoolchildren demonstrated their patriotic feelings on November 18, Latvia's independence day. Many came to school in symbolic clothes and overtly expressed the meaning of this celebratory day. In the worst cases, the Soviet security apparatus jailed these students, sometimes even the entire class. Schoolchildren resisted singing the "International," the Soviet national anthem. Party functionaries had to resort to threats to get Latvian children to sing this and other Soviet songs. There were occasions when Stalin's portrait had its eyes poked out, just like the czar's portrait in earlier times. The words "Down with the Communists!" appeared on blackboards as late as 1966. Soviet flags were ripped down on days honoring the October Revolution or the Soviet constitution, and on May 1.

On the other hand, Latvia's national flag was secretly hoisted on national holidays. It was even flown from Riga's radio tower. Demonstrations took place by monuments to Lenin and Stalin in Riga and

elsewhere. From time to time anti-Soviet slogans appeared on apartment building walls, stairwells, and factories. Underground leaflets also appeared, including those that appeared the day after the Soviet army invaded Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1968.

Besides the sporadic demonstrations that related to specific holidays and political events, there were large, annual patriotic manifestations, for example, in Riga's Forest Cemetery and Cemetery of Brothers, which is a national shrine. The Latvian flag appeared when large numbers of people gathered there on the last Sunday in November.

Mass patriotic manifestations occurred every year by the graves of the first Latvian president Jānis Čakste, former president Gustavs Zemgals, the beloved first foreign minister Zigfrīds Meierovics, and heroes of the Independence Wars generals Pēters Radziņš and Jānis Balodis. All Souls' Day is separated by only a week from November 18, both being national days of celebration. For tactical reasons, therefore, the cemeteries were visited on this day to demonstratively place candles and flowers on the graves of President Čakste and other Latvian heroes.

An eyewitness stated: "Every year thousands of Latvians come to Čakste's grave on All Souls' Day. They place flowers. There are so many candles that they are not set upright but thrown into a big bonfire. This is a moving way to honor President Čakste's memory."

To prevent this kind of demonstration, the area around Čakste's grave was planted with large trees in 1968. They were well tended and grew quickly, but one night they were sawn down. Later, smaller trees were planted there. Unlike trees by other graves, these withered. The people of Riga said ironically that the Forest Cemetery had very poor soil, especially by the president's grave. It turned out that visitors to Čakste's grave poured salt and other chemicals on the trees' roots.

The next year, just All Souls' Day, a barrier with benches was erected around the grave to prevent access to the memorial and its group of graves. Nevertheless, the people did find a way to the president's grave, and again formed a pilgrimage past the memorial, in the tens of thousands. As the Forest Cemetery is some distance from Riga's center, the Soviets reduced the number of trams in that direction for that day.

Several Riga high schoolers were expelled and not allowed to graduate for placing candles at Čakste's grave. Children in lower grades received less severe punishment. For educating children in a manner unacceptable to the Party, the school principal was dismissed. Not a single remembrance day passed without incident. The Cheka even set up a special staff section in the cemetery's chapel.

For many years the Forest Cemetery contained martyrs' graves, in which victims of Soviet terror found in mass graves had, been reburied in 1942 by the organization People's Aid. This section of the cemetery was leveled in 1970, because here too Latvians placed flowers, to honor the martyrs. One large pine tree grew there. Flowers continued to be placed by the pine tree, showing that the memory of the martyrs was not extinguished.

Stubborn persistence succeeded in placing a memorial plaque in the cemetery to the commander-in-chief of the Independence Wars, General Balodis. The monument to his predecessor Colonel Kalpaks in Airitēs by Skruna was demolished by the Communists, but later the person who destroyed it was found murdered. In the Cemetery of Brothers, the Communists chipped off the cross by the central figure of the Mother. Though they could not prevent this desecration, Latvians in 1971 and earlier protested the ban on crosses and oak leaves on memorial plaques in cemeteries. Sacred and national symbols were not acceptable to the Soviet regime. When presenting artists with flowers and on other occasions, Latvians generally arranged the flowers in red-white-red groupings, the colors of the Latvian flag.

For a time Latvians compromised Communist functionaries by sending them letters thanking them for their help in the struggle against the Russians. Sarcastic remarks and even derisory whistles were heard during functionaries' speeches. Students at the university and in other schools asked their teachers provocative questions, stressing the higher standard of living during the period of independence. In general, students' marks in Russian and such subjects as "Marxism-Leninism" and "A Short Course in the Communist Party" were poor, calculated to no more than barely pass.

With every step on the street and every ride on public transport, Latvians contrived to express their dislike of Russian newcomers. From time to time there were clashes. Resistance also grew in the younger generation, and hatred of the Russians in later years did not lessen, but increased.

Resistance to the Russians and their colonization policy in Latvia was also expressed by Latvian national Communists. Eduards Berklavs' active opposition to Latvia's Russification started in 1958 and continued for two years. At the time, Berklavs was the deputy chairman of the Latvian SSR Council of Ministers. He was supported by a considerable number of other Latvian Communists. Berklavs tried to save Latvia from the Russians who had inundated Riga and other cities. He was therefore

also against the country's forced industrialization, because this was the cover under which the inundation of Russians continued to increase, smothering Latvian national culture and their very existence. That Berklavs and his supporters took such a strong stance and resisted Moscow's policies was a surprise to the central Party organs.

Latvian national Communism had broad support among the people, including the Komsomol. Berklavs' rhetorical question, "What happened to the Latvians' old revolutionary spirit?" did not fall on deaf ears. As a result, the leaders of the Latvian Komsomol were removed from their posts in 1959. Berklavs, who had earlier been at the head of the Komsomol himself, was deported, and there was a wide purge in the entire Latvian Communist Party. One of Berklavs' close associates, Pauls Dzērve, died suddenly. Despite all this, as I will show later, Latvian national Communist resistance was not crushed. It became active again in 1971.

The church, too, caused serious difficulties for the Soviet regime. The largest religions in Latvia are the Evangelical Lutheran and Roman Catholic. The Baptist Church became significant after 1945, during the era of Soviet repressions. The Jews also formed their diaspora after the great sufferings of the German occupation. Subject to the Soviet regime's intense disfavor, the churches in Latvia were forced to defend themselves, depending on the one hand on the faithful being true to their congregation, and on the other hiding behind the formal facade of Stalin's constitution.

Rooted in a Western view of life and holding to Christian traditions, Latvians continued to celebrate Christmas, Easter, and other holy days. Even if they had to go to work during the day on these holy days, they gathered in the churches in the evening. During all the long years of occupation, the churches were generally full at Christmas. There were schoolchildren who refused to go to school but celebrated these days at home. When they were interrogated about this, they fearlessly stated that "even if not for the Russians, then for us Christmas is still a day to celebrate."

And so parents held to their faith. Most parents had their children baptised. If they could not do it in their own congregation, then for prudence's sake they traveled some distance away and asked a minister unknown to them to baptise their child. The same with confirmations. Children, too, in cooperation with their parents, had themselves confirmed in congregations where they were not known.

Theologians were forbidden to teach religion. As some ignored this edict, several clergymen were arrested. As in 1941, there were dozens of

Protestant and Catholic clergymen in the arrests and deportations after 1945. The clergymen continued to minister to the faithful in the labor camps, forming the so-called catacomb church. Church services were held during breaks in the coal-mines or in some out-of-the-way corner. The Bible was secretly circulated.

No Soviet punishment was able to prevent the faithful from gathering on traditional church celebratory days, such as at Aglona every August 15 to celebrate the Ascension of Mary. Ignoring the work edicts of Soviet managers and kolkhoz directors, the faithful did not work that day but made the pilgrimage to the holy places, sometimes even with vehicles taken from the workplace. All institutions, including the Academy of Science, fervently propagandized atheism. The faithful protested against the so-called "fighting atheism" and forced atheism clubs. Meetings organized by the atheists were therefore frequently very noisy. *Sovetskaja Molodyozh* reported an incident where Riga students openly protested against the profanation of religion.

Attendance at church services was also not stopped by the fact that Soviet surveillance agencies registered those who went to church, photographing them by the church doors and putting them on the so-called "black list" of church-goers and cult members. Clergymen were especially strictly controlled, their sermons monitored and recorded. The fact that several clergymen were sent repeatedly to Siberia's labor camps shows that there were clergymen not afraid to preach God's word and truth. Similarly, there were parents not afraid to recite the Lord's Prayer by their children's beds and express their Christian faith in other ways. Soviet schools fought against this, interrogating children about their parents' attitude towards religion and the church. All this did not break the Latvians' sense of faith and spiritual defiance.

Also, the Latvians' sense of justice, whose deepest roots are to be found in the Roman and Germanic legal system and Western societal norms, resisted the imposed, incomprehensible, unjust Soviet legal regulations. The Latvians had foreign norms, which did not relate to either justice or morality, imposed on them. This created legal uncertainty and unceasing conflicts with the Soviet legal system and state power.

After the Soviet dictatorship took away farmers' lands and any possibility of normal work, they were herded into kolkhozes. Not able to exist in the collective system, the rural people sought to make a living from the land around their homes. Need forced them to harvest grain from the sides of ditches, which was considered to be endangerment of socialistic property and sabotage. Even though the farmer himself had

been robbed, the Soviet regime labeled him a criminal and counter-revolutionary.

As late as 1971, the newspaper *Cīņa* reported on the struggle against privately raising poultry near Riga. A criminal case was instituted against the person raising the chickens. His poultry feed, acquired with much difficulty, was confiscated. Similarly, there were untold criminal cases against cobblers, tailors, and other craftspersons for taking private orders and working during the evening hours. These craftspersons were accused of parasitism, just like the well-known Russian writer Amalrik, who dared to devote himself full-time to writing. This kind of persecution of farmers, craftspersons, and intellectuals is unfathomable and unjustifiable. The people's sense of justice is outraged. This too created a huge conflict with the Soviet regime. One's sense of justice is also outraged by the fact, again reported in *Cīņa*, that the driver had to personally cover the damages of any accident that occurred while working in a Soviet transport system. These payments lasted one's entire life and meant utter ruin.

Passive resistance sometimes expressed itself in unusual ways. One example was referring to the rights in the Soviet constitution and using them to support national independence. In 1959, when Khrushchev was actively suppressing the Latvian national Communists, a teenager named Rijnieks started gathering signatures for Latvia's secession from the Soviet Union. He referred to the 15th paragraph of the Latvian SSR's constitution, which stated: "The Latvian SSR retains the right to freely secede from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics." A similar paragraph, number 17, was in Stalin's constitution.

Rijnieks saw that this paragraph of the constitution could be applied to Latvia's situation, and started gathering signatures about the desirability of Latvia seceding from the imposed union. He was arrested when he had only 200 signatures, tried, and sentenced. Calling on not just one but two Soviet constitutions made no difference: the charges against him were heavy, and the prosecutor asked for the death sentence. The court disapprovingly noted that he still could have such an idea in his head when he had just finished his military service in the Soviet army, where he had been educated not just militarily but also politically. Rijnieks was sentenced to fifteen years hard labor in the Potma labor camp in the Mordavian swamps.

Some time later quite a large number of Latvian young people and intellectuals were arrested for organizing a resistance movement that called for a Baltic federation. They could not all be named, as they generally called each other just by their first names. Participating in many

hunger strikes, they generated a lot of media attention in the early 1970s.

In 1969 Jānis Jachimovičs, 38 years old, was arrested. He was an ardent Communist who had worked in the Komsomol from his youngest days. All of his closest relatives were Communists and Red Army heroes. Still, one day even Jānis Jachimovičs was listed among the enemies of Communism. He was accused under paragraph 183 of the Criminal Code of "spreading false rumors" that allegedly threatened the Soviet state and the social order.

At the beginning of 1972, the Western world was startled by a document smuggled out of Riga, that was written by seventeen Latvian Communists. Seeing the great sufferings of the Latvian people, they openly told of the situation created in Latvia by the occupation regime. The original was 482 lines long, written in Russian.

It was addressed to the Communist Party leaders in Italy, Yugoslavia, Romania, France, Spain, Austria, and other countries, and to the French Communist writers Louis Aragon and Roger Garody. It simultaneously came into the hands of the Swedish Communist Party leader Hermanson. The document gained attention around the world, because it was a voice of protest from Communists themselves. Their viewpoint coincided with that of the Latvian national Communists in 1958. Only now they had more facts with which to critically judge the Soviet ruling class's duplicity and deliberate intent to annihilate the Latvian people.

* * *

LETTER FROM 17 LATVIAN COMMUNISTS

Dear Comrades!

We, 17 Latvian Communists, appeal to you. We write to you because we see no other way to influence actions and events that are causing great harm to the Communist movement, Marxism-Leninism, ourselves, and other small nations.

Several Communists have spoken about the issues we write about here, but the result has been only repression.

Who are we?

So that we are correctly understood, we find it necessary to say a few words about ourselves. We are not opportunists, we are not "leftists" or

"rightists." We are Communists. Most of us have been Communists for 25-35 years and more. We want only the best for socialism, Marxism-Leninism, and all humanity.

We were all born here, in Latvia. We have all lived here, have experienced here firsthand and in full the faults of the bourgeois system, we joined the Party when it was underground, we suffered repression and spent many years in the prisons of bourgeois Latvia. Our entire lives and only goal was the struggle for Soviet power, for the socialist system. We have all studied the works of the founders of Marxism-Leninism. During the Second World War, we were in the ranks of the Soviet army and in partisan units, we fought against the German fascistic invaders. In the post-war years, we actively participated in the building of socialism in our country.

With a clear conscience, we did everything in our power to put the teachings of Marx, Engels, and Lenin into practice, but with anguish we saw that year by year their ideas are corrupted more and more in our country, that Leninism is used as a cover for Great Russian chauvinism, that words here are different than actions, that we make the work of Communists in other lands more difficult, that instead of helping we bring confusion.

At first, we thought that these occurrences were merely errors made by certain leaders and a lack of understanding of the evil of this policy. But over time, we became convinced that Great Russian chauvinism is a carefully thought out policy of the leaders of the CPSU. The forced assimilation of the small nations of the USSR is one of the most important goals of internal affairs in the near future.

Our homeland Latvia

Latvia is such a small country that most people abroad probably have no idea of its history or geographical characteristics. To help them orient themselves in what comes later, we will give a short description of our homeland Latvia.

More than two thousand years ago, the Couronian, Semigallian, Selonian, and Lettgalian tribes lived on the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea. Their origin was the Indo-European Baltic group. Because they lived by ocean bays, mouths of rivers, and navigable rivers such as the Daugava, Visla, and Venta, their lands from the earliest days were coveted by the larger nations to the East and the West, especially the Germans and the Russians. At the beginning of the 13th century they were

conquered by the sword and cross of the German crusaders. For about 700 years the Latvian people lived under the yoke of German knights and barons.

The Russian czars, too, dreamed of grabbing the ice-free harbors of the Baltic coast at Liepāja, Ventspils, Riga, and Tallin. Czar Peter I realized this dream, and so our ancestors came under the yoke of czarist Russia.

In addition, other parts of Latvia were ruled at various times by Poland and Sweden. All the invaders tried to assimilate the local tribes, from whom the Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians were formed, but none was successful.

After the First World War in 1918, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia became independent. Latvia at that time had an area of 66,000 km², with a population of two million, of whom 76% were Latvian. Latvia established a bourgeois democratic regime with a multi-party system. There were political class struggles, and depending on relative strengths, the system was more or less democratic. Trade unions and the Social Democratic Party were legal from 1918 to 1934, but the Communist Party was underground from 1919 until 1940.

Before the Second World War, the Soviet Union forced the leader of bourgeois Latvia, Ulmanis, to sign a treaty allowing the establishment of large Red Army garrisons in Latvia. In 1940, the bourgeois regime was toppled with the help of the Red Army, and Latvia was incorporated into the Soviet Union.

During the bourgeois democratic era, Latvian economy and culture developed significantly. Like Denmark and Holland, Latvia sold high quality butter, cheese, eggs, meat (bacon), wood products, and flax on the world market. Exports also included electrical and optical devices. Latvia had a university with nine departments, four other institutions of higher learning, an opera, and several theaters and associations of concert musicians.

During the Second World War, about 40,000 people were evacuated to the interior of Russia, and two Latvian divisions fought in the Red Army. The rest of Latvia's inhabitants stayed in Latvia. Some of these were killed by the German fascists, some died on the front fighting against the Red Army, and some emigrated to the West at the end of the war, to West Germany, Sweden, Australia, the US, etc.

Brief thaw

After the Second World War, having determined to this time stay in the

territory of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia forever, the leaders of the CPSU CC tried to achieve the forced settlement of Russians, Belorussians, and Ukrainians in this territory and the forced assimilation of Latvians, Lithuanians, and Estonians (as well as other small nations of the USSR), disregarding the fact that this is in direct contradiction to the principles of Marxism-Leninism.

Because we cannot sign this letter, you may think that what we say is not true, that we exaggerate the errors that are inevitable in any undertaking. No, that is not so. Let the facts speak for themselves.

Let us start with the actual words of the CPSU CC Presidium decree of June 12, 1953, the only such decree that is just. First Secretary of the LKP CK, member of the CK, and candidate member of the CPSU CC Presidium Jānis Kalnbērziņš stated at the June 22, 1953, plenum of the LKP CK:

The Presidium of the CPSU CC passed a decree stating:

1. Order all Party and state organs to correct the essence of the situation in the national republics, to end the mutilation of Soviet policy toward nationalities.

2. Organize the preparation, education, and widespread placement of persons of local nationalities into key positions. End the practice of promoting personnel that do not belong to the local nationality. Dismiss nomenklatura officials who do not know the local language, recall them and turn them over to the CPSU CC.

3. Affairs in the national republics are to be conducted in the native, local language [...].

In the afore-mentioned LKP CK plenum, LKP CK First Secretary Kalnbērziņš said what was attributed, unpalatably but fairly, in the CPSU CC decree to the Latvian SSR. The decree stated that the LKP CK and Council of Ministers (of course, as forced by Moscow) had until now grossly mutilated the Leninist principles of the policy toward nationalities. Many Party, state, and economic officials, falsely referring to security and expressing unfounded distrust of local personnel, have placed mainly non-Latvians in key positions. This attitude toward local personnel led to the situation that only 42% of all LKP CK officials were Latvian, and only 47% of the Party's district and city committee secretaries were Latvian. In addition, many of them were counted as Latvian even though they had lived in Russia for many years, or even all their lives, and did not know Latvian.

As this time this direction was decreed from above, the slavish

Kalbērziņš then stated correctly that there was a particularly unsatisfactory situation with national personnel in the Party organization of the city of Riga. Not one department head in the city's committee apparatus was Latvian, and only two of 31 instructors were Latvian.

Officials of the Party's district committee organ sections and secretaries of the local Party organizations decide personnel policy and who joins the ranks of Party organizations, but there Latvians are the fewest. In each district committee, these sections have only one Latvian, and of local Party organization secretaries, only 17% are Latvian.

This unfounded attitude of distrust against Latvian workers, farmers, and intelligentsia and this Party personnel structure led to the fact that of all the city of Riga's Communists, only 18% were Latvian.

In the afore-mentioned LKP CK plenum, even such a toady to great power policies as Arvīds Pelše, then LKP CK propaganda secretary, now a member of the CPSU CC Politburo and chairman of the CPSU CC Party control commission, acknowledged the gross mutilation of the policy toward nationalities and discrimination against Latvians.

Referring to the decree of the CPSU CC Presidium, he stated: "The decree gives clear and unambiguous directives, the first task is to correct the essence of the situation in the republic, ending the perversion of Soviet policy toward nationalities, preparing, educating, and placing Latvian personnel into key positions in the near future on a large scale..."

From these statements we can see that then, 1953, was the only time since the death of V. I. Lenin that it was officially acknowledged that Marxism-Leninism's policy toward nationalities was grossly mutilated (and still is being mutilated) in our country.

But did this mutilation end after the plenum? At the "top," the new course that had been set lasted only a short while. Then, even though the Presidium decree mentioned above was never rescinded, all planned measures were halted, and everything stayed the same as before. Furthermore, a carefully worked-out program of forced assimilation of small nationalities was ever more aggressively implemented in the national republics.

Program of forced assimilation

What are the main parts of this program, how is it implemented?

The first and most important task is to transfer as many Russians, Belorussians, and Ukrainians as possible from Russia, Belorussia, and Ukraine and settle them permanently in Latvia (and the other Baltic republics).

How has this first and most important task been put into practice?

The CPSU CC did not trust the Communist party central committees of the national republics:

1. The "CPSU CC Orgbureau [Organization Bureau] for Latvia" was set up as part of the LKP CK (and also the Communist Party CCs of other union republics). This bureau's function was to control and direct the workings of the LKP CK and all policy in the republic. Shatalyin was appointed its first chairman, later replaced by Ryazanov.

2. Ivan Lyebedev was sent from Moscow to be second secretary of the LKP CK, and Fyodor Titov was sent to be cadres secretary. These positions have remained to this day. They are reserved for sent-in Russians. At the moment, the second secretary of the LKP CK is the Russian Belucha, who was sent from Leningrad.

3. The orgbureau and these Moscow "obercommissars" formed and continue to form personnel policy in the republic so that all the important positions, especially the leadership of the personnel departments of all Party, state, and economic institutions, are taken by Russian newcomers. These persons arranged for easier residency registration for the newcomers in cities, assigned them apartments, and placed them in the best jobs.

4. To promote the mass influx of Russians, Ukrainians, and Belorussians into the republic, various all-union, inter-republic, and zonal organs were formed in Latvia. Huge new industrial enterprises were built and existing ones enlarged, although there was no economic justification for them whatsoever. Construction workers were deliberately recruited from outside the republic and brought here, raw materials were brought in from the Urals or the Donets Basin (i.e., three-four thousand kilometers away), specialists and workers were also brought in, but the production output was taken out of the republic.

For these purposes, they built a diesel engine plant, electrical appliance factory, hydraulic appliance factory, and turbine factory in Riga, in Daugavpils a large synthetic fiber plant, whose brought-in builders and workers formed a good-sized city of their own with no Latvians, in Ogre a large group of enterprises processing knitted fabric, and many others. Factories were built or are being built in the main city of literally every district. Construction workers, specialists, and production workers are brought in, but the production itself is sent out into the entire Soviet Union.

Even though Latvia already had a sufficient number of power stations supplying the republic with electrical energy, and Russia has many

large rivers, the Pļaviņi hydroelectric plant was built on the Daugava with brought-in workers. A whole city, Stučka, was built and a new district in the republic created for them.

5. Disregarding the fact that all the post-war years the acreage of forests cut was greater than that of forests planted, the forests were barbarically destroyed, which lead to large areas becoming swamps and the necessity of importing raw materials for the furniture industry. Large numbers of loggers were brought in from Russia, the Trans-Carpathian region of the Ukraine, and Belorussia, the destruction of the forests continued, and the brought-in loggers settled in to live permanently in the republic.

As a result of these policies, 22,500 newcomers register to live in Riga every year. Riga's population is 2.5 times what it was, but the proportion of Latvians was only 45% in 1959, and 40% in 1970. In 1959, Latvia had only 62% Latvians, and in 1972, 57%.

The fate of the Karelian SSR clearly shows where these policies lead. It no longer exists. It was liquidated because the native people formed less than half of the total population. Karelia is now a part of the Russian federative republic. The same fate awaits the Kazakh union republic and Latvia.

6. Flooding local inhabitants with brought-in masses of Russians, Belorussians, and Ukrainians occurs also in locating large military and border garrisons in Latvia and building dozens of large sanatoriums, resorts, and All-Union level tourist centers in Latvia. Riga's Jūrmala has already been transformed into an All-Union level health resort, there are almost no local inhabitants remaining.

Such policy has continued in Latvia through all the post-war years and has even intensified in the last ten years. Latvia already has many large factories in which there are almost no Latvians among the workers, engineers, technicians, and managers, and there are factories in which most workers are Latvians, but not a single manager knows Latvian.

There are entire sectors with hardly any Latvians. For example, there are about 1,500 workers in the Interior Ministry in Riga, but only about 300 of them are Latvians. More than half of the workers in commerce (51%) do not know Latvian, and only 29% of the managers are Latvian. There are very few Latvians among construction workers. About 65% of the doctors working in city medical institutions do not know Latvian, and therefore frequently make grave mistakes in diagnosis and prescription.

All this stirs up righteous anger in the local people.

Russification by degrees

Solving the first and most important task (the growing numbers of non-Latvians in the republic) will simultaneously create the conditions for solving the second task: to Russify by degrees all aspects of life in Latvia, assimilating the Latvians. To reach this goal, the following has been and is being done:

1. Newcomers' demands to increase the republic's radio and television broadcasts in the Russian language are met. Today one radio program and one television program is broadcast only in Russian, but the next, in both languages.

In this way about two-thirds of the republic's radio and television broadcasts are in Russian. The former manager of the Riga telecenter, Jelinskis, did not agree with such demands by the newcomers. He was forced out of his job.

2. Even though all all-union newspapers, magazines, and books are available in Latvia, about half of Latvia's periodicals are published in Russian. There is a shortage of paper in Latvia for publishing Latvian writers and schoolbooks, but nevertheless Russian writers and schoolbooks in Russian are published here.

3. Everything in the republic, city, district, and most local organizations, and in all businesses, takes place in Russian.

4. Except for collectives such as the editorial offices of Latvian newspapers and magazines, Latvian theaters and educational institutions, and some kolkhozes, all meetings and conferences take place in Russian.

There are many collectives where Latvians are an absolute majority, but if there is even one Russian, he demands that the meeting take place in Russian, and his demand is met. If not, the collective is accused of nationalism.

5. So-called united schools, kindergartens, and children's homes were founded and continue to function in cities and in the country. In practice, it means that the schools, kindergartens, and homes teaching in Russian have stayed the same, while all such institutions teaching in Latvian have also formed Russian groups and classes.

Furthermore, everything, such as all school councils, teacher and student meetings, and Pioneer gatherings, also takes place in Russian here. Except for rural areas in Kurzeme, Zemgale, and Vidzeme, there are already very few Latvian schools left in Latvia.

6. All special, middle, and higher institutions of learning have tracks with Russian as the language of instruction.

7. In newspapers, radio and television, meetings and books, everywhere, every day, friendship with Russians is trumpeted. Instances where Latvian women marry Russian men or Latvian men marry Russian women are widely propagandized.

8. Everything national has been completely exterminated in the production of consumer goods. Earlier Latvia, like other countries, had its national cuisine, its sweets, chocolates, and cigarettes, but now there are only all-union brands. Restaurants and cafeterias have only food prepared according to all-union (i.e. Russian) recipes, national foods are a rarity.

9. The Latvian people have the wonderful *Līgo* festival at mid-summer, which was freely celebrated for hundreds of years, even during the years of German fascist occupation.

This holiday was categorically banned until last year. Even this year they are not officially recognized, even though they are not officially banned.

10. There are two approaches to literary heritage. The Russian writers Tolstoy, Turgenev, Dostoyevsky, Gogol, Pushkin, Lermantov, etc. are published over and over, but of Latvian pre-Soviet era writers, only Rainis, Paegle, and Veidenbaums, partly Aspazija, Blaumanis, and some others are acknowledged.

11. Riga has six administrative districts, but none is called by a local name. They are called the Lenin, Kirov, Moscow, Leningrad, October, and Proletariat districts.

12. Riga has streets called as follows: Lenin, Kirov, Sverdlov, Gorky; even one called by the name of the czarist governor Suvorov. But Latvian names have been discarded, as the boulevard named for the greatest Latvian female poet Aspazija and the street named for Krišjānis Valdemārs, one of the leaders of the Latvian national awakening.

13. There is a memorial house in Riga not just to Lenin, but also to Russian Czar Peter I, conqueror of the Baltic lands.

14. It is well known that Latvian riflemen played a significant role in the October Revolution. In the revolution's most critical days, Lenin ordered them to guard him and the Kremlin. During the Second World War, two Latvian divisions and a special air force regiment fought heroically in the Red Army, but now the Latvian units have been disbanded.

Latvian youths are deliberately forbidden to serve in the Russian units stationed on Latvian territory. They are scattered over the entire

Soviet Union, as far as possible from Latvia.

15. No Latvian professional or amateur theater, ensemble, orchestra, or choir has its repertory approved unless it contains Russian plays or songs, but Russian collectives have essentially no Latvian plays or songs.

National Communists' resistance

This factual list could go on and on, showing the same thing over and over: everything national is exterminated, forced assimilation is advanced, peoples, cultures, traditions do not have equal rights.

One could, of course, ask: but why do Latvian Communists and the people remain silent?

They did not remain silent. There were attempts to resist these policies.

For example, former first secretary of the Riga city committee, later deputy chairman of the Latvian SSR Council of Ministers and member of the LKP CK bureau Eduards Berkļavs steadfastly took a stand against these unjust actions, and for a time he was supported by several other members of the LKP CK bureau and the republican government. But when the majority of the members of the LKP CK bureau started to support his views, CPSU CC secretary comrade Khrushchev himself came to Latvia. He also sent CPSU CC secretary Muchtidinov. As a result, Berkļavs was removed from office as deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, expelled from the CK and the LKP CK bureau, and deported from the republic. The following were removed from office for supporting this position, for resisting Great Russian chauvinism and the mutilation of Marxist-Leninist policy [*names have been deleted for clarity - ed.*]:

Chairman of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Latvia,
Chairman of the republican council of trade unions,
Secretary of the Riga city committee,
Editor of the central organ of the LKP CK, the newspaper *Cīņa*,
Deputy chairman of the republican state planning committee,
First deputy chairman of the executive committee of the city of Riga,
LKP CK secretary and bureau member,
LKP CK second secretary,
Director of the Economic Scientific Research Institute of the Latvian SSR Academy of Science,

Minister of Culture, member of the LKP CK,
Deputy Minister of Culture,
Deputy Minister of Health,
Minister of Agriculture,
Deputy Minister of Agriculture,
Editor of the Riga newspaper,
First secretary of the Latvian Komsomol CK,
Second secretary of the Latvian Komsomol CK,
Editor of the Latvian Komsomol central organ, the newspaper
Padomju Jaunatne,
Chief of the personnel department of the Latvian SSR Council of
Ministers,
Chief of the administrative organ department of the LKP CK,
Minister of Transport and Highways,
Chairman of the control commission of the LKP CK,
Senior researcher of the Council of Ministers,
Chief of the education department of the executive committee of
the city of Riga,
High school principals,
and many, many more.

All key positions are now filled only by foreigners and Latvians who spent all their lives in Russia and came to Latvia only after the Second World War. Most of them do not speak Latvian, or speak it poorly. Let the facts speak for themselves.

The secretaries of the LKP CK are: CK first secretary A. Voss, Latvian from Russia, generally does not speak Latvian in public; CK second secretary Belucha, Russian from Russia, does not know any Latvian at all; CK propaganda secretary A. Drīzulis, Latvian from Russia; agriculture secretary R. Verro, Estonian from Russia, does not know Latvian; CK industry secretary E. Pētersons, Latvian from Russia, speaks Latvian very poorly.

The leadership of the Council of Ministers: chairman J. Rubenis, Latvian from Russia, speaks Latvian very poorly; deputy chairman I. Bondaletov, Russian from Russia, does not know any Latvian at all; chairman of the presidium of the Latvian SSR Supreme Soviet V. Rubenis, Latvian from Russia, speaks Latvian very poorly, does not speak Latvian in public.

Generally, those who are appointed to leadership positions are people without principles, people with no viewpoint or opinion of their

own, toadies, careerists, sycophants. The way is barred to people with principles, to those who have definite viewpoints and do not hide them.

This is the situation in Latvia, this is the situation in which the native people find themselves in the republics, in the lands of their birth. With regard to the Lithuanians, Estonians, Jews, Germans, Poles, and other minorities (except for Russians) formerly and currently living in the territory of Latvia, their national identity is not respected in the least. Until 1940, until the founding of the Soviet regime, they had elementary and high schools in Latvia where they studied in their native language; they published newspapers, magazines and books in their native language, they had their own clubs, theaters, choirs, and other cultural and educational organizations. Now, despite the known Marxist-Leninist principles regarding this issue, despite all the assertions of the leaders of the USSR that the national question in the USSR has been solved, that all our nations and nationalities have been guaranteed complete freedom and equality, there is nothing like that at all. In all the republics, the Russians have everything, the native people in their own republic still have something, and the others have nothing.

The USSR's 3.5 million Jews publish only one newspaper and one magazine in their own language, in their autonomous region. They are denied the right to have theaters, clubs, or any cultural organizations even in cities where they number tens of thousands.

* * *

Invitation to Communists abroad

Dear Comrades!

In this letter we briefly looked at the existing situation in the Soviet Union from only one aspect, that of the nationalities question. But Marxist-Leninist teachings about the common rights and freedoms of all humanity, freedom of speech, Leninistic work, and other basic principles of Marxism-Leninism are mutilated here just as harshly.

Why are we writing to you about this? Why are we only writing now? What are we asking of you, what do we propose?

As we said at the beginning of this letter, we have been Communists for a long time. When we worked in the underground, suffocated in the prisons and labor camps of bourgeois Latvia, we knew the essence of the socialistic state and all of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism only

theoretically, and we believed wholeheartedly in all of these ideals. When we saw the reality of the socialistic state (which was then the only one of its kind in the world), we immediately saw that reality was not like theory. But we strongly believed that the errors were only temporary, that they could be fought against and liquidated. We did not immediately understand how deeply these errors were entrenched.

Only by degrees, over time, we became convinced through practical work that which here is officially spoken and written is only a pretence, a tendentious twisting of the facts, only lies, that all Party conferences, meetings, and congresses are only shows carefully prepared ahead of time. They are held only to create the impression of democracy inside the Party, and they have to echo what is said "from above," in short, from the first person on down (unanimously).

Any attempt to protest against this view is considered to be a stand against the Party, against Leninism, and such courageous people are not just removed from their jobs, but are deprived of their freedom, they are jailed, put in camps and prisons under inhumane conditions, they are deported, sometimes they disappear for all time without a trace.

Of course, under those conditions, there are not and never can be any discussions, neither in party conferences and congresses nor in workers' council sessions. That is how the illusion of unity is created.

We think that you have already heard of all this and know some of it, but, using only official sources and staying in the Soviet Union only for short periods of time, you are not even close to knowing everything that happens here. That is why we are writing to you, we want to make you aware of the facts.

We know that no Communist party has the right to interfere in the affairs of other parties. But, to achieve that with combined strength, it is necessary to curb those that break this principle. You know the facts. In addition, people around the world judge Communists and socialism as a whole from our successes, failures, and errors. The actions of the Soviet Union help or hinder your work also.

We therefore think that you have to know the truth about us, and that you will see that it is necessary to influence the leaders of the CPSU. We know that that is not easy. They are not used to listening to others. They act from positions of power and recognize only power. But your parties' influence on the world's Communist movement is great, and your views cannot be disregarded. We will not attempt to tell you in what ways you could influence the leaders of the CPSU, but we feel that it is not possible to retain the prestige of Marxism-Leninism by keeping silent

about the mutilation of its basic principles here.

If the leaders of the CPSU are not amenable to immediately stopping the above-mentioned and similar actions, then they are to be ruthlessly unmasked and boycotted. The current policies of the CPSU are fatal to the Communist movement of the whole world.

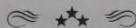
With Communistic greetings!
Latvian Communists

* * *

Judging with greatest respect this documentation of the reality of Soviet life, we cannot but comment on the paradox that these seventeen Latvian Communists, like many of their predecessors, unwaveringly believed in the Communist idea, in Marxism-Leninism. We mention these travellers on this road: Politburo member Jānis Rudzutaks, also other close collaborators with Lenin - Jānis Bērziņš-Ziemelis, Jūlijs Daniševskis, Vilhelms Knoriņš, Kārlis Landers, Jānis Hermanis, Eduards Bērziņš, Reinholds Bērziņš, Jēkabs Alksnis, Jēkabs Pēters, Osvalds Dzenis, Mērtiņš Lācis, Ivars Smilga, Valerijs Mežlauks, and others.

Even though they served Communism and the building of the Soviet empire with the greatest idealism, these and thousands of other Latvian Communists were shot, destroyed as presumed enemies. Since the October Revolution, actually a coup d'état, huge numbers of people and entire nationalities have ceaselessly fallen and fall as victims of Communism. This occurs in the name of the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat, which stands at the heart of Marxist dogma. As a system of power consolidated by a dictatorship, the Soviet regime does not even have the capability to be either socialist or humane. Its only characteristic is Russian chauvinism, which has created a symbiosis with the Communist system.

It is therefore understandable and natural that clear reason has caused the Latvian people to resist Communist ideology and Soviet power. The dynamics of passive resistance, too, strengthen the existence of the people and its vital interests.



Jānis Amols

AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE OF NATIONAL RESISTANCE

The document titled *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* has a special place in the history of Latvian national anti-Soviet resistance. The importance of this document and its authors in the fight for the rights of the Latvian people perhaps has not yet been fully realized. Still, besides the actions of many openly patriotic Latvians and the hidden “religious underground,” this document has gained recognition both as an outstanding example of national resistance and as an authentic historical source that accurately characterizes the situation in Latvia in the years of the Soviet regime’s relative stability.

With concrete facts, the *Letter* unmasked the Russification of Latvia being directed by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. It has to be considered as documentary evidence by researchers and others interested in studying the history of the Soviet occupation of Latvia.

The aim of this article is not to analyze the content of the *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* as such, but to show why and how this document came into being, who was involved, and what reaction it provoked in occupied Latvia and the Western world.

* * *

At the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, the *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* seemed to have been forgotten. Patriotism had revived, with the leaders and heroes of free Latvia being again honored after decades of disparagement and silence by the occupiers, but it seemed that even historians were not noting the fact that the 20th anniversary of the *Letter’s* publication was approaching. Knowing that the *Letter* had been first published in Stockholm in January 1972, the time had come to remind people again of its importance and at the same time make known the secrets associated with it. There were justified hopes that the former Latvian national Communist Eduards Berklavs would not hold back more information about the letter’s authors, the seventeen Latvian Communists, and how the letter came into existence.

Except for the authors themselves in Latvia and a few exile Latvians, who all – except for Artūrs Pormals, who had brought the letter to the West – were associated with the newsletter *Brīvība (Freedom)* of the exile Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party (LSDSP, *Latviešu Sociāldemokrātiskā strādnieku partija*), most Latvians, both in exile and in Latvia, did not know the letter's authors, how it came to be, or the extraordinary details of how it was distributed. These things could not have been known, for then the Soviet regime would have exacted harsh reprisals on the letter's authors. On December 26, 1991, I had the opportunity to meet personally with Eduards Berklavs and interview him.

In 1972 the *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* was published in the world's major newspapers, radio and television broadcasts gave citations and commentary. It was probably the first time since the Second World War that the Western press paid so much attention to Latvia and Latvians. For a moment Latvia, its illegal occupation, and the fate of its oppressed people were at the world's center of attention, noticed by both statesmen and society at large.

The unusual amount of media attention as well as the reaction in the West and in the "socialist camp" to the document's publication make it one of the most important and most successful Latvian anti-Soviet protest actions of the post-war occupation. Precisely the *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* is probably the most important and most effective episode in the Latvian struggle against Russification in the time period starting after the 1959 "purges" until the "singing revolution" of the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. Other successful post-war Baltic political demonstrations, which garnered widespread media attention around the world for the Baltics and Balts, in addition to the *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* are the *Copenhagen Tribunal* and the *Baltic Peace and Freedom Cruise* in the Baltic Sea in 1985.

The second reason this action is important is that it was an outstanding example of effective cooperation between Latvians in Latvia and in exile in the struggle against the occupation regime. The authors' and distributors' logistics in gaining the widest possible audience in the West has to be judged outstanding.

Historical setting

Analyzing the situation in Latvia at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, one has to remember the events of 1959.

In the latter part of the 1950s, there was a bitter struggle between two groups in the leadership and administration of the Latvian Communist Party. The Russian imperialist group espoused the position of the central power and its aspirations to entrench itself into conquered territories, and defended the selfish interests of the nomenklatura and militarists who had come into Latvia in the post-war years. This group also included the Stalinized and “mankurtized” Latvians sent from Moscow, especially LKP CK secretary Arvīds Pelše.

The other group was composed of those Party and state functionaries who were born and raised in Latvia. Ignoring official internationalism, this part of the nomenklatura was influenced by the strong cultural traditions of independent Latvia of the 1920s and 1930s. Along with their language, they had gained a certain principled way of looking at the world. This group of Latvian Communists tried to preserve some Latvian autonomy from the center.

Speaking in Marxist terms, each of these groups had its “mass base.” For the newly-arrived nomenklatura this was, of course, the workers, officials, and military personnel brought in from the USSR’s “old republics.” In this situation, where the imperialists had already entrenched themselves into the local Latvian Party organization and ruling institutions, the national Communist group, without the support of the center in Moscow, was fated to be defeated. Its defeat was possibly also hastened by the fact that at the end of the 1950s, most Latvians did not accept the conquerors’ ideology, join the Communist Party, or cooperate with the Soviet regime.

When Nikita Khrushchev, the leader of the USSR, was in Latvia in June 1959, he was informed of the “bourgeois nationalistic activity” of Eduards Berklavs, then the deputy chairman of the Latvian SSR Council of Ministers. The accusations were given to him at the urging of General Dyomin of the occupation army and the Russianized chauvinist N. Saleyev, editor of the newspaper *Sovetskaya Latvija*.

After an investigation that summer by a CPSU CC commission, the ranks of the Latvian Communist Party were purged of “bourgeois nationalists” on Khrushchev’s and Pelše’s order. A large number (about 1,500) of LKP and state functionaries who were favorably disposed to Latvia were removed from their posts. A ruthless campaign to suppress of any kind of national expression was started. All barriers to colonization and Russification were swept away. By a decree of the CPSU, Berklavs was sent to an insignificant job in Vladimir, in the heart of Russia.

Internal differences of opinion in the Party had prompted the national

Communists to tend to the opposition in the Party's leadership. The year 1959 made the national Communists not the national wing of the Party, but the left wing of the national dissident movement instead.

How the idea of the letter arose

Berklavs returned to Riga from banishment in Vladimir in January 1968. The Central Committee of the Latvian Communist Party had given him two options for returning:

1) Write several articles for the press expressing regret for his earlier bourgeois nationalistic activities. He would then be allowed to work in a meaningful position and later receive a pension.

2) Work where the LKP CK ordered, at RER, a large electrical machine factory in Riga. This firm had the largest percentage of non-Latvians in all of Riga (88%) and also the largest non-Latvian Party organization.

Berklavs refused to write articles of repentance, stating that he did not accept the USSR's policies on nationalism. He went to work at the RER factory as head of the office of technical information and propaganda, all the while closely watched by "trusted comrades."

Berklavs slowly renewed contacts with former work colleagues who shared his ideas, veterans of the Latvian Communist Party, including Emma Ērenštreite, Jānis Kacēns, and Ella Ankupa. They discussed the political situation in Latvia and the growing dangers of Russification caused by the "according to plan" economic policy of the CPSU.

Concluding that they would not be able to achieve anything in Latvia or Moscow, Berklavs and his colleagues decided that situation would have to be raised to an international level. It was known from Western radio broadcasts that many Communist parties abroad did not agree with Moscow's policies. At the time, the sharpest opposition to CPSU's policies came from the Italian Communist Party, but many other Communist parties, or at least some of their leaders and members, disagreed with Moscow.

They had the illusion that the men in power in Moscow, even though they might ignore the views of Western politicians and society, would not totally ignore the views of their closest associates, Communists in other lands.

In the summer of 1969, a group of Latvian national Communists drove out to the vicinity of Ložmetējkalns in Kacēns' car. After discussion, they agreed to send a letter to foreign Communist parties. They decided

that Berklavs would write the document and then show it to the others. They also discussed how the letter would be delivered to the West. Clearly, the mail would not do. Ērenštreite proposed throwing the document over the walls of a foreign embassy in Moscow. The others rejected this as too risky. It was well known that the VDK closely watched all embassy environs and detained anyone who tried to approach them.

Berklavs started to write the first draft of the letter. It was added to, revised and rewritten several times. Berklavs gave it to his colleagues for review. He gained trusted Latvian Communist allies at the RER factory, Jānis Galdiņš and the engineers Valentīna Borka and Rasma Siliņa.

The authors of the letter

A group of Latvian patriots participated in the creation and development of the letter. Formally, they were all members of the Communist Party, but they were united by their rejection of the USSR's policies in Latvia, especially the deliberate mass Russification of Latvia and the local authorities' complete submission to Moscow.

Besides Berklavs, the document's main author, the group consisted of the following former LKP activists and national Communists: Jānis Kacēns, Emma Ērenštreite, Arnolds Zandmanis, Jānis Gustsons, brothers Pēteris and Jānis Sadovskis, Ella Ankupe, Zālamans Jofe, Pēteris Plēsums, Olga Vāvere, former *Cīņa* editor Pāvels Pizāns, CK instructor Frīdmanis, colleagues from the RER factory Jānis Galdiņš, Valentīna Borka, Rasma Siliņa, and kolkhoz chairperson Elvīra Zēberga, a former underground Communist.

Getting the letter to the West

In his memoirs, Berklavs states that the letter was finished in 1969. The completed letter had to wait to be delivered to the West. For a long time there were no opportunities. Galdiņš suggested that Berklavs try to find an opportunity to give the letter to an exile Latvian visiting in Latvia. Berklavs himself did not have relatives or friends abroad. Luckily, in the summer of 1971, Artūrs Pormals from the United States was visiting his brother Jānis Pormals, who was a friend of Galdiņš. Keeping to the terms of the conspiracy, Berklavs did not try to meet the foreign guest himself or even ask his name. They met for the first time almost twenty years later, when Berklavs was in Chicago.

Artūrs Pormals was a former member of the Kurelis unit of the Latvian national partisans, and was imprisoned for a time in the Stutthof concentration camp. One of his brothers died fighting with the national partisans. In the United States, Pormals served with the Green Berets, and had been through a special training course. In his first visits to Latvia, he had illegally travelled around the country on a motorcycle.

Pormals took the request to carry the letter out of Latvia very seriously. The document was delivered to him at the Riga Sports Center. Taking advantage of the thronging crowd, Galdiņš placed the letter in Pormals' coat when passing by behind him. Pormals did not even look back at the emissary, so that if he were caught the VDK could not get this person's name from him by their "special methods." Pormals had even thought up the story that the letter was given him by the brother of the well-known LKPCK secretary Arvīds Pelše, who lived in New York and was then also fortuitously visiting in Riga. To muddy the trail, such rumors actually were later spread.

Where to keep the letter in the hotel room was a problem, as Cheka agents routinely went through visitors' possessions. Pormals hid it in a relatively safe place, inside the radio, and also warned his roommate, a Latvian from Canada, about it.

To minimize the risk in getting the letter past the Soviet border guards, Artūrs Pormals bought a large bouquet of roses and wrapped the letter's thin tissue-paper pages around the stems of the roses. These he then encased in a plastic bag of water, which if danger threatened could be pressed and broken so that the water would immediately dissolve the thin paper. But everything went smoothly. The *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* had survived the most dangerous part of its journey.

Preparations for the letter's publication in the West

In the United States, Artūrs Pormals gave the document to the Latvian Sovietologist Andris Trapāns. After carefully analyzing the text, Trapāns concluded that the letter was genuine. In December 1971, via his brother Jānis Trapāns, who worked at Radio Free Europe in Munich, Andris Trapāns sent a copy and a Latvian translation of the letter to Brūno Kalniņš, chairman of the Foreign Committee of the LSDSP, and historian Uldis Ģermanis in Stockholm. A short time later, Andris Trapāns also sent an English translation of the letter to Stockholm. In the accompanying letter he wrote:

All of my written comments here are secret and only for the two of you to know. If you agree with me that this document is the "real thing," then this would be the most important political document that has until now come out of occupied Latvia. The letter was brought out of Latvia at the end of July by Artūrs Pormals, a member of our fraternity Livonica. The person who gave this letter stated that he himself is one of the secret group of Latvian Communists. He expressed the desire that the letter be sent to certain foreign Communist Party members. He also expressed the hope that the letter overall gain wide publicity in the West.

Andris Trapāns felt that the letter was written after publication in the Soviet press of the 1970 census (April 17, 1971). The letter was written in Russian on ten pieces of tissue-paper, of normal width but longer than normal length.

Andris Trapāns felt it would be best to publish the letter in neutral Sweden, and that other countries' newspapers would pick it up from there. This turned out to be completely true. He added that it would be useful if the letter could also be printed in publications of the Socialist International, as they are read by all the Communist parties.

In his memoirs, Uldis Ģērmanis stated that after carefully reading the document, he and Brūno Kalniņš concluded that the author was from the Berklavs group. Ģērmanis made some insignificant corrections in the letter's Latvian version. Soon afterwards, in January 1972, the *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* was published in *Brīvība*, the monthly newsletter of the LSDSP Foreign Committee. At the same time, the letter was broadcast in Russian by Radio Liberty, and from there it was picked up by many other radio stations.

Preparing for the distribution of the letter, Kalniņš and Ģērmanis divided up the tasks. As Kalniņš had many personal contacts and great authority among Sweden's Social Democrats and in the Socialist International, he undertook the letter's distribution in the international Social Democratic press. It should be mentioned that without Kalniņš personal participation, the letter possibly would have not had the immense amount of publicity and response around the world that it did.

Ģērmanis, being a *Dagens Nyheter* correspondent, used his acquaintance with Harald Hamrin, the head of the newspaper's foreign policy department, in preparing the way for the letter's wider publication in Sweden and elsewhere.

Interestingly, well before the document was published, on January

11, 1972, Ģērmanis gave the document to the leader of the Swedish Communist Party, C. H. Hermanson, who promised to discuss the document in the Party's central committee. Unfortunately, there is no evidence as to what Hermanson did. Also, nothing indicates that Hermanson gave the document to any USSR agencies.

Response to the letter in the East

As seen from several documents of the USSR embassy in Sweden, which were found in the archive of the former LKP, the Soviets started an active investigation immediately after the *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* was published.

The LKP CK was sent a secret report by USSR embassy attaché Albert Liepa on the reaction of Sweden's Latvians to the letter, a precise transcription of the letter from the Radio Liberty broadcast of January 21, 1972, and materials from the newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*.

In his February 21, 1972, report, Alberts Liepa wrote:

Since the very beginning of 1972, there has been a marked tendency of the activity of reactionary Latvian organizations to focus on all kinds of protests and demonstrations of all kinds, in preparation for the upcoming conference on collective security in Europe. The goal of such activity is to draw the attention of the reactionary circles of the Western great power to the so-called question of "the self-determination of the Baltic states." An outstanding example of such attempts is the so-called *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* to western brotherly Communist parties, which was allegedly received from Soviet Latvia by the Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party Foreign Committee and which was published in the Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* on January 29, 1972, as well as in the January issue of the Latvian Social Democratic monthly *Brīvība*.

Careful examination of the "letter" shows it to be the work of the same Latvian Social Democrats, B. Kalniņš' and U. Ģērmanis' handiwork. It has become known that Ģērmanis allegedly personally translated the "letter" from Russian into Swedish and gave the "letter" to the Swedish Communist Party leader Hermanson. Judging by the reactions, there is distrust among Latvian emigrés in Stockholm and Uppsala as to the authenticity of the letter. Anecdotes are even being spread about it. This proves that the re-

actionary organizations of the Latvian emigration will not forego such falsifications and anti-Soviet provocations in the future also. Continuing my work with the Latvian emigration, I am attempting to establish useful contacts, especially with young people. In January 1972 [...] visited the USSR embassy in Stockholm and promised to inform about the success of the film among the young people.

The USSR embassy's report on the publications in *Dagens Nyheter* states:

The document was written in Riga in the summer of 1971. The original in Russian is on 10 closely-spaced typewritten pages. The excerpts published in *Dagens Nyheter* are only one-third of the original.

The document was brought out of the Soviet Union in late summer of 1971 by a person who was then visiting in Latvia. After that the document was translated and given to those designated by the authors.

Dagens Nyheter has a photocopy of part of the document in Russian.

In a case such as this, of course, some discussion of the document's authenticity is necessary. Yet everything points to the fact that this is not a forgery.

In his memoirs, Ģermanis writes that Liepa, in a talk with him on February 24, 1971, tried to provoke him to give some information about the document's possible authors. Ģermanis did not try to prove the letter's authenticity, but carefully tried to deflate Liepa's supposition that the author was Ģermanis himself, thereby in fact leaving Liepa and his masters guessing.

In this regard, the distributors of the letter were helped by articles in the Swedish press written by journalist Alex Milits, an exile of Estonian-Russian background, in which he tried to show that the *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* was a fabrication of Soviet Chekists themselves.

The Soviet organs carried out a counter-propaganda campaign in three directions:

- 1) Attempts were made to discredit the letter's authenticity and its authorship in Latvia, using disinformation spread by official Soviet propaganda and Soviet security organs to assign authorship to the LSDSP Foreign Committee, Kalniņš, and Ģermanis,

2) At the same time, the USSR state security apparatus strengthened its special operations work to discover the letter's authors and those who worked with them,

3) The Soviet institutions passed a decree about strengthening international education and fighting against the ideological remnants of bourgeois nationalism, as well as prophylactic work with Baltic emigrants.

On February 24, 1972, *Cīņa*, the semi-official organ of the LKP CK, published a lengthy article titled *In answer to the slanderers. About a failed anti-Communist provocation*. This was clear evidence that the *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* had reached its addressees not only abroad, but also in Latvia. If the Communist Party's propagandists had remained silent in this case, it could only mean their inability to refute the facts mentioned in the letter. In response to the seventeen Communists' charges, the Soviet "agitprop virtuosi" countered with these phrases:

All in all, for the crafty politician Kalniņš, who has, as the saying goes, gone through fire and water and has crawled through all the sewers, it is easier than easy to write a composition such as the aforementioned "letter."

There is an Eastern saying: "Dogs bark, but the caravan goes on its way." And no matter what kinds of dogs bark in the international courtyards, Latvians, Soviet people in the brotherly community, go their way to the desired goal, to Communism.

In the campaign to discredit the letter, besides "internal counter-propaganda," VDK foreign agents were sent into the exile Latvian community. In the August 29, 1998, supplement *Mājas Viesis* to the newspaper *Lauku Avīze*, Indulis Zālīte published an article titled "How did the Cheka make cultural ties?":

March 23, 1972. Casablanca. Agent "Zars," answering a letter received from P. Bērziņš (name has been changed), [...] in which Bērziņš sent the *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* addressed to foreign Communist parties and asked "Zars" to assess it, i.e., is it authentic or a forgery [...]. "Zars" wrote that [...] it was a bluff, and convincingly proved it with examples.

March 31, 1972. West Germany. Hamburg. Agent "Zars" received a letter from P. Bērziņš thanking him for the assessment of the so-called *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* [...].

The security agencies of the USSR tried diligently to find out how the *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* was written and sent. Of course, the Cheka did get to Eduards Berklavs. Soon after the letter was published in the West, Berklavs gave a copy to a colleague at work, who publically read the letter at a wedding. This reckless person was denounced and called in for interrogation by the VDK, where he confessed that he had received the document from Berklavs.

At Christmas in 1972, Berklavs was also summoned to the VDK. During the interrogation, Berklavs succeeded in denying his participation in the writing of the letter. Still, the VDK gave him an official warning, equivalent to a suspended court sentence.

Later, the VDK managed to associate Berklavs' contacts with Klāvs Lorencs, an old Social Democrat, to the *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists*' case. In a search of Lorencs' apartment, the Chekists found a note from Berklavs about returning a borrowed book. That was sufficient for the VDK to assert that Berklavs had sent the *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* out of Latvia with the Lorencs' help. The VDK knew that exile Latvian Social Democrats sometimes visited Lorencs. Considering the coincidence of the facts that the exile LSDSP center was in Stockholm and that the letter was first published there, this assertion did have a logical basis.

The Soviet counter-propaganda attempt at fighting "ideological enemies" in their home territory in Sweden was rather grotesque. In April 1972, the newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* received a "protest letter" signed by ten people in Latvia. In typical Soviet fashion, the signatories (Vikentijs Latkovskis, Fricis Bergs, Eduards Smilga, Valija Bērzupe, Pāvels Āboltiņš, Arnis Stoķis, Vija Artmane, Gaida Liniņa, Uldis Rozeviskis, Elza Mitriķe) had not even seen the letter they were protesting.

This protest letter was beautifully satirized by Ģermanis, who wrote that "the Russian bear has again done himself a real bear's service" [i.e., disservice - trans.]. Responding to this protest by "representatives of the Soviet Latvian people," *Dagens Nyheter* journalist Hamrin wrote: "It would be easy wax sarcastic about the coincidence that has brought these ten *DN* readers together in a joint protest against the document published in *DN*."

Reaction in the West

The importance of the *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* in the West was first of all the sensational news that Latvian Communists were protesting against their own Party's policies in Latvia. The letters' authors main trump card turned out to be precisely their avowed Communist views, their membership in the Communist Party, the criticism of the policies of the USSR and the CPSU with their own ideological weapons. Also, all expert Western analysts were unanimous: this document was not a forgery. The *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* became one of the most important documents accusing the Soviet regime of criminal activity in the Baltic states.

A special achievement was the inclusion of the English translation of the letter in the *Congressional Record* in April 1972, as noted by US Senator Charles H. Percy in his letter of April 20, 1972, to Artūrs Pormals.

An idea of the influence of the *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists* in the West is given by USSR Ambassador M. Jakovlyev's letter to USSR Deputy Foreign Minister N. Firyubinam:

Considering what has been said above, I ask that you please consider the question of granting 800 rubles yearly in local currency for work among Latvian and Estonian displaced persons. The embassy would use the stated sum to rent a theater in Stockholm and also for presentations and small exhibits. Once a quarter we would show films to Estonians and Latvians to show life in Soviet Latvia and Soviet Estonia.

As a curiosity, one can mention a brochure published by the "Old Latvian" (pro-Soviet) publication *Amerikas Latvietis* dated March 11, 1972, called "Samizdat and the 17 'Communists' Letter." This brochure was in fact part of the Chekist counter-propaganda, the only difference being that "a spade was called a spade" even more openly than in *Cīņa*:

The bigger the lies, the more the people will believe them – that is an old fascist saying. Seeing that Samizdat and Russification stories fill their pockets with dollars, Hitler's former servants have produced a new document and called it 17 Latvian Communist Party's unknown leaders' appeal to foreign Communist parties leaders' consciences.

Conclusions and lessons for the future

What are the lessons learned from the *Letter from 17 Latvian Communists*?

The action discussed above clearly showed that:

1. Even a small number of people, if well organized and working together toward a common goal, can achieve unexpectedly large results.
2. Despite their different political orientations, Latvians have to learn to cooperate productively and work for their own interests, not those of a foreign power.
3. We have to try to successfully unite and use the differing experiences and capabilities of exile Latvians and Latvians in Latvia to reach our common goals.



*Heinrichs Strods***LATVIA'S NATIONAL PARTISAN WAR 1944-1956**

Only a few years old, research into the history of Latvia's national partisan war is just in the beginning stages. As there are no other special monograph researches, except for several partisan memoirs and some articles, this work can be considered a summary of the author's 1996 monograph. The monograph's second volume, *Documents and Materials*, with an index of names for both volumes and annotations in English, was published in Rīga in 1998.

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The top leadership of the resistance movement during the German occupation, *Latvijas Centrālā Padome* (LCP, Latvian Central Council), started to organize Latvia's national partisans in 1943.

The German army's counter-intelligence service, the so-called "forest cats" (*Waldkatzen*), were professionals trained to fight in the rear of the enemy. After Germany's capitulation, these units, led by Captain Boriss Jankavs, also became partisans. In 1945, there were 462 men in hunt detachments (*Jagdkommandos*) in Kurzeme, and Pēteris Supe, J. Pormals, and A. Feldbergs, among others, became commanders of national partisan units.

The more politically aware section of the population understood that the occupying forces had to be destroyed, for otherwise the Soviet dictatorship that would be established would take away democratic freedoms and property. There was no other choice, and so four large national partisan groups were formed in Latvia in 1944-1945.

In Eastern Latvia, the Roman Catholic priest Antons Juchņēvičs led the partisan group called *Latvijas Tēvijas sargs* (Latvian Homeland Guard). In Northern Latvia, the leaders were Kārlis Rusovs, A. Circenis, and Pēteris Supe. In Northern Kurzeme, the Latvian National Partisan Organization was led by B. Jankavs and I. Feldbergs. The group *Tēvijas vanagi* (Homeland Eagles) was active in Southern Kurzeme. From 1944 to 1946, Latvia's national partisan war was not led from abroad.

The fight against Latvia's national partisans was led by the LK(b)P CK, the Central Committee of the Latvian Communist Party, which was dependent on the Politburo of the CPSU CC. The latter issued orders and provided finances, and appointed its legal and economic officials.

Both of these organizations directly managed the repression of the national partisans, but the Red Army actually carried it out. From 1945 an anti-partisan headquarters operated in Riga, commanded by LK(b)P CK Secretary Titov and including LSSR NKGB People's Commissars A. Noviks and A. Eglītis.

The USSR NKVD (MVD) 5th Special Task Division's 24th, 36th, 143rd, and 260th Regiments, the Railway Guards' 152nd Regiment, the Escort Army Division's 48th Regiment, and the 21 Extermination Battalions took part in the fight against the armed national underground in Latvia. Extermination battalions had 16-18 thousand men; 15 regiments fought against the partisans until 1949.

It is not possible to describe the Red Army units and the rear guard because of the lack of data. It is known that the 43rd Latvian Rifle Guard Division "combed the forests" and carried out actions against the partisans.

In 1945, a LKP CK (*Latvijas Komunistiskās partijas Centrālā Komiteja*, Central Committee of the Latvian Communist Party) special forces group of 110 people also fought against the partisans. An additional group of 80 dressed as civilians tried to infiltrate the partisans.

The Internal Army had the main role in the fight against the partisans. It had no soldiers of Baltic nationality. Its units were heavily armed with tanks, mortars, radio communications, small arms, and service dogs. The regiments were frequently relocated to create a tenfold superiority in one or the other of the republics.

One can identify several stages in the Latvian national partisan war. The first ran from July 1944 to July 1946, when the partisan groups were of considerable size. The first battles were around Abrene, against the 24th Regiment of the NKVD 5th Special Task Division.

The Latvijas Nacionālo partizānu apvienības (LNPA, Latvian National Partisan Organizations) and Latvijas Tēvzemes Sargu (partizānu) apvienība (LTS(p)A, Latvian Fatherland Guard (Partisans)) were being formed in Vidzeme. At that time there were about 20,000 partisans. The organizations had statutes and written orders; solemn oaths were sworn upon joining. The partisans fought in direct battles. They built bunker cities, such as the one of about 30 bunkers in the Stampaki Forest. The LTS(p)A had four divisions, in Latgale, Vidzeme, Kurzeme, and Zemgale. The partisans held power in the districts of Ilūkste, Daugavpils, and Valmiera.

The second stage, from 1946 to 1948, was characterized by anti-partisan warfare organized according as in East Germany. NVKD General

Ivan Serov (1905-1990) arrived in Latvia and ordered the unification of all armed forces, including the 5th Special Task Division (about 5,000 soldiers), the 21 Extermination Battalions (about 18,000 soldiers), and armed companies and sections of the Communist Party in various cities and districts.

Starting in 1945, Soviet activists in the Latvian SSR were issued arms. False partisan units of about 80 men each were formed in several districts. They fought in groups and individually, sometimes as "Englishmen" and sometimes as "Swedes." The Reds started to copy partisan fighting methods, using agents and scattered forces. In some districts they concentrated their forces tenfold, overwhelming the partisans.

For the most part, the partisans were untrained. They lacked equipment, ammunition, and medical services. There was no centralized leadership or communication system. Some partisans started to drink heavily, others went on looting forays, which lessened the partisans' standing with the people. The larger partisan organizations started to break up. Their positions changed frequently. The partisans started to attack MVD and MGB officials, Party organizers, Komsomol organizers, and Red agents.

The next stage was from 1949 to 1953. Many partisan units lost their supply lines and means of getting information, as on March 25, 1949, 43,000 persons were sent to Siberia. Although they were joined by several hundred people who had escaped deportation, the number of organized, active partisans grew smaller as they started to give up the fight and rejoin the society.

1953 to 1956 saw only sporadic partisan activity. However, Latvia's national partisan war was not yet over. Even the LSSR VDM acknowledged that there were more than a hundred national partisans in Latvia in 1954.

From 1944 to 1950, partisans fought 1,572 engagements against Red Army forces. Counter-intelligence reports of the time noted that the partisans fought heroically, "with the desperation of those fated to death," leaving the last bullet or grenade for themselves.

A major role in the suppression of the partisans was played by NKVD-VDM agents and informers, including *maršrutnieki* ("route-persons") such as gamekeepers, postmen, and milkmen, and influence agents such as journalists, professors and teachers. They molded society's opinions as desired by the Cheka and were controlled by the local "resident."

Other groups were directly under the Cheka. Cell agents spied on those arrested. Assault agents committed acts of violence while dressed

as partisans, or attacked the national partisans while acting as landlords of conspirators' homes. Informants, *stukači*, reported anti-Soviet activities to the Cheka.

Latvia's national partisans fought against three armed forces at the same time: against 5,000 men of the Internal Army, 18,000 men from the Extermination Battalions and against the various district, city, and committee companies, against the special forces groups of 80 who, dressed as familiar legionnaires and officers, tried to infiltrate the partisans, and against armed Communist Party activists, militia and exterminators.

From 1944 to 1947, Latvian national partisan battles were characterized by attack or defense, such as the Stampaki swamp battle of 1945. From 1953 onward, the partisan groups fought mainly when besieged, often against Red forces ten times their strength. In 1954 the number of active partisans was a few hundred, and 1956 is considered the year that the partisans were defeated.

There were other resistance groups in the underground, the largest being *Kursa* and *Lāčplēsis*. The largest national partisan youth organization, *Jaunais ērglis*, was in Latgale. Other organizations had few contacts among themselves, for example, in Alūksne a youth group headed by Līvija Eglīte issued a newspaper *Kokle* and had contacts with the national partisan group led by Reders.

The goal of all these groups and organizations was the renewal of independent Latvia and support of the national partisans' unity, distributing their illegal publications, and warning them of imminent NKVD actions. Some of these groups later became part of the passive resistance movement.

The national partisans were led ideologically by headquarter's information divisions and individual partisans. Ten periodical publications, which had 400-500 copies per month in 1945 and 1946, have survived. Hundreds of leaflets were also issued.

The publications were written by hand or typewriter and copied by mimeograph machines. The partisans pasted leaflets in meeting places: rural centers, mills, milk distribution centers, schools. The publications and leaflets had connections with Independence Day – November 18, Lāčplēša day – November 11, and other events honored by independent, democratic Latvia.

Another part of the ideological work was to let the Latvian people know what was happening in other countries, especially events that related to Latvia, such as the Potsdam accords, Paris peace conference,

and speeches of the American president. This information was gained from foreign radio sources.

About 2,500 national partisans died in the 1,572 battles of 1944 and 1950 referred to above, in subsequent battles, and in ambushes. After the war, 489 partisans who had been taken prisoner or surrendered were shot in Rīga's Central Prison. The number of partisans killed was over 3,000, about the same number as those killed in Latvia's wars of independence from 1918 to 1920.

The number of Red enemy killed in the Latvian national partisan war from 1944 to 1953 was 3,243 (incomplete data).

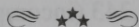
The Latvian national partisan war lasted twelve years. It showed that the Russian empire, militarily occupying Latvia, had not achieved complete victory. The Western democratic countries acted short-sightedly in not supporting the struggle of the small countries either morally or materially. They did not even allow the internationally legitimate and accredited ambassadors Kārlis Zariņš in London and Alfrēds Bīlmanis in the USA to sign the Atlantic Charter in 1941 or form a government in exile. At Yalta in 1943, the small countries were handed over to the unrestricted power of the occupier.

The Latvian national partisans fought for a democratic, independent Latvia, against Communist monolithic ideology. The partisan war showed that the illegitimate regime of the Latvian SSR and its legal system collaborated with the CPSU CC and was a part of its power structure. The USSR and Latvia's Communists together tried to destroy the Latvian people. This was the first time in the history of the Latvian people that genocide was attempted against it, directly affecting at least one third of the people. This was a crime against humanity.

The Latvian national partisan war had its faults. Only a small number of the partisans or their leaders had training in this kind of fighting (B. Jankavs, P. Supe, J. Pormalis, and others). The fighting was often unskilful and not according to the partisan headquarter's orders. The partisan's lacked arms, ammunition, and clothing. Intelligence and medical services were poorly organized. At times the leaders of the partisans lacked true information about the enemy's forces, intelligence agents, and the infiltration of the Cheka's special soldiers into the partisans.

The members of the resistance movement did not allow for the possibility that Communist totalitarianism would eventually be able to realize its goals. Foreign radio propaganda long created extravagant hopes for Western help. The partisans therefore believed the Cheka's false "foreign" representatives, who infiltrated the partisan camps and partisan

backers. Most of the partisans could not believe that the defender's of Latvia's independence abroad did not want to hear anything about the partisan movement in Latvia ten years after the end of the Second World War, using it only for the needs of their foreign security services. The Cheka used it widely with the help of Kim Philby (operation *Lursen*, etc.).



Andrew Ezergailis

SOVIET SHOW TRIALS IN OCCUPIED LATVIA

The prosecution of the Latvian Police Battalions

The prosecution of the 18th and 21st Latvian Police Battalions is part of the old Soviet tradition of show trials. In the 1930s, the Cheka organized and arranged fraudulent trials on Moscow's orders to convict the old Bolsheviks. The main aim of this article is to show that the trials of the 18th and 21st Latvian Police Battalions in 1961, 1972, and 1973 were not organized with the aim of discovering true war criminals, who took part in shooting the Jews. Instead, they were the regular fraudulent trials of the Cheka, arranged for reasons of politics and propaganda, and although few Latvians know of them, they have a special place in the history of Soviet repression.

When in the West most army veterans had healed the wounds of the Second World War and reached an honorable age, in the Soviet Union in the time of Khrushchev and later also Brezhnev, the Cheka investigated and tried members of the Latvian police battalions. These were men who had been identified in Soviet post-war screening camps and had served 10-year sentences in the slave camps of Siberia. As clearly shown in court documents, the soldiers' personal histories and battalions' histories were well known to Russian interrogators in 1945 and 1946. The men were amnestied after Stalin's death.

But then, when these victims of World War Two were starting to turn grey-haired at the beginning of the 1960s, they were suddenly arrested again, and this time, many were shot. The pretexts for the second prosecutions were accusations of deliberately hiding the past and alleged discoveries of new crimes. Both Latvian police battalions were accused of active participation in the extermination of Jews. The 18th Battalion was charged with taking part in shootings in Slonim, Belorussia. The 21st Battalion was charged with taking part in the extermination of Jews in Liepāja.

The trials of the 18th and 21st Battalions are not ordinary cases of Latvian soldiers accused of crimes during the Second World War. They are clearly part of the Soviet show trial tradition, which started during the civil war and reached its heyday in the persecution of the old Bolsheviks (the alleged Trotskyites) in the 1930s. In the matter of evidence,

these Latvian trials, just like the 1930 Moscow trials, were without legal merit, without objective evidence as required in criminal cases. The men of the 18th Battalion were sentenced without even ascertaining the date of the criminal act. As is characteristic in Soviet trials, the accusation already contained the court's verdict, and the sentence was announced to the press before the end of the trial. At the start of the investigation, the defendants were listed in the order of the predetermined sentences. At the beginning of the list were those sentenced to death, then came those sentenced to years in prison. Just as in the trials of the 1930s, the main evidence against the defendants was self-incrimination, supposedly "voluntary confessions" about participating in the shooting of Jews.

The purpose of these trials was propaganda. It was less about accusing certain Latvian soldiers, although some of them were shot and the rest received long prison sentences, than about discrediting Latvian exiles abroad and collectively slandering the Latvian people with collaboration in the extermination of the Jewish people. The Latvian police battalions were such, as ordered by the top leadership. They were lead according to military standards, and the location, time, and nature of their daily activities can be determined from the units' daily orders. The original sets of orders, including those of the 18th and 21st Battalions, are available in the archives of the Hoover Institution, in Stanford, California. The Soviet courts did not make use of these documents.

A characteristic example of the lies that occurred in the trials is that several dozen members of the 21st Battalion, defendants as well as witnesses, testified that they had joined the battalion in September 1941. That was not possible, because formation of the battalion started only in February 1942. The lie was necessary for the Soviet prosecutors because it let them associate the 21st Battalion with shootings of Jews that occurred in the fall of 1941, especially the actions in Šķēde in December 1941. In February 1942, the Jews of Liepāja were no longer alive.

For purposes of propaganda and slander, the occupying power hoped to greatly widen the circle of Latvians who truly participated in the extermination of Jews. The original goal was to associate the Latvian Legion with shootings of Jews. However, this was not an easy task even for Soviet organs, as the Legion was established only in 1943, that is, two years after Latvia's Jews were already killed. Therefore, the attempt to tie Latvian fighting units with the shooting of Jews was then directed against the police battalions.

Did the police battalions actually participate in the shooting of Jews? Perhaps this will never be entirely clear, as the Soviet organs have

successfully muddled the evidence. However, it must be taken into consideration that in their attempts to collectively associate the 18th and 21st Police Battalions with the shooting of Jews, the organs could not do without lying.

* * *

It can be seen from trial court materials in the Cheka's archives that in the years just after the war, the Soviet regime considered the shooting of Jews to be a lesser crime than fighting against Soviet partisans and the Red Army. All the accused were sentenced to about the same number of years punishment, almost independent of the crimes. Most of them were allowed to return home about 1955. Of course, that does not mean that the Soviet institutions were not aware of the international political dimension of the shooting of Jews

Auxiliary police battalions

Formation of the fighting units known as auxiliary police or *Schutzmannschaft* battalions started in the fall of 1941. They received their unit numbers at the beginning of 1942.

Before that, there were in Riga the "Annas ielas" (Anna Street) companies, or the so-called auxiliary police closed units, led at first by Voldemārs Veiss and in the fall by Roberts Osis. The Germans set the size of these companies at 500 men. Although the Germans called these units auxiliary police (later *Schutzmannschaften*), Veiss and Osis ran them like military units. The daily orders of these companies and later battalions are found in the Hoover Institution archives. These companies, battalions, and closed units differed from city and regional auxiliary police units, whose basic duty was local police work.

The first Latvian battalion, still without a number, left for the Lenin-grad front on October 21, 1941, under Colonel Mangulis. Later, this battalion received the designation 16th Battalion. Battalion formation started in earnest after the defeat in Moscow at the beginning of 1942. In February 1942, the German police leadership in Liepāja formed the 21st Battalion, and on April 1 it arrived at the Krasnoye Selo front by Lenin-grad. On May 4, another battalion, the 18th, left for Minsk.

About 30 battalions were formed during the German occupation, though many of them existed only a short period of time. About half a dozen of these battalions were transferred over to the Latvian Legion in 1943. Some consider that, unlike the Legion, the police battalions were composed of volunteers. That is only partially true, as just the first two

or three battalions, about 1,500 men, were truly voluntary.

In Soviet terminology, still partly used in Russia and also in Rīga, these police battalions are often called “punishment units.” This term is no nearer the truth than Nazi propaganda attempts to call Russian partisans “bandits.” Soviet organ propaganda and historiography after the war tried to create the impression that the Germans, invading Latvia, gave power to the “extreme nationalists,” which was then supposedly maintained by the all-powerful *Schutzmannschaften*.

In reality, there were in the literal sense no police or police units in Latvia at that time. There were only auxiliary police (*Hilfspolizei*), whose every step was controlled by the German police. Two German policemen were stationed in every Latvian police precinct. The name *Schutzmannschaft* was not given to Latvian auxiliary policemen as a symbol of broad power. Using this word, the Germans wanted only to limit the Latvians’ power and actions. The Latvian leadership constantly complained that the independent and battalion *Schutzmannschaft* members were poorly armed, ill fed, and untrained for battle. In terms of supplies, at least of weapons, Russian “bandits” surpassed Latvian *Schutzmannschaft* members. It is doubtful whether members of the 18th Battalion even had access to submachine guns, as asserted in the trials.

In this article, I in no way want to defend criminal offenses by Latvian auxiliary police battalions or by precinct police. All the same, democratic legal norms do not allow uncritical generalization, as practiced by Soviet prosecutors, reporters, and historians. To ascribe the crime of shooting Jews to the police battalions, as done in the Soviet show trials, is very problematic. In the West, so far only three Latvian precinct policemen have been charged with war crimes, and in all three cases the prosecution was unsuccessful. Not a single member of a police battalion has even been charged, though I believe that after the trial of the 18th Battalion many were investigated.

* * *

It would be precipitate to think that after fifty years of torment, Latvians completely understand exactly what happened to them and how it all happened. Soviet domination was not simply an occupation. The violence in Latvia was multi-faceted, involving the army, the Cheka, and various Party organs. In their own way, all the nationalities living in Latvia were involved. They were exploited in mutual hatred, and also in their own oppression. The overseers of the system of oppression were mainly Russian, but Latvians themselves were involved in the lower adminis-

trative levels. Stalin well understood that the oppressors had to espouse the principle of internationalism. Falsification of evidence and court decisions has been an integral part of the Soviet legal system from its earliest years, when Pēteris Stučka worked out the revolutionary legal system on Lenin's orders in the fall of 1917.

The Soviet legal system gained a new direction in the 1930s. Stučka's class principle ceased to be decisive. Vishinsky's revolutionary justice was turned against the galaxy of old Bolsheviks themselves, and Soviet cadres learned that truth, documentation, and facts had little meaning, were perhaps even useless. The state and the court as the state's representative gave the verdict credibility – if not complete credibility, then at least legal finality.

The workings of the Soviet legal system in Latvia have not yet been documented, but we can already say that, paradoxically, when overall the Soviet regime grew more liberal after Stalin's death, the legal system in Latvia grew more brutal, as shown by the trials of the 18th and 21st Battalions.

An important perception in understanding Soviet repression is that Stalin had successfully taught the Cheka to inflame national hatred. So that neither he nor the Chekists could be accused of lacking internationalism, Stalin never carried out nationally one-sided oppressions.

For example, the Doctors' Plot of 1953 was generally a broad campaign against Soviet Jews, but among those accused and arrested were persons of several other nationalities. Some of the accusers even formed a "Jewish front," headed by Kaganovich in Moscow, who also had colleagues in Riga.

With similar logic, in the Khrushchev era, the Cheka organized a campaign against the Latvians in 1961. It started with the trial of the 18th Battalion, in which members of this police battalion were accused of murdering the Jews of Slonim in August 1942. Although many of the names of the trial personnel, investigators, and court workers are Slavic, there are also Latvian names. The task of propagandizing the trial internationally was given to Latvia's Committee for Cultural Relations with Countrymen Abroad.

This trial also gave an excuse to write the pamphlet *Kas ir Daugavas Vanagi?* ("What are the Daugava's Hawks?"), as a result of which Western prosecutors started to hunt for Latvian "war criminals." On the basis of this fabricated publication, investigations were instigated against those who warranted it, and also those who did not, for example, Vilis Hāznerns and others, who were accused and held in suspicion un-warrantedly.

The history of the 18th Police Battalion

The 18th Battalion was completely formed in January 1942. Per battalion order No. 121, it left Rīga for Minsk on May 4, 1942, under Captain Fridrichs Rubenis. The battalion had 430 men; staff – 42, 1st company – 109, 2nd company – 139, 3rd company – 140. The German liaison officer, the one who ultimately commanded the battalion, was first Captain Sichert, and from July 27, Captain Egon Erzum, a Baltic German.

In Minsk, the battalion settled into barracks that had been used by the Red Army artillery. The battalion's movements and actions in Belorussia are not particularly secret, as they can be detailed day by day from the battalion's orders, available in the Hoover Institution archives. In August 1942 the battalion arrived in Slonim, where it stayed four days. It left Slonim on August 22. The Soviet organs did not make use of these basic documents in the trial, even though they are freely accessible.

The fate of the Slonim Jews

At the beginning of the German occupation in July 1941, there were about 22,000 Jews in Slonim, among them many wealthy Jews from occupied Poland. On July 4, 1941, 1,255 Jews were shot in Slonim, and on November 14, 1941, 10,000 were shot. In December 1941, a ghetto was created in the city, also for Jews from the surrounding area. The third wave of murder, which killed 10,000 ghetto inhabitants, started in June 1942 and continued until July 15. On August 20, 400 more persons were shot, and in December, all the rest of the Jewish inhabitants of Slonim. (See *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, 1989).

More details are found in Dr. Noah Kaplinskis' essay *Pinkas Slonim*, v. 2, pp. 20-50, Tel Aviv, 1962; ed. K. Lichtenstein (in Hebrew). Kaplinskis makes no mention of the presence of Latvians at the shootings of August 20.

Today, we can conclude that if members of the 18th Battalion took part in the shooting of Slonim's Jews, then that could have happened only on August 20.

Before the court documents were publicly available, the world learned of this trial from the pamphlet of lies *Kas ir Daugavas Vanagi?* Published in Rīga in 1962, it is a product of the Cheka's organs, written by Pauls Ducmanis. Among other things, Ducmanis writes:

At the beginning of the summer of 1942, German security police (SD) chiefs gave it (Slonim) to the aforementioned 18th Battalion

to guard. The first work done there by the guards was the liquidation of the Slonim ghetto.

Although in places Ducmanis goes beyond the information to be found in the trial documents, the pamphlet clearly demonstrates the overall nature of the trial's accusations.

The short and simple information given by Kaplinskis refutes several basic tenets of Ducmanis' version. If the SD had given the city of Slonim into the hands of the 18th Battalion, Kaplinskis would not have been able to let this pass unmentioned.

Also, if the 18th Battalion had carried out the transporting, shooting, and guarding of the Jews, as stated in the trial's conclusion, then that too would have been mentioned in Kaplinskis' version.

Kaplinskis does not fail to mention Arājs men in all earlier shooting incidents in which they participated. The number of victims mentioned by Kaplinskis, 400 persons shot on August 20, completely changes the scope of the actions referred to in the accusations.

After fleeing to the West, Imants Lešinskis, a former Chekist and eyewitness at the trial of the 18th Battalion, wrote about the trial in his memoirs *Kalpības gadi (Years of Servitude)*. He considered it to be one of the most widespread campaigns by Soviet organs to slander Latvian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Belorussian, and Ukrainian nationalists and turn them into Fascists and murderers:

The moral of it was Leninistically simple: if you were a nationalist, then all you have ever done is perpetrate war crimes and crimes against humanity punishable by death. [...]

As with many things in Soviet history, the unmasking and bringing to court of "war criminals" was not related to discovering the truth or following the precepts of law, but only to considerations of foreign policy. In this case, the trials marked the use of so-called "cultural" relations with non-Russian exiles in the free world. From the Cheka's point of view, it was necessary to "prove" that Latvian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Belorussian, Ukrainian, and Northern Caucasian nationalism was identical with Hitlerism, anti-Semitism and inhumanity in order to split the nationalist exiles by dividing them into two categories – "war criminals" and "confused countrymen abroad." Each of the mentioned "republics" had to find some "war criminals" of its own. The initiators and organizers of the campaign sat in the CPSU Politburo and USSR KGB. With regards to the Latvian KGB, the local blood-stained zealots

could not wait to “exceed the plan” in fulfilling the directive from the “center.”

The trial of the 18th Battalion

The trial of the 18th Battalion, KGB Trial Archive Nr. 44109, lasted five weeks, from March 8 to April 12, 1961. The following persons were accused and sentenced:

Bumbērs, Jānis. 1917. High school education. Officer. Death.
 Lemešonoks-Eglājs, Francis. 1914. High school education. Officer. Death.
 Lapiņš, Osvalds. 1914. High school education. Officer. Death.
 Vilnis, Edgars. 1912. 4th grade education. Death.
 Lūsis, Jevgenijs. 1903. High school education. Death.
 Ogriņš, Voldemārs. 1922. 7th grade education. 15 years.
 Šķetars, Eduards. 1917. 6th grade education. 15 years.
 Širmachers, Voldemārs. 1918. 4th grade education. 15 years.
 Zlamets, Jāzepts. 1906. High school education. 15 years.

Judge: A. Zašcirinskis. Prosecutor: Stalidzāns. Investigators: Andrejevs, Vītols, Vēvers.

Translator: Kofanova. Secretary: V. Šalkonis. Counsel: Viktorova, Buliņa, Baško, Ūdre. Assistants: O. Ozoliņš, G. Zemvalds.

In 1991, on my request, the chairman of the Latvian Supreme Council, Anatolijs Gorbunovs, recommended that Prosecutor Jānis Skrastiņš review the 18th Battalion's case. In his answer, Skrastiņš gave me the opportunity to see the documents of the case. After returning to America, I wrote my conclusions on the case to Prosecutor Skrastiņš:

July 1992

First I would like to thank you for letting me look through the 18th Battalion's files, which I did in May of this year. I still do not have the slightest doubt that the nine members of the 18th Battalion were sentenced for political, not legal, reasons, and that it was a Soviet style trial with coached and forced testimony.

My comments are general:

1. Even though the trial mentioned several “criminal” events to which the defendants were alleged to have been accessories, the main event, for which five of the defendants were sentenced to

death, was accusations of participation in the shooting of the Slonim Jews.

2. The testimony gathered by the Soviet court against the members of the 18th Battalion was too contradictory to by itself lead to the verdict reached by the court.

3. The trial lacked that which we could call "objective" documentary evidence. The trial consisted of self-incriminations and testimony from other members of the battalion, who themselves should be sitting on the defendants' bench if everything happened the way they testified.

4. The crime in Slonim has no date. The court did not even try to determine the date of the crime.

5. The description of the shooting of the Jews in the trial differs in many ways from how such shootings actually took place.

From the sentencing document, it follows that the action's main organizers and leaders of the shooting were the member of the 18th Battalion. That does not accord with German practice. Even Latvian SD units did not have the right to carry out shooting actions against Jews without German leadership. It is unbelievable that an auxiliary police battalion would have been given an order to shoot people on its own initiative. That action could not have taken place without the presence and leadership of the SD. It must be remembered that the German security police was a bureaucratic institution that did not allow improvisation on that level.

6. Some of the testimony implies that the shooting was at least for a time led by one of the 18th Battalion's sergeants.

7. The description of the shooting in the court's sentencing document contradicts the testimony given during the trial in many ways. From one series of statements, it follows that the victims were lined up by the side of the pit and then fell into the pit, but others testified that the persons were driven into the pit and shot from above. Both methods might have been used, but not in one and the same action. The court should have arrived at a concrete description of the crime, and should have considered and weighed the contradictory evidence.

8. Jānis Bumbērs and Edgars Vilnis were sentenced to death for allegedly simply going to the edge of the pit, out of turn, and shooting into the pit at already half-dead people. In the German concept of order, it is unthinkable that someone from the side could step to the pit and start shooting. This type of testimony is suspi-

cious even if the shooters themselves “confessed” to it. In the shooting of the Jews, there were special persons designated to fire “mercy” shots, but that was also a strictly ordered procedure. Even if one accepts that some members of the 18th Battalion were designated to guard the place of the shooting, it does not mean that one of them could simply walk up to the pit and start shooting.

9. One of the court’s main findings was that members of the 18th Battalion had volunteered for the shooting action. In this regard, most of the testimony is not only contradictory, but even refutes the idea that participation was voluntary. It does not follow from the testimony given that participation was voluntary. The evidence on volunteering per se is contradictory, and it is even more contradictory on when they were asked to volunteer and when the men of the 18th Battalion volunteered, if at all, for the action.

10. The most unbelievable part of the evidence and findings relates to “photographing by Edgars Vilnis.” By order, it was forbidden to photograph actions. On June 27, the 18th Battalion received the following order: “By order of the *Chef der Sicherheits-polizei und des SD* [Heydrich] executions (shootings) can be photographed only when ordered by the officer in charge of the action. This paragraph of the order is to be read to all soldiers.”

This paragraph cannot have been unknown to Vilnis, who in private life evidently was a photographer. For disobeying this order, Vilnis himself would have been shot. The officers who would have allowed photography would also have been shot. In some cases, the Germans did photograph the shootings, but they had their own reasons and purposes. It is too surreal to believe that they would have allowed a Latvian to do so and then purportedly play around with the pictures. There is no evidence in the trial showing that Vilnis received an order or permission to take pictures. If he had been ordered to do so, he would have had to turn the pictures over to the Germans.

For these and other reasons, the Soviet court’s verdict in the case of the 18th Battalion should be overturned. At the start of the process of annulment, I would advise that you find the members of the battalion who are still alive and question them. Most importantly, you should find the witnesses who allegedly testified against members of their own battalion and determine if they still

uphold the veracity of their earlier testimony.

The most important witness to find would be Pāvels Valdhelms, from the Jelgava district, Kalnciemā Nr. 37, Apt. 3 (electrician). I think Valdhelms is particularly important because his testimony more than any other corresponds with the description of events in the court's findings. First, I think you could easily find out if Valdhelms was an agent. That alone would suffice to annul the verdict. Even if he is not still alive, perhaps there might be family members who would know how he was prepared for the trial. But Valdhelms was not the only one to testify about the events. It would be important to talk with all the witnesses.

I have had several contacts with Latvia's legal institutions since 1992, but up to now have not gained any positive results. It has been the same for Bērtulis Lapiņš, who has been trying to gain the rehabilitation of his brother Osvalds, slain by the Cheka.

The trial of the 21st Police Battalion

At first it was planned to have one large group trial of the 21st Battalion, but later it was divided into five parts. From the viewpoint of objective testimony, this trial has even less legality than that of the 18th Battalion. The 18th Battalion did actually exist when the offense under consideration took place. It is also believable that on August 20, 1942, when 400 persons were shot in Slonim, the 18th Battalion was stationed there. On the other hand, the 21st Battalion was not yet even formed when the horrific deeds ascribed to it took place. From December 15 to 17, a huge tragedy took place in the Šķēde dunes. During those days, almost 3,000 Liepāja Jews were shot. After Rumbula, it was one of the largest massacres of Jews in Latvia.

Researching the holocaust in Latvia, I came to the realization that although the shootings were brutal, they were not chaotic. They took place according to a carefully worked out system. Persons who wanted to participate in the shooting of Jews would not even be able to get close unless they had been assigned to the planned shooting unit. Heydrich gave the task of exterminating the Jews of Eastern Europe to SD *Einsatzgruppen*, whose leaders directed all the shootings in Latvia. The leaders of the *Einsatzgruppen* organized and chose the shooters. For that purpose, the Latvian *Arāja komanda* (Arājs commando) was formed, and an SD platoon, consisting of a few dozen people, was formed

specifically in Liepāja.

The so-called Erhard Grauel trial took place in Hanover from 1968 to 1971. The defendants were a group of German SD men. The documents of this trial describe the Šķēde shooting in detail. From these accounts, I concluded that three shooting units operated in Šķēde: the Arājs commando, the Liepāja SD guard unit, and a German SD group. The Hanover trial documents do not allow for the possibility that the 21st Battalion was also operating there.

Also, I am almost certain that none of the 21st Battalion defendants were members of these groups, that is, they were not members of the SD. However, neither the indictment nor the trial's investigative reports are sufficiently detailed, because the case is a collective charge against the 21st Battalion as a whole, and the assignation of guilt is connected to the act of joining the 21st Battalion. The battalion's trial took place in 1972 and 1973. Twenty-two persons were sentenced, eight of them to death. The numbers of the trials are 45225, 45232, 45233, 45236, and 45234.

"War crimes" in the Nuremberg definition are different than in the Soviet conception. To understand the fifty years of Soviet occupation, we would have to lift the veil that covers Soviet legal theory and practice relating to war crimes in the Second World War. In doing so, one has to keep in mind that the number and scope of the crimes committed by the Communists themselves are at least as large and as many. Moreover, there is no desire to talk about them.

The debates in Latvia's press about the Konrāds Kalējs case should not have ended when they did. The actions of Valdis Batarags and his mentor Viktors Busse should have been thoroughly analyzed. Busse and Batarags were chief war crimes specialists in the Latvian state prosecutor's office during the 1970s and 1980s respectively. Busse's achievements were Stakhanovitic. Batarags forced those he interrogated into small lies, but the lies produced by Busse were colossal.

The main prosecutor in the 21st Battalion's trials in the 1970s was Busse. By then almost all Latvians with any kinds of ties to the Second World War had already endured Siberia. Nevertheless, starting with Khrushchev's struggle against "nationalists" in 1959, directives from Moscow demanded that Latvian "war criminals" be punished anew. Some were found and sentenced in 1960. But this was not enough. Therefore, starting in 1960, "war criminal" cases were simply fabricated. In 1972, the state prosecutor's office and the Cheka organized the large case against the 21st Battalion. After gathering information about the members of

the battalion, the trials started under Busse's leadership. In three of the five trials, the prosecutor was Busse himself. The fourth trial was led by E. Romoshova, and the fifth by P. Paukšēns. The first trial took place in July 1972, the last in September 1973.

The judges in the case were J. Vilders, V. Laiviņš, F. Jaunbelzējs, F. Kušners, and U. Krastiņš. Investigators were Captain Bērziņš, VDK (*Valsts drošības komiteja*, Committee for State Security) Major Dembrovskis, Colonel Izvestny, Colonel Lukaševičs, Captain Naglis, Lieutenant-Colonel Rekšņa, Rēvalds, Major Bravackis, Major Nevickis, Major-General Avdyukevich.

Busse achieved something that would stupefy Western lawyers and judges, something that they would think absolutely impossible to do. He succeeded in getting not only all of the defendants, but also all of the witnesses, more than two dozen people, to lie openly in court. It is difficult enough to get even one person to lie against his will and incriminate himself. It is therefore hard to describe Prosecutor Busse's "achievements" – there simply are no suitable words. Busse's achievements deserve to be placed besides Vishinsky's achievements in the large show trials of the 1930s.

Busse got all those interrogated and accused to testify that they joined the 21st Battalion in September 1941, even though the battalion was not formed until February 1942. The difference in time is crucial. Between September and February is December, the month that the mass shooting of Jews took place in the Šķēde dunes by Liepāja. If Prosecutor Busse had not succeeded in getting all those interrogated to lie, then it would not have been possible to accuse and try the members of the 21st Battalion (or the battalion itself) for shooting Jews on the Šķēde coast. And precisely this is the only issue common to all five trials, and the main one of each.

There are no disagreements as to when the 21st Battalion was actually formed. That is a clearly known and indisputably fixed fact. In September 1941, there were no plans or even any intentions of forming a police battalion. The Red Army was still in retreat, with the Germans in pursuit. The Germans had no need as yet for any Latvian police battalions. The military situation changed suddenly in December 1941, with Zhukov's breakthrough in the Moscow front. The rhythms themselves of the Eastern front's ebb and flow dictate the logical time for the formation of the Latvian police battalions.

Here it is necessary to digress a little. The small core of the Latvian police or *Schutzmann* battalions was being formed under the wing of the Riga auxiliary police, first under Lieutenant-Colonel Veiss, then under

Lieutenant-Colonel Osis. In the fall of 1941, three companies of the so-called “closed units” were training at the Abrene Street barracks, in preparation for battle against the Bolsheviks. In October these companies were combined into a battalion. On October 22, under the leadership of Colonel Mangulis, the battalion left for the region of Staraya Russa, mainly to fight partisans. Until January 1942, this was the only police fighting unit; it operated under the name “First Latvian Fighting Unit.” It was renamed the 16th Zemgale Battalion only in January 1942.

Thus, considering the logic of numbering, even if there had been perpetrators of violence in Liepāja, the 21st Battalion could not have existed in September.

But why did Busse choose precisely September 1941 as the month the battalion was allegedly formed? One reason could be that the subsidiary of the Arājs commando, the Liepāja Latvian SD guard platoon, was established in this month. This platoon’s participation in the December shootings is an irrefutable fact. However, it had no connection with the 21st Battalion. The platoon continued to exist after the battalion left for Krasnoye Selo. It is clear that Busse deliberately tried to mix the SD with the 21st Battalion, and later to tie it to the Latvian Legion. The 21st Battalion was one of the basic units that formed the Legion in 1943.

Of the twenty-two defendants, Busse sentenced eight to death.

The defendants:

Andersons, Kristaps. 1913. 15 years	Pāvelkopa, Rūdolfs. 1903. Death
Bārs, Pēteris. 1909. Death	Pāvelsons, Jānis. 1911. 15 years
Bibis, Kārlis. 1920. 15 years	Poga, Alfreds. 1921. 15 years
Caune, Ruports. 1919. Death	Pūce, Konstantīns. 1922. 15 years
Dinters, Kārlis. 1904. Death	Skuja, Miķelis. 1916. Death
Endols, Kārlis. 1909. 15 years	Smaģis, Miķelis. 1912. 15 years
Klammers, Aleksandrs. 1911. Death	Smilkte, Jēkabs. 1909. 15 years
Koppi, Teodors. 1919. Death	Štibelis, Juris. 1920. 15 years
Krikmanis, Gunārs. 1922. Death	Tida, Jānis. 1921. 15 years
Kļava, Fricis. 1915. 15 years	Vecvagars, Fricis. 1917. 15 years
Ķepars, Alfreds. 1918. 15 years	Vecvagars, Nikolajs. 1910. 15 years

The question in this case is larger than just the guilt or innocence of these twenty-two men. At issue here is whether or not the legal institutions of free Latvia can and want to distance themselves from the former regime.

My recommendations to settle this matter are as follows:

1. Investigate Busse's complicity and that of every other member of the court in the creation of this pack of lies, and, if necessary, bring those guilty to trial.

2. Review the cases of the twenty-two convicted men, including a thorough examination of the documentation, to see if there is any reason to uphold the pre-arranged sentences against the individuals and against the 21st Battalion as a whole.

Conclusion

These trials were based on two kinds of evidence: self-incrimination and testimony from other members of the battalion. Although these statements of evidence would not stand up in a Western court of law, they gain a certain credibility in their interaction with one another. Knowing how Soviet law was practiced, there can be no doubt that we are dealing here with prepared witnesses and defendants.

Self-accusation gave credibility, especially among journalists and intellectuals, to the Stalin trials in the 1930s. *New York Times* correspondent Walter Duranty wrote with particular enthusiasm about the credibility of these trials. How was it possible to get so many people to lie against themselves? The situation is incomprehensible to those who have not lived under the Soviet system. Explication would require help from those who have experienced Soviet harshness. Let us hope that someone from the Soviet organs themselves will testify about the system as a whole and specifically about the preparation of court cases.

Reading through the documents of these trials, I gained the impression that the court's main argument leading to the desired verdict was the testimony of other members of the battalion. The self-accusations were very diverse, even chaotic. The defendants often admitted to a general crime, but denied specific accusations. All servants of the law in Latvia, of the old or new regime, who defend the correctness of the 18th and 21st Battalions' Soviet trials, should have to answer the question: why was such a small group selected to be sentenced and shot for a crime that was allegedly collective?

The Ansbach Regional Court in Germany investigated the role of the 18th Battalion's liaison officer, Egon Erzum, a Baltic German, in the shooting of Jews. The "documents" provided by the Cheka did not stand up to examination by a free court, and the case was dismissed for lack of evidence.

In the 21st Battalion's trial folders, we see not only a lack of objective facts, but also a deliberate avoidance of documentary evidence, even a flight therefrom. Nothing joins Viktors Busse's, E. Romoshova's, and P. Paukšēns' trials to Vishinsky's stagings of the 1930s more than the refusal to find out the basic facts of the crime's location, time, and participants. The Party is all-powerful, and, if necessary, uses even legal institutions to commit murder.

Busse and his colleagues could maintain that there was proof, there were testimonies and self-accusations. But what if the self-accusations contradict each other and contradict objective documents of the time? What then?

Democratic Latvia's higher courts will have to deal with this situation someday. The prosecutors did not have to rely on literature put out by nationalist emigrants; without too much effort they could have used the original documents. Organs that "knew everything" could not have been ignorant of the fact that the 21st Battalion's basic documents, personnel rosters, and daily orders, are in the Hoover Institution archives in Stanford, California. If California was too far away, it would still have been possible to document the origin of the 21st Battalion right there in Latvia, in the Misiņš Library in Rīga, which holds the newspaper *Kurzemes vārds*, issued during the German occupation. Looking through the September and December issues of 1941, the researcher will find nothing about battalions. But, coming to the issues of February 1942, there is more information about the battalion's creation than one knows what to do with. Starting with the first page of the February 13 issue, everyone can read General Jekeln's appeal in German and Latvian. He urges Latvians to join the police service "to be able to do all that is necessary for the well-being of your people."

The clerks of prosecutors Busse, Romashova, and Paukšēns, looking through the newspaper, could not but have noticed also the three appeals to join the police battalions. It would have been even harder not to see the widespread reporting on how recruitment, which continued until May, was going. The many exhortations in *Kurzemes vārds* attest to the fact that voluntary enlistment was slow. Newspaper extracts attest that Latvians did not trust the Germans very much.

The February 14 issue informs readers of enlistment conditions and pay rates. The "volunteer" was obligated only until December 31, 1942, at which time he could supposedly go home. This promise was unilaterally broken by the Germans, and soldiers were not allowed to go home. From that we can deduce that starting in January 1943, battalion members

could no longer be considered “volunteers.”

If the Soviet prosecutors and judges had wanted to be fair and true to their legal oath, if they had wanted to try the accused on documentary evidence, they would have been able to find all this and more not only in *Kurzemes vārds*, but also in other Latvian and German publications.

Looking back on the first stages of the 21st Battalion through the prism of time, here and there we can see stupidity and overbearing demagoguery, but nothing criminal. The Šķēde massacre was already an event of the past.

Going through the folders of these fraudulent trials, one is left with the feeling that the prosecutor's office of the Latvian SSR had not been given an order to find and sentence the real criminals. Just after the war, a special VDK group gathered information about members of the SD. The SD men were identified and sentenced right after the war, and some, Boris Kinstlers for instance, were given a job with the organs. Evidently the order to the prosecutor's office was to use its resources to tie the 21st Battalion to the Šķēde massacre and decree capital punishment, ignoring documentary evidence. In other words, the court system was to be turned against the entire Latvian people. Busse's group “exceeded the plan” in carrying out their task: eight Latvians were put to death with no documentary evidence or proof.

Thinking about the trial of the 21st Battalion, I cannot escape the question: what would American courts do to Busse and his colleagues today? They would without doubt be tried for murder and the use of juridical institutions for criminal ends. It is first degree murder, a planned and deliberate crime. The documents were easily accessible, but not used.

It seems that it will not be easy to persuade the Latvian government to review these cases. Latvia's internal and international situations are not of the easiest. Reviewing cases calls for a lot of hard work, determination, and resources. Nevertheless, this burden of historical injustice cannot lie on the shoulders of the Latvian people forever. Returning to independence also means returning to standards of ethics and truth. The task of every truly democratic state's legal system is to distinguish between the innocent and the guilty. In doing so, Latvia would finally have the opportunity to show to its inhabitants, to the Russians, and to the world the crimes that the “evil empire” committed in the Baltics in the years of occupation. At the same time, it would be a major step in never again allowing Soviet power and legal systems to return to Latvia.



Gunārs Astra

LAST WORDS

The trial of Gunārs Freimanis and Gunārs Astra before the Latvian SSR Supreme Court in Riga started on December 1, 1983, and lasted until December 19. The chief judge was Jānis Krūmiņš, the prosecutor was Valdis Batarags, and the defense attorney was Beljānis. The prosecutor asked that Gunārs Astra be declared an especially dangerous recidivist and sentenced according to Paragraph 65 Part 2 of the LSSR Criminal Code to seven years' deprivation of freedom and incarceration in a special regime correction work camp. In addition, he asked for a supplementary punishment of up to five years' deportation.

The court's sentences for both of the accused was handed down on December 19, 1983. It took from 2:00 until 5:00 in the afternoon to read the court's findings, which encompassed 51 typewritten pages. Freimanis' sentence was somewhat lighter than that asked for by the prosecutor (he received four years' deprivation of freedom in a strict regime correction work camp and two years' deportation), but Astra's sentence was the full amount asked for.

As Astra later told his relatives and friends, he wrote Last Words the day before the sentencing. The original was ten pages long, but he lost one page during the court session. In the official court record, Last Words was distorted and shortened. The original version was recorded during the court session by Juris Ziemelis and Alfrēds Stinkurs and broadcast a few days later on Radio Free Europe and Voice of America.

* * *

I was born at a time when childhood was hard but full of fateful events. I grew up during that time, and learned to analyze, compare, contrast, and draw the appropriate conclusions.

I started work early. At age 25 I was already deputy manager of the largest department in the VEF factory, which has about 2,000 people. My "social base" was "correct." Therefore, they promoted and trusted me, and I came to know the insiders' rooms of administrative and ideological leadership organizations. They tried to get me to join the

Communist Party, openly stating that before further promotions I had to “shape up politically.”

I had to take part in back-room discussions where people and events were openly discussed, where a spade was called a spade. Positions were divided up and people picked for them, people who were later supposedly elected by the workers themselves. “Well, let’s let this one through ... let Bunte be the foreman, even if he is one of those Latvians.”

My department and I, for being the best, were ceremoniously honored in the Opera Theater on the 40th anniversary of the St. Petersburg revolution. But I reached the 50th anniversary in less ceremonious surroundings, in the cellars of the Cheka in Saransk, the capital of the Mordovian ASSR.

As noted by my defense attorney, I am a Latvian person, I would even dare say a Latvian. And not just a Rigan, as lately we are being called in the central Soviet radio, press, and television.

It is not an accident and it is not a matter of indifference that our beautiful and rich native language is pushed out of meetings, offices, institutions, slogans, that it is ever more impoverished and distorted.

I feel hurt and degraded when I see that behind the huge and bright letters high on the facade – Straume factory, or above the roof of VEF and RER, there is only Russianism – orders, decrees, informational signs, slogans, language, technical documentation, everything is in Russian.

I feel hurt and degraded when I consider that my native language has to retreat to reservations – the Open-Air Museum, some theater stages, some media – and even there it is slowly and inexorably being pushed out by Russian.

I feel hurt and degraded when I consider that the overwhelming majority of Russians born and raised in Latvia do not know and do not want to learn the Latvian language, that for the Russian high school graduate the Latvian language is something to scorn and denigrate, and no examiner requires this language from a Russian student, but knowing the Russian language is absolutely obligatory for a Latvian student.

I feel hurt and degraded when these same Latvian students compensate for their inability to express themselves in their native language by using Russian obscenities.

It makes me sad that Latvian children have to see and hear their bedtime story from Moscow television, as Harijs Misiņš gets only as far as the [Latvian] Radio House, that Latvian children in kindergarten are not taught their golden heritage of Latvian folk songs, that Rīga's Nameja and Aspazijas boulevards, Valdemāra and Vaidavas streets have been

pompously changed to Mayakovska, Padomju [Soviet], Gorky, Yeryomenko, Svedlov, Sergei, Lyulyina and many other names, that Riga's main streets so precisely and compliantly reflect the turnings of time – Alexander, Brīvības [Freedom], Adolf Hitler, Lenin streets. Other names come to mind – Alfred Rozenberg Ring, Herman Goering Ring, von der Goltz Ring, etc.

I become especially sad and angry when I consider that the name “Latvija” [Latvia] is given a decorative, cosmetic use in advertising – the sewing firm *Latvija*, *Latvija* cigarettes, *Latvija* soap (one has to mention that in all these cases they use the capital L, so they are not talking about the fifteenth or sixteenth century, but about the twentieth).

I feel deeply offended and degraded when I have to experience such an arrogant, chauvinistic attitude to my language at every step in public places – in stores, offices, busses, on the streets – in Latvian territory. At best I hear “*Chevo, chevo? Po ruski!*” (“What, what? In Russian!”), at worst, the person looks through me as if I were a window-pane, and then I have the privilege of admiring the back of his head.

Everything mentioned in this regard, and that not mentioned even more so, forces one to ask the question: what is the basis for the formula “with the intent of undermining and weakening Soviet power”? It is clear to everyone who does not want to be blind that the concept Soviet means a thing of a social nature. Everything that I have mentioned and will mention results from a thing of a national nature. Would the terminology used in investigations, accusations, and courts have to be understood as attempts at showing that the Russian nation's unmistakable, oppressive, advancing domination is the realization of Marxism-Leninism? It is not possible to convince me of that. I allow the possibility that the state organs of power act on the formula *sovetskoye - eto ruskoye* (Soviet is Russian) and use the word Soviet as a cover word for the concept Russian.

I have spent a great part of my life among the Russian people and their language, both in prison and at work. My many years of experience have shown that given enough years of domination by the Russian nation, there will be consequences, as I will illustrate with the following examples:

1. In Mordovia, the Mordovians are ashamed to use their native language, they pretend to be Russians.

2. The process of assimilation process for our neighbors the Belorussians has reached such a state that Belorussians do not want to acknowledge themselves to be Belorussians, and the word Belorus has

begun to mean something scorned and degraded.

3. In the former Ukrainian capital city of Kharkov, one of the two former Ukrainian schools was recently closed, and the other is barely holding on. The teachers try to recruit students, but parents want the best for their children and do not want them to attend Ukrainian schools.

I mention only some of the facts clearly known to me from the huge mass of facts that form the historically new human group, the Soviet people.

We are all systematically and unrelentingly habituated to the idea that it is completely natural to write, speak, sing, and think in Russian.

Why do I mention all this? To explain why today I am sitting in the dock instead of in the technocrat seat that was once so completely habitual to me. I have been brought here by love and respect toward my people, and by the violent measures taken to belittle and starve the soul of my people. "The water of the well of truth has long been bitter, mixed with lies, it does not slake my thirst."

On page 21 of the charges against me it states:

In 1981, Astra photographed the text of Agnis Balodis' anti-Soviet book *Baltijas republikas Lielā Tēvijas kara priekšvakarā* (*The Baltic Republics before the Second World War*) and prepared negatives of this book's text.

I would like to mention some documents, citing some from memory, some from the Moscow newspaper *Izvestia*.

1. In the Soviet regime's first decree, *Decree on Peace*, it states that elections that take place in the presence of another country's army are unlawful and their results are not valid.

2. Latvia's Constitution, accepted but never revoked or changed by the Latvian people, states that all questions of state are to be decided by the Saeima, except for one, the question of relinquishing the state's sovereignty. This question can be decided only by a vote of the people.

3. The *Peace Treaty between Latvia and Russia* of August 11, 1920, states that:

In view of the desire expressed by the Latvian people to possess an independent national existence, Russia voluntarily and forever renounces all sovereign rights over the Latvian people and territory. The previous state of subjection of Latvia to Russia shall not entail any obligation to Russia.

4. The *Non-Aggression and Mutual Assistance Pact* concluded on August 23, 1939 between the USSR and Germany. The secret protocols of this pact are cited in the document addressed to the USSR, the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic, and others, and whose text is in criminal case no. 26. The original photocopies of the secret protocol have to be in the hands of the Supreme Court.

I further want to point out these events:

1. On June 17, 1940, Red Army units crossed the Latvian-USSR border, defined in the above-mentioned peace treaty, and entered Latvian territory.

2. On July 21, 1940, a meeting of the Saeima (supposedly this is the one and only Saeima whose work was interrupted by the coup of May 15, 1934, but where are the parties' deputies?) declares the founding of Soviet Latvia.

3. On August 5, 1940, the USSR Supreme Soviet, on deputy's Achumbabayeva's proposal, agrees to the request of the Soviet Latvian delegation to incorporate it into the USSR.

In this regard, there arises a question: what was the legal basis for the Red Army's entering into Latvia on June 17? There is only one answer – none, if one does not regard as such the secret and criminal protocols of the Soviet-German treaty.

Taking into account the above-mentioned documents, the *Decree on Peace*, the *Latvian Constitution*, and the *Latvian-USSR Peace Treaty*, it is necessary to conclude the following:

1. There was no legal basis for the actions of June 17.
2. There was also no legal basis for the actions of July 21.

This is why I chose Agnis Balodis' book, which relates these events precisely and clearly, and from which everything else flows, including this court proceeding. Being a citizen of Latvia with national and democratic convictions, I cannot ignore the aforementioned situations.

If June 17 and July 21 were reversed, i.e., if a Soviet republic had been established in Latvia on June 17 according to the Latvian Constitution, expressing the will of the people, and on July 21 the Latvia's Soviet government had asked the friendly USSR army units for whatever reason to enter Soviet Latvia, I would respect the will of the people and there would be nothing for which to persecute me.

I would like to cite last Saturday's (December 10) *Izvestia*. On page 4 it states:

Aggression is considered to be the invasion or entering of a state's armed forces into the territory of another state, or also any military occupation, even if of a temporary nature, that is the result of such an invasion or entering (Paragraph 3).

No reasons of any kind – political, economic, military or other – can serve to justify aggression

(Paragraph 5. Definition of aggression, UN, 1974).

That same day, December 10, the world celebrated the 35th anniversary of the signing of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, in which it states: "Every person has the right to seek, receive, and distribute information regardless of state boundaries."

As the Soviet government, in whose name I am accused, has affirmed, the USSR has conscientiously fulfilled the requirements of the *Declaration*. If that is so, then why am I being tried? I have done nothing more than exercise my human rights.

In the charges against me are the words "lying fabrications," "slandered USSR policies," "written from anti-Soviet positions."

What could that mean? Any lie should be refuted, if it is worth it. Considering the reactions of the organs, it is worth it. Instead of showing that some information is a lie, i.e., is not information but disinformation, and thereby neutralizing it, the organs of power hide this information, persecute those who have it and distribute it, and thereby inevitably create an atmosphere of sensationalism and excessive curiosity around this information.

It is absolutely necessary for a person as a thinking being to constantly receive information about the objective world, in addition, the more diverse, the better. It has been realized since ancient times that if opposing views are not expressed, how can one choose the best? *Audiat ex altera pars!* ("Listen to the other side!")

Lack of information makes a person incapable of drawing correct conclusions, condemns his thinking to atrophy. If he has no critical thinking, he is degraded, he is an object to manipulate, a toy, a slave. A person has to know in order to be completely convinced of something. He has to know what his opponents say about him and his society, he has to be able to debate the arguments of the opponent, if such arguments exist.

To sum up: my crime is photographing a book, keeping the negatives, and giving three negatives to Freimanis. Translating one article. Showing one book to another person, having several other books. Writing and keeping completely personal works. Recording radio broadcasts and keeping the tapes. For that, I will be sentenced. For that, the state prosecutor has asked that I be declared an especially dangerous recidivist and be incarcerated in a special regime camp for seven years, and in addition be deported for five years, and not to the Crimea. The state prosecutor has outdone himself — at my age and health, seven years in a special regime camp is more than enough to kill me.

Why such harshness? Are my crimes really so serious? No. I did not give detailed or wide-ranging testimony. I did not testify at all, and no person has been arrested or investigated because of me. This cannot be forgiven, and so I am not forgiven. They also cannot forgive me for the fact that here before you I do not abjure my friends or my convictions.

The judge pointed out that I have been sentenced for a “crime against my people and my native land.” This blasphemy requires no refutation. I will just say – “he knows on which side his bread is buttered.”

I believe that this age will disappear like a bad dream. This gives me strength to stand here and breathe. Our people have suffered much and have learned from their suffering, and will survive this dark age also.

I thank my wife and my daughter, my relatives, friends, and well-wishers for their trust and support, and my defense attorney Beljānis for his good intentions. I thank the State judge, who gave me the honor of saying that Andrei Sacharov and I are colleagues sharing the same views, and who splendidly showed his lack of ability.

Thank you for your attention!

“Last Words,” *Latvija Šodien* [*Latvia Today*], 1984.



THE RIBBENTROP-MOLOTOV PACT

Treaty of Non-Aggression Between Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

The Government of the German Reich and the Government of the
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, in view of strengthening the cause

III

DOCUMENTS AND TESTIMONIES

IV. In between Germany and the U. S. S. R. has been the following
agreement:

ARTICLE I

Both High Contracting Parties obligate themselves to abstain from
any act of violence, any aggressive action, and any attack on each other,
either individually or jointly with other powers.

ARTICLE II

Should one of the High Contracting Parties become the object of
hostile action by a third power, the other High Contracting Party
shall in no manner lend its support to this third power.

ARTICLE III

The Governments of the two High Contracting Parties shall in the
future maintain continual contact with one another for the purpose of
consultation in order to exchange information on problems affecting their
common interests.

ARTICLE IV

Neither of the two High Contracting Parties shall participate in any
grouping of powers whatsoever that is directly or indirectly aimed at the
other party.

ARTICLE V

Should disputes or conflicts arise between the High Contracting
Parties over problems of one kind or another, both parties shall settle
these disputes or conflicts peacefully through friendly exchange of
opinion or, if necessary, through the established means of arbitration
commissions.

To sum up: my crime is photographing a book, keeping the negatives, not giving three negatives to Freimane. Translating one article. Showing one book to another person, having several other books. Writing and keeping conspicuously personal works. Recording radio broadcasts and keeping the tapes. For that, I will be sentenced. For that, the state prosecutor has asked that I be declared an especially dangerous criminal and be incarcerated in a special regime camp for seven years, and in addition be deported for five years, and not to the Crimea. The state prosecutor has ordered himself - through another eye and health, seven years in a special regime camp is more than enough to kill me.

DOCUMENTS AND TESTIMONIES

I give detailed testimonies. I did not testify at all, and no person has been arrested or investigated because of me. This cannot be forgiven, and so I am not forgiven. They also cannot forgive me for the fact that here before you I do not absolve my friends or my convictions.

The judge pointed out that I have been sentenced for a "crime against my people and my native land." This blasphemy requires no retaliation. I will just say - "he knows on which side his bread is buttered."

I believe that this age will disappear like a bad dream. This gives me strength to stand here and breathe. Our people have suffered much and have learned from their suffering, and will survive this dark age also.

I thank my wife and my daughter, my relatives, friends, and well-wishers for their trust and support, and my defense attorney Boljais for his good intentions. I thank the State judge, who gave me the honor of saying that Andrei Sacharov and I are colleagues sharing the same views, and who splendidly showed his lack of ability.

Thank you for your attention!

"Last Words," *Latvian Society (Latvian Today)*, 1984.

THE RIBBENTROP-MOLOTOV PACT

Treaty of Non-Agreession Between Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

The Government of the German Reich and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics desirous of strengthening the cause of peace between Germany and the U.S.S.R., and proceeding from the fundamental provisions of the Neutrality Agreement concluded in April 1926 between Germany and the U. S. S. R., have reached the following agreement:

ARTICLE I

Both High Contracting Parties obligate themselves to desist from any act of violence, any aggressive action, and any attack on each other, either individually or jointly with other powers.

ARTICLE II

Should one of the High Contracting Parties become the object of belligerent action by a third power, the other High Contracting Party shall in no manner lend its support to this third power.

ARTICLE III

The Governments of the two High Contracting Parties shall in the future maintain continual contact with one another for the purpose of consultation in order to exchange information on problems affecting their common interests.

ARTICLE IV

Neither of the two High Contracting Parties shall participate in any grouping of powers whatsoever that is directly or indirectly aimed at the other party.

ARTICLE V

Should disputes or conflicts arise between the High Contracting Parties over problems of one kind or another, both parties shall settle these disputes or conflicts exclusively through friendly exchange of opinion or, if necessary, through the establishment of arbitration commissions.

ARTICLE VI

The present treaty is concluded for a period of ten years, with the proviso that, in so far as one of the High Contracting Parties does not denounce it one year prior to the expiration of this period, the validity of this treaty shall automatically be extended for another five years.

ARTICLE VII

The present treaty shall be ratified within the shortest possible time. The ratifications shall be exchanged in Berlin. The agreement shall enter into force as soon as it is signed. Done in duplicate, in the German and Russian languages.

Moscow, August 23, 1939

For the Government of the
German Reich: *V. Ribbentrop*

With full power of the Govern-
ment of the U.S.S.R.: *V. Molotov*



SECRET ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL

On the occasion of the signature of the Nonaggression Pact between the German Reich and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics the undersigned plenipotentiaries of each of the two parties discussed in strictly confidential conversations the question of the boundary of their respective spheres of influence in Eastern Europe. These conversations led to the following conclusions:

1. In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement in the areas belonging to the Baltic States (**Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania**), the northern boundary of Lithuania shall represent the boundary of the spheres of influence of Germany and the U.S.S.R. In this connection the interest of Lithuania in the Vilna area is recognized by each party.

2. In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement of the areas belonging to the Polish state the spheres of influence of Germany and the U.S.S.R. shall be bounded approximately by the line of the rivers Narew, Vistula, and San.

The question of whether the interests of both make desirable the maintenance of an independent Polish state and how such a state should be bounded can only be definitely determined in the course of further political developments.

In any event both Governments will resolve this question by means of a friendly agreement.

3. With regard to Southeastern Europe attention is called by the Soviet side to its interest in Bessarabia. The German side declares its complete political disinterestedness in these areas.

4. This protocol shall be treated by both parties as strictly secret.

Moscow, August 23, 1939

For the Government
of the German Reich:
V. Ribbentrop

Plenipotentiary of the
Government of the U.S.S.R.:
V. Molotov



SECRET SUPPLEMENTARY PROTOCOL

The undersigned Plenipotentiaries declare the agreement of the Government of the German Reich and the Government of the U.S.S.R. upon the following:

The Secret supplementary Protocol signed on August 23, 1939, shall be amended in item 1 to the effect that the territory of the Lithuanian state falls to the sphere of influence of the U.S.S.R., while, on the other hand, the province of Lublin and parts of the province of Warsaw fall to the sphere of influence of Germany (cf. the map attached to the Boundary and Friendship Treaty signed today). As soon as the Government of the U.S.S.R. shall take special measures on Lithuanian territory to protect its interests, the present German-Lithuanian border, for the purpose of a natural and simple boundary delineation, shall be rectified in such a way that the Lithuanian territory situated to the southwest of the line marked on the attached map should fall to Germany.

Further it is declared that the economic agreements now in force between Germany and Lithuania shall not be affected by the measures of the Soviet Union referred to above.

Moscow, September 28, 1939

For the Government
of the German Reich:
V. Ribbentrop

With full power of the
Government of the U.S.S.R.:
V. Molotov



SECRET PROTOCOL

The German Ambassador, Count von der Schulenburg, Plenipotentiary of the Government of the German Reich, on the one hand, and the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., V. M. Molotov, Plenipotentiary of the Government of the U.S.S.R., on the other hand, have agreed upon the following:

1. The Government of the German Reich renounces its claim to the strip of Lithuanian territory which is mentioned in the Secret Supplementary Protocol of September 28, 1939 and which has been marked on the map attached to this Protocol;

2. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is prepared to compensate the Government of the German Reich for the territory mentioned in Point 1 of this Protocol by paying 7,500,000 gold dollars or 31,500,000 Reichsmarks to Germany.

The amount of 31,5 million Reichsmarks will be paid by the Government of the U.S.S.R. in the following manner: one-eighth, that is, 3,937,500 Reichsmarks, in non-ferrous metal deliveries within three months after the signing of this Protocol, the remaining seven-eighth, or 27,562,500 Reichsmarks, in gold by deduction from the German gold payments which Germany is to make by February 11, 1941 in accordance with the correspondence exchanged between the Chairman of the German Economic Delegation, Dr. Schnurre, and the People's Commissar for Foreign Trade of the U.S.S.R., Herr A. I. Mikoyan, in connection with the "Agreement of January 10, 1941 concerning reciprocal deliveries in the second treaty period on the basis of the Economic Agreement between the German Reich and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of February 11, 1940."

3. This Protocol has been executed in two originals in the German language and two originals in the Russian language and shall become effective immediately upon signature.

Moscow, January 10, 1941

For the Government
of the German Reich:
Schulenburg
(Seal)

By authority of the
Government of the U.S.S.R.:
V. Molotov
(Seal)

SOVIET RUSSIA'S ULTIMATUM TO LATVIA

On June 16, 1940, Molotov, president of the Soviet of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union, delivered to the Latvian Minister in Moscow Fr. Kociņš the following ultimatum addressed to the Latvian Government:

On the basis of the material of facts at the disposal of the Soviet Government and also of the exchange of views which recently took place in Moscow between President Molotov of the Soviet of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union and Prime Minister Merkis of Lithuania, the Soviet Government considers it assured that not only has the Latvian Government failed to liquidate the military alliance with Estonia which was created before the conclusion of the Latvian-Soviet mutual assistance pact and was aimed against the Soviet Union, but has even extended this alliance by enticing into it Lithuania and is attempting to include in it also Finland. Until the conclusion of the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance in the fall of 1939 the Soviet Government could view casually the existence of such military alliance, although as a matter of fact it was contrary to the pact of non-aggression previously signed between the Soviet Union and Latvia. But after the conclusion of the pact of mutual assistance the Soviet Government considers the existence of the military alliance between Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania and aimed against the Soviet Union not only unpermissible and unbearable, but also seriously dangerous and menacing to the security of the frontiers of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Government reckoned upon the withdrawal of Latvia from the military alliance with the other Baltic States after the conclusion of the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance and that in this manner the military alliance would be abolished. Instead Latvia together with the other Baltic States has acted to revive and expand the above-mentioned military alliance, to which testify such facts as the conversation of the two secret conferences of the three Baltic States in December, 1939, and March, 1940, in order to develop formally the expanded military alliance with Estonia and Lithuania, the enhancement of relations between the general

staffs of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania secretly from the Soviet Union, the creation in February, 1940, of a special press organ of the military Baltic entente - the 'Revue Baltique,' which is published in Tallinn in English, French and German, etc.

All these facts go to show that the Latvian Government has grossly violated the Latvian-Soviet mutual Assistance Pact, which forbids both parties 'to conclude any unions whatsoever or to participate in coalitions which would be directed against one of the contracting parties' (Article 4 of the treaty). This gross violation of the Latvian-Soviet mutual assistance pact on the part of the Latvian Government takes place at a time when the Soviet Union has conducted and continues to conduct a supremely favourable and definitely pro-Latvian policy, scrupulously observing all the requirements of the Latvian-Soviet mutual assistance pact. The Soviet Government finds that it can no longer suffer such a state of affairs.

The Soviet Government considers the following completely indispensable and not to be postponed: 1) the establishment in Latvia immediately of a government capable of and ready to ensure the honest execution of the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance; 2) to ensure without delay the free entry of Soviet troops into Latvian territory, in order to place them in the most important centers of Latvia in such numbers as to secure the possibility of realizing the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance and to avoid possible provocative acts against Soviet garrisons in Latvia.

The Soviet Government considers compliance with this demand to be the elementary stipulation without which it is impossible to achieve the honest and loyal execution of the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance."

Source: *Valdības Vēstnesis* [The Government Messenger], 17 June 1940. Latvian-Russian Relations. Documents, Compiled by Dr. Alfreds Bilmanis. Publ. by The Latvian Legation, Washington, D. C. 1944, p. 202-203.

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 Vītoliņš on contemporary Latvian music; and one by J. Kadilis on Latvian literature.

Source: 1940 god v Estonii: Dokumenti i materiali. Tallinn: Olion (1989), pp. 100-101.

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* [The Government Messenger] on 17 June and by other newspapers on subsequent days.

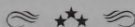
The TASS report did not include the last paragraph of the announcement, which stated:

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 time frame will be considered to be a refusal to comply with the demands of the Soviet Union.

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.

(Translated from the Russian and taken from a publication of the document in *Polpredi soobščajut*....p. 387).



**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 festival, 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.



Agnis Balodis

THE EFFORTS OF BALTIC DIPLOMATS IN 1940 AND 1941

Latvia's ministers overseas at first loyally respected the new government's decrees, believing that Ulmanis did in fact still hold power in Latvia. Thus on July 25, 1940, a press bulletin issued by the Latvian Embassy in Washington stated:

Regarding the rumors expressed in the foreign press, it has to be firmly emphasized that the new regime, even though friendly to the Soviet Union, is not at all Communistic and that absolutely no one in the government is a Communist.

But the Latvian minister in Washington, Dr. Alfrēds Bīlmanis, soon had to change his stand as increasingly disturbing news came from Latvia, portending completely different conditions. In an official pronouncement of July 13 he detailed the reality of the planned elections and, referencing the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, declared them to be illegal. In a longer memorandum dated July 21, Bīlmanis characterized Latvia as the victim of unprovoked aggression. On July 23 Latvia's chargé de affaires in Argentina and Brazil, Dr. Pēteris Oliņš, submitted a protest about the events in Latvia and the role of the USSR therein. Kārlis Zariņš, the envoy in Britain, also protested to the British Foreign Office.

On July 15 Loy Henderson, deputy chief of the European section of the Department of State, wrote a memorandum to the US government concerning Bīlmanis' request to safeguard the assets of Latvia and its citizens in the United States against USSR attempts to appropriate them, stating:

The United States cannot have one policy towards Czechoslovakia, Denmark, and German-occupied Poland, and another towards Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Finland. If the United States desires to disavow aggression, regardless of who commits it, then it cannot close its eyes to the fact that the Soviet Union is committing aggression against its neighbors.... The United States Treasury Department therefore has decided to freeze all Latvian, Estonian, and Lithuanian assets in the United States as of July 15, 1940.

This greatly irritated Molotov, who in a long and irate note dated July 20, 1940, condemned this "illegal action" and threatened that the United

States was responsible for all losses incurred by the USSR, as the USSR had bought these gold and currency collections from the Baltic states' governments. On August 9, 1940, the US Department of State denied all of the Soviet Union's accusations and demands in a direct and sharply-worded note. All subsequent Soviet attempts to gain these assets were also unsuccessful.

Bilmanis's actions greatly displeased the Soviet government, and on July 29, 1940, the Cabinet asked Kirchenšteins to remove Bilmanis from his post for disciplinary violations. A similar resolution was passed concerning Kārlis Zariņš, the envoy in London. The next day even stronger measures were taken, depriving them of Latvian citizenship and confiscating their possessions. The announcement in the official gazette *Valdības Vēstnesis* ended with the statement that both envoys were proscribed because of high treason. However, the Kirchenšteins government never made known any specific accusations.

On July 23, 1940, the acting United States Secretary of State, Sumner Welles, issued the following statement relating to the incorporation of the Baltic states:

During these past few days the devious processes whereunder the political independence and territorial integrity of the three small Baltic republics — Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania — were to be deliberately annihilated by one of their more powerful neighbors, have been rapidly drawing to their conclusion.

From the day when the peoples of these republics first gained their independent and democratic form of government the people of the United States have watched their admirable progress in self-government with deep and sympathetic interest.

The policy of this Government is universally known. The people of the United States are opposed to predatory activities no matter whether they are carried on by the use of force or by the threat of force. They are likewise opposed to any form of intervention on the part of one state, however powerful, in the domestic concerns of any other sovereign state, however weak.

These principles constitute the very foundations upon which the existing relationship between the 21 sovereign republics of the New World rests.

The United States will continue to stand by these principles, because of the conviction of the American people that unless the doctrine in which these principles are inherent once again governs the relations between nations, the rule of reason, of jus-

tice, and of law — in other words, the basis of modern civilization itself — cannot be preserved.

The Soviet Union's role in this aggression, as well as its duplicitous actions and gross violations of Latvia's laws and Constitution, was best described by Bilmanis in his declaration after Latvia's incorporation into the USSR:

The Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has proclaimed, on August 6, 1940, the incorporation of the Republic of Latvia into the Soviet Union. The Latvian Minister considers this act to be an outrageous infringement of international law, practice and morals and he solemnly protests against this violation of Latvia's integrity.

Although the USSR has attempted to give a semblance of legality to the proceedings, a glance at the Constitution of Latvia shows that this "legality" is nothing but a flimsy veil to cover the annihilation of the independence of a weaker country by brutal force. Article One of the Constitution of Latvia states that

"1. Latvia is an independent democratic republic."

Article Seventy-six and Seventy-seven of the Constitution further state that

"76. The Saeima (Parliament) may amend the Constitution in sessions in which at least two-thirds of the members of the Saeima participate. Amendments shall be adopted in three readings by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the votes of the deputies present."

"77. Should the Saeima amend Articles One, Two, Three or Six of the Constitution, such amendments to attain legal force shall be referred to a national referendum."

It is well known that no referendum was carried out in Latvia and that even the Saeima elections were illegal, only one party being permitted to run. Moreover, no referendum or plebiscite could have been carried out in the presence of the huge military forces of the Soviet Union occupying Latvia. Thus the action of the USSR and of the Latvian puppet Saeima in incorporating the Republic of Latvia into the Soviet Union does not have the slightest constitutional legality.

Dr. Alfred Bilmanis, Latvian Minister, Washington, D.C.

Source: *Baltijas diplomātu cīņa 1940. un 1941. gadā*. Stockholm, Memento, 1973.

LATVIAN LEGATION

Washington, D. C.

November 25, 1952

His Excellency
Lester B. Pearson,
President of the Seventh General
Assembly of the United Nations,
United Nations,
New York, New York

Excellency:

On several occasions in the past the Latvian diplomatic representative in Washington, together with his Lithuanian and Estonian colleagues, have called on the President of the General Assembly or on the Secretary General of the United Nations, informing them of the unbearable situation of their respective countries in connection with the unlawful military occupation by the Soviet Union, and have asked for the intervention of this high body.

Jointly with other representatives of the Soviet-occupied countries, I have had an opportunity to draw the attention of the Secretary General of the United Nations to the transgressions of the Soviet occupation forces in Latvia, which are contrary to the stipulations of the United Nations Charter on Human Rights and particularly to the unprecedented genocidal practices applied by the occupation forces in Latvia by deportation of scores of thousands of innocent people from Latvia to forced labor camps in Soviet Russia with the obvious purpose to weaken and finally to exterminate the Latvian nation which has for millenniums dwelt on its present site. This monstrous action perpetrated by one of the charter members of the United Nations must not remain silenced lest mankind in its search for truth would lose confidence in the United Nations — the paramount instrument for achieving peace.

The Latvian nation, at home and in exile, expects the free nations to raise on its behalf their voices in the present General Assembly to condemn the aggressor who not only continues to perpetrate these crimes in Latvia and other illegally occupied countries, but whose representative in the United Nations General Assembly and in the respective committees simultaneously continue to accuse democratic nations of crimes, which

have become standard practice in the internal and external affairs of the Soviet Union itself.

The Soviet delegates in the United Nations consistently pretend to act as defenders of the freedom of other nations, while one hundred million people in Eastern and Central Europe are suffering under Soviet military occupation and police system. Not a single colonial people has ever and in any circumstance experienced as hard a political and economic oppression as do now the Eastern and Central European nations which have considerably higher political and economic standards than the proletarianized masses of the Soviet Union.

At present the legal committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations is examining the question of the Definition of an Aggressor. This offers to the Soviet delegates an opportunity to make demagogic speeches in an effort to lull the world's vigilance against the Kremlin conspiracy to destroy world peace.

According to the report of the New York Times, of November 22, 1952,

Mr. Vishinsky insisted that a definition of aggression was not only possible but useful. He said it would assist in the struggle against "would-be aggressors," and would provide a yardstick for international organs called upon to determine the guilty party in a conflict.

The Soviet resolution calls for the branding as an aggressor of any country that first declares war, invades another land, establishes a naval blockade or sends armed bands from its own soil to operate against other countries. In addition, the Soviet resolution specifically excludes as justification for an attack "any arguments of a political, strategic or economic nature." It also rules out as justification any claim that the victim state was backward, was fomenting revolutionary movements, had violated treaties or had repudiated concessions.

Thus spoke Mr. Vishinsky, the same man who in 1940 arrived in Riga, the capital of Latvia, as a commissar from Moscow, dissolved the legal Latvian Government and under the protection of the occupation troops of the Red Army, carried out unconstitutional "parliament" elections and achieved with threats and the ruthlessness of the Soviet political police, Latvia's incorporation into the Soviet Union.

All this occurred in spite of the provisions of the Treaty of Definition of an Aggressor, which was fervently patronized by the Soviet Union, under whose insistence it was joined by neighboring countries.

The legal relations between Latvia and the Soviet Union are treated in the enclosed Memorandum.

It is hoped that the legal commission of the General Assembly of the United Nations will gain by examining the pre-war history of the "definition of aggressor" and its consequences. There should come to light the great chasm between the speeches of the Soviet Delegates in the General Assembly, and the practical policy of the Soviet Union as applied to its neighbours, who in good faith had signed the Soviet-sponsored Convention Regarding the Definition of an Aggressor.

Accept, Excellency, the expression of my highest consideration.

Signed: *J. Feldmans*
Minister Plenipotentiary
Chargé d'Affaires of Latvia

Source: L .R. Ārlietu Ministrija. Rīga. 293 f. 1. apr. 1115 lieta 81 lp.



MEMORANDUM

I

Treaties and Conventions

Formal relations between the Latvian Republic and the Soviet Union were established by the Treaty of Peace signed between the two countries at Riga, August 11, 1920. Pursuant to Article 2, of this treaty:

Russia unreservedly recognises the independence, self-subsistency and sovereignty of the Latvian state and voluntarily and forever renounces all sovereign rights over the Latvian people and territory which formerly belonged to Russia under the then existing constitutional law as well as under international treaties, which, in the sense here indicated, shall in the future cease to be valid. The previous status of subjection of Latvia to Russia shall not entail any obligation towards Russia on the part of the Latvian people or territory.

(League of Nations, Treaties Series, No .67, 1920-1921)

On February 9, 1929, Latvia, the Soviet Union, Estonia, Poland and Rumania signed in Moscow a Protocol for the immediate entry into effect of the Treaty of Paris of August 27, 1928, Regarding Renunciation of War as an Instrument of National Policy.

Furthermore, "being desirous of confirming and supplementing in their relations the General Pact of Renunciation of War of August 27, 1928," the Soviet Union concluded a Treaty of Non-Aggression with Latvia, signed at Riga, February 5, 1932. The first two articles of the above treaty provide the following:

Article 1.

Each of the High Contracting parties undertakes to refrain from any act of aggression directed against the other, and also from any acts of violence directed against the territorial integrity and inviolability or the political independence of the other Contracting Party, regardless of whether such aggression or such acts are committed separately or together with other Powers, with or without a declaration of war.

Article 2.

Each of the High Contracting parties undertakes not to be a party to any military or political treaties, conventions or agreements directed against the independence, territorial integrity or political security of the other Party, or to any treaties, conventions, or agreements aiming at an economic or financial boycott of either of the Contracting Parties.

(League of Nations, Treaty Series, 1934, No. 3408, pp. 123-127)

The above Treaty of Non-Aggression was concluded for a period of three years and on April 4, 1934, was extended until December 31, 1945.

A Convention Relating to Conciliation Procedure Between Latvia and the Soviet Union was signed at Riga, June 18, 1932, Article 1 of which provided -

The High Contracting Parties mutually undertake to submit for amicable settlement in the Conciliation Commission, in accordance with the provisions of the present Convention, disputes of all kinds which may arise between them on account of circumstances occurring after the coming into force of the Treaty concluded at Riga on February 5th, 1932, between Latvia and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and which cannot be settled through the diplomatic channel within a reasonable time. This undertaking also refers in

particular to any possible differences regarding the interpretation and execution of treaties and agreements concluded or to be concluded between the High Contracting parties.

(League of Nations, Treaty Series, 1934, No. 3409, pp. 139-143).

The Soviet Union as well as Latvia were co-signers of the Convention for the Definition of Aggression, signed at London, July 3, 1933, Articles 2 and 3 of which read:

Article 2.

Accordingly, the aggressor in an international conflict shall, subject to the agreements in force between the parties to the dispute, be considered to be that State which is the first to commit any of the following actions:

- (1) Declaration of war upon another State;
- (2) Invasion by its armed forces, with or without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State;
- (3) Attack by its land, naval or air forces, with or without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State;
- (4) Naval blockade of the coasts or ports of another State;
- (5) Provision of support to armed bands formed in its territory which have invaded the territory of another State, or refusal, notwithstanding the request of the invaded State, to take, in its own territory, all the measures in its power to deprive those bands of all assistance or protection.

Article 3.

No political, military, economic or other considerations may serve as an excuse or justification for the aggression referred to in Article 2.

(League of Nations, Treaty Series, 1934, No. 3391, pp. 69-77)

On October 5, 1939, a Pact of Mutual Assistance was signed in Moscow, between Latvia and the Soviet Union for a period of ten years. Article 5 of this Pact provides that:

The carrying into effect of the present pact must in no way affect the sovereign rights of the Contracting Parties, in particular their political structure, their economic and social system, and their military measures.

II

How Soviet Russia Observed These Treaties

The illegal occupation of the territory of Latvia by Soviet Union troops on June 17, 1940 not only put an end to the exercising of sovereignty by the independent Latvia, but simultaneously broke all of the above-mentioned treaties concluded between the Soviet Union and Latvia and still in force on June 17, 1940. Furthermore, on the date of the Soviet invasion, Latvia was a member in good standing of the League of Nations, whereas the Soviet Union had been expelled from that body for her unprovoked aggression against Finland in 1939.

The illegal invasion and occupation of Latvia by the Soviet Union on June 17, 1940 was preceded by an ultimatum served on Latvia on June 16, 1940, which demanded the realization of the following "absolutely indispensable and urgent" conditions:

1. Immediate establishment in Latvia of a government capable of and ready to ensure the honest execution of the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance;
2. To ensure without delay the free entry of Soviet troops into Latvian territory, in order to place them in the most important centers of Latvia in such numbers as to secure the possibility of realizing the Latvian-Soviet Pact of Mutual Assistance and to avoid possible provocative acts against Soviet garrisons in Latvia.

(A. Bilmanis, Latvian-Soviet Relations/Documents, Publ. by the Latvian Legation, Washington, D. C., 1944, p. 202)

The above ultimatum accused Latvia of:

1. The maintenance of an alliance with Estonia;
2. The conclusion of a military treaty with Estonia and Lithuania;
3. Issuing the magazine Revue Baltique through the Estonian-Latvian-Lithuanian Bureau of Collaboration.

In evaluating these pretexts one must keep in mind the statement of Mr. V. Molotov of March 29, 1940 made in his report on foreign policy at the session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.:

Our experience during the six months that elapsed since these Pacts of Mutual Assistance were concluded enables us to draw

very definite and positive conclusions concerning these treaties with the Baltic countries.

It must be admitted that the treaties concluded by the Soviet Union with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have served to strengthen the international position of both the Soviet Union and of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

In spite of the scare raised by the imperialist circles hostile to the Soviet Union, the state and political independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania has not suffered in any way, while the economic intercourse between these countries and the Soviet Union has begun markedly to increase. The Pacts with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are being carried out in satisfactory manner and this creates promises for further improvement in relations between the Soviet Union and these countries.

(Pravda, March 30, 1940)

Furthermore, all conventions signed between Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania, as well as the Latvian-Estonian Alliance of 1923, had been duly registered with the League of Nations, and were of a purely defensive nature. They involved no secret commitments. Their existence was well-known to the Soviet Government which had never before raised any objections to them, either at the time of the signing of the Non-Aggression Pact of 1932, or at the time of the conclusion of the Mutual Assistance Pact of 1939. In the Latvian-Estonian Defensive Alliance Treaty the two nations merely "... resolved to maintain the national sovereignty and independence, which they had gained at the cost of heavy sacrifices, and to preserve their territorial integrity". They also agreed to

... afford each other assistance should either of them suffer an unprovoked attack on its present frontier.

Accordingly, should one of the High Contracting Parties suffer an unprovoked attack, the other shall consider itself in a state of war and shall furnish armed assistance.

(League of Nations, Treaty Series, XXIII, 1924, No. 578)

The text of this treaty implied clearly that it was directed against no state in particular, only against a country or countries resorting to unprovoked aggression against one of the signatories. Certainly, no power could uphold before an international tribunal that such a defensive alliance as signed by Latvia and Estonia endangered the security of a third state, especially the U.S.S.R.

As far as the second allegation of the ultimatum was concerned, namely that there existed a military alliance of the three Baltic States against the Soviet Union, and that secret meetings of their military staffs had been held in December 1939 and March 1940 to fortify their positions, it was a purely fictitious accusation, since Lithuania had never joined the Latvian-Estonian Alliance of 1923, and no other treaties of a military nature had been signed by the three Baltic States. A rapprochement between Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia had resulted in the Baltic Entente of 1934, with only pacific and cultural purposed and aims.

Regarding the accusations against the *Revue Baltique* as being "a special press organ of the military Baltic Entente," it must be said that this innocuous review had no official character whatsoever, but was published privately by the Estonian-Latvian-Lithuanian Society as an expression of social and cultural cooperation. The first and only issue, dated February 1940, met with not the slightest objection on the part of the Soviet envoy in Riga and in the capitals of the other two Baltic States.

It is obvious that the Soviet Union could not find any more serious and valid grievances against Latvia and, therefore, because of the above futile pretexts, the territory of Latvia was invaded by Soviet troops and subsequently annexed by the Soviet Union, which annexation still continues.

Washington, D. C., November 25, 1952

(L. R. Ārlietu Ministrija 293 f. 1. apr. 1115 lietā, lp. 79-86.)



SOVIET DEFINITION OF AGGRESSION CRITICIZED

To the Editor of the New York Times:

A New York Times editorial of November 29, devoted to the efforts of the UN Assembly's Legal Committee to develop international criminal law and to establish a permanent criminal court, stresses the cynical approach of the Soviet delegation to the question of defining aggression. Although the Soviet delegation presented to the Legal Committee a lengthy resolution on "Aggression" to fit its propaganda purposes, attention is called to the fact that the Soviet definition is merely an

extended version of the conventions which the Soviets concluded in 1933 with Poland, the Baltic countries and Rumania; but subsequently all these countries fell victim to precisely the kind of aggression outlawed in the conventions.

This observation is absolutely correct. In my note and memorandum, presented to the President of the Seventh UN Assembly on November 28, I have drawn attention to the fact that the Soviet Government, in its occupation and annexation of Latvia in 1940, violated the following agreements which it voluntarily signed with Latvia: The Peace Treaty of August 11, 1920; the Treaty of Non-Aggression, signed on February 5, 1932 and subsequently extended to December 31, 1945; the Convention Relating to Conciliation Procedure of June 18, 1932; the Convention for the Definition of Aggression, signed on July 3, 1933, and the Pact of Mutual Assistance, signed on October 5, 1939. Similar memoranda with regard to Estonia and Lithuania were presented to the UN by the diplomatic representatives of these countries.

While the Soviet delegates to the United Nations pose as defenders of oppressed nations and simultaneously accuse the western democracies of the crimes which have become standard practice of the Soviet regime, a hundred million people in Eastern and Central Europe are subjected to continued Soviet military occupation and oppression by most cruel police methods.

It was in spite of the provisions of the Convention for Definition of Aggression and the Non-Aggression Pact that the Soviet Union illegally occupied the Baltic countries. It is ironical that Mr. Vishinsky, who in the quality of a Moscow emissary manipulated the annexation of Latvia into the Soviet Union in 1940, now demands that the Legal Committee of the UN pass a Soviet resolution defining aggression.

A closer study of Soviet perpetrated acts of aggression in the Baltic countries by the Legal Commission of the UN would bring to light the chasm between the propaganda speeches of the Soviet representatives to the United Nations and the imperialistic policy practised by the Soviet regime. The diplomatic representatives of the Baltic republics have repeatedly drawn the attention of the United Nations to such Soviet policy with regard to their countries which constitutes a flagrant violation of the UN Charter by one of its charter members. It would seem that the time has come for the representatives of free nations to raise their voices in the Assembly of the UN on behalf of the Baltic and other Soviet enslaved nations which have no voice at present and to condemn Soviet aggression and acts of genocide lest mankind would lose confidence in

the ability of the United Nations to maintain peace based on the principles of justice in international relations.

J. Feldmans

Minister Plenipotentiary,
Chargé d'Affaires of Latvia

Washington, December 2, 1952

(Source: L. R. Ārlietu Ministrija. Rīga. 457 k)



December 8, 1952

His Excellency Lester B. Pearson,
President of the Seventh General
Assembly of the United Nations, United Nations, New York, New York

Excellency:

The debates on the definition of aggression in the legal committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations have created animated discussions in connection with the resolution proposed and defended by Mr. Vishinsky regarding the definition of aggression. The representatives of free nations, such as Senator Green, Mr. Fitzmorris and others, in criticizing the project of the resolution of the Soviet delegation, pointed out that the Convention on the Definition of Aggression of 1933 between the Soviet Union and its neighboring nations - Poland, Rumania, and the Baltic States, did not prevent Soviet invasion of the latter countries and their subsequent loss of liberty. In this connection, Mr. Vishinsky made a statement on December 4 concerning the Baltic States, pointing out that as early as 1920 the Soviet Union had established friendly relations with these countries by signing peace treaties which were still reinforced by non-aggression treaties – with Lithuania in 1926 and with Latvia and Estonia in 1932. According to Mr. Vishinsky, however, at that time the Baltic Entente became a military alliance which developed activities hostile to the Soviet Union. The “rulers” of the Baltic States allegedly attempted to undermine the treaties with the Soviet Union, which in turn created unrest “culminating in the elections of 1940.” In result of these elections these nations are said to have “expressed their sovereign will” to introduce Soviet regime in their countries and to join the Soviet Union.

Mr. Vishinsky failed to mention, however, that the “democratic elections” in the Baltic States in 1940 were carried out at a time when

these countries were militarily occupied by the Soviet Union, and when the Soviet political police were carrying out in these countries unprecedented mass executions. Mr. Vishinsky also failed to mention that these “democratic elections” were held contrary to provisions of the Constitutions of the respective Baltic States and, instead, followed the Soviet established pattern of a single list of candidates chosen by the occupational authorities. Those attempting to register a list of their own were arrested and later disappeared in the forced labor camps in the vast regions of the Soviet Union.

By invading the Baltic states in 1940, the Soviet Union broke not only the peace treaties of 1920 concluded with these countries and subsequent non-aggression pacts and treaties on Definition of Aggression of 1933, but also the Mutual Assistance Pacts of 1939, by which the Soviet Union had wrested the right to station in each of these countries a large Soviet garrison of 30,000 troops each and to use military and naval bases in these countries. Yet, these Mutual Assistance Pacts provided that they would not affect the independence, sovereignty and military measures undertaken by the Contracting Parties.

Mr. Vishinsky emphasizes that these Pacts did not diminish the rights of the Baltic peoples but rather prevented them from becoming Hitlerite German colonies. Mr. Vishinsky again forgot to mention the great “concern” of the Soviet Union for the Baltic States when in the secret agreement of August 23, 1939 with Nazi-Germany she obtained Germany’s consent to consider the Baltic States within the Soviet “sphere of interests,” i. e. to be left to Soviet domination. Mr. Vishinsky avoids mentioning this barter between Stalin and Hitler, which Stalin never renounced, even when he was at war with Hitler.

In order to reply to the question of what happened to the Baltic States, since they had signed the Convention of Definition of Aggression, Mr. Vishinsky quoted remarks of Mr. L. Beria, Vice Premier of the Soviet Union, at the 19th Congress of the Communist Party, asserting that the industrial output of the Baltic States has surpassed several-fold the “pre-war level.” Certainly Mr. Beria is a “specialist” in the Baltic question as he, as chief of the Soviet political police, directed the mass deportations from the Baltic States to the forced labor camps in the Soviet Union. For his comparison Mr. Beria uses figures of 1940 – the year when the Soviet army occupied the Baltic States and when the industrial production was reduced to almost nil. Quite as extraordinary are the statistical figures provided by Mr. Vishinsky. Speaking of industrial development in independent Latvia, Mr. Vishinsky stated that it has exceeded the 1913

level only one and one-half times. It is pertinent to state that Latvia's independence was proclaimed only five years later in 1918, while in 1913 Latvia, as a Russian province at that time, was industrially geared to serve the needs of all of Russia. In independent Latvia the situation was changed, and even then Mr. Vishinsky had to admit that its industry surpassed one and one-half times the 1913 level.

Actually, under the Soviet occupation the Baltic States have become exploitable colonies: most of its industrial products are shipped to the Soviet Union. Moreover, the natural wealth of Latvia, e. g. its forests, are now being cut down at an unprecedented rate and shipped to the Don coal mines. Yet the local inhabitants in the Baltic States suffer from want of goods as much as do other countries occupied by the Soviet Union. Even more deplorable is the situation with agriculture: while in independent Latvia agricultural export was the main source of its revenue, now, due to the Soviet-introduced kolkhoz system, agriculture is unable to satisfy even domestic needs. In cities as well as in rural areas, lack of food is keenly felt.

The forcibly imposed Soviet system has brought to the people of the Baltic States untold suffering: hundreds of thousands of innocent people have been deported to the slave labor camps of the Soviet Union without a trial, based only on judgement by default of the political police. Economically and culturally prospering sovereign states have become Soviet-exploited colonies. The standard of living in the Baltic States has now reached a new low and is approaching now the low standard of the proletarianized masses of the Soviet Union. All this was brought upon the Baltic States by the unlawful action of the Soviet Union in

1) the signing of the secret Stalin-Hitler agreement of August 23, 1939, in which both dictators conspired to deprive the Baltic States of their freedom, and

2) its violation of international law by breach of all treaties voluntarily signed by the Soviet Union with the Baltic States.

Accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of our highest consideration.

For Lithuania: *P. Zadeikis* Minister of Lithuania

For Latvia: *J. Feldmans* Minister Plenipotentiary, Chargé d' Affaires

For Estonia: *J. Kaiv* Acting Consul General of Estonia
in charge of Legation

(Source: L. R. Ārlietu Ministrija. 293 f. 1. apr. 1115 lieta. 236 lp.)

**INSTRUCTION OF OCTOBER 2, 1940,
ON ACTIVITIES AGAINST THE CHRISTIAN CLERGY**

(Strictly Confidential)

To all Chairmen of the County Branches of the GPU:

From material gathered by the GPU it is evident that the Lithuanian priests and the leaders of the former Catholic parties and organizations and their active members initiated their hostile activities by proceeding along three principal lines:

1. By propagating national-chauvinistic "ideas" in a camouflaged way and often also openly during the services for the faithful in the churches and by endeavouring to influence the faithful against the Soviet Government.

2. In their relations with pupils of the schools (students, scholars, and pupils of preparatory schools). According to information at hand, special pastors were, upon the instruction of Bishop Brizgys, appointed in almost every parish to engage in illegal activity among the youth, by educating them in a national-chauvinistic spirit and by provoking in them a hatred against the bolshevik order. The clergy extended this campaign all over Lithuania, especially on Sundays in the churches, during special services arranged for the youth, as well as in their apartments where the youth gather in groups of 10 and 12. They also influenced parents so that the latter would implant Catholic ideas in their children.

3. They carry on anti-Communist work among the population through the illegal Catholic Communities and clerical groups (Apostolic Community of Men, Apostleship of Prayer Society, Association of the Third Order of St. Francis, etc.) which are political instruments in the hands of the clergy.

In order to organize the fight against the hostile activities of the clergy I hereby order you:

1. To place all clergymen within your district under formal control.
2. To find out about all the leading personalities of the Catholic organizations and communities and to place them under formal control.

3. To obtain information immediately through agents concerning all the members of the Deanery and the church offices of your county.
4. To enlist as soon as possible the services of clergymen and employees in the churches (organists, sacristans) who have close connections with the leading personalities of the Catholic parties, groups and communities as a means for obtaining information concerning the activity of above-mentioned parties. To enlist simultaneously persons as agents and informers among the same people and to order them to split up the Catholic organizations from the inside.
5. To find out which clergymen as well as which leaders of communities within your county are in close touch with the inhabitants, ascertain the character of these relations and submit this information.
6. To place all monks under control in counties where there are cloisters. To put the abbots of the monasteries under formal control. To recruit a network of agents and informers among the monks.
7. You shall ascertain where the pastors meet the pupils for carrying out their hostile activities. Students of the upper classes must be recruited for preparing and executing the inside work of splitting up.
8. Referring to the fact that priests and active members of the communities are now collecting signatures among the inhabitants for the submission of an appeal to the government to obtain permission for religious instructions in schools, find out who the organizers of this work are, and place them under control.
9. Avoid mistakes in recruiting agents. The candidates must therefore be carefully prepared and information about them should be obtained by agents. Remember that some pastors are not materially provided for and therefore waver in their "idealistic opinion."
10. All cases of anti-Soviet, anti-revolutionary tendencies among the clergy which you have discovered must be duly documented, and the material must be forwarded to the GPU of Lithuania.
11. By October 10, 1940, you must submit a detailed report concerning the hostile activities of the clergy within your country.
12. By October 15, 1940, you must deliver a memorandum to the second department of the State Guard of the GPU concerning the actions taken against the clergy, at the same time indicating the material obtained, how it was obtained and the steps you intend to take in the future.

(Signed) *Gladkov*,

Major of the State Guard, Acting People's Commissar of the Interior
of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Lithuania.

October 2, 1940.

Source: "Baltic States Investigation. "Hearings before the Select Committee to Investigate the Incorporation of the Baltic States into the U.S.S.R." House of Representatives, 83d Cong., 1st sess., pt 1, Washington, D. C., Government Printing Office, 1954, pp. 609-610.



INSTRUCTIONS No. 2192

regarding the Procedure for carrying out the Deportation of Anti-Soviet Elements from Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.

(Strictly Confidential)

1. General Situation

The deportation of anti-Soviet elements from the Baltic Republics is a task of great political importance. Its successful execution depends upon the extent to which the district operative "troikas" and operative headquarters are capable of carefully working out a plan for executing the operations and for anticipating everything indispensable.

Moreover, care must be taken that the operations are carried out without disturbances and panic, so as not to permit any demonstrations and other troubles not only on the part of those to be deported, but also on the part of a certain section of the surrounding population hostile to the Soviet administration.

Instructions as to the procedure for conducting the operations are given below. They should be adhered to, but in individual cases the collaborators engaged in carrying out the operations shall take into account the special character of the concrete conditions of such operations and, in order correctly to appraise the situation, may and must adopt other decision directed to the same end, viz., to fulfil the task entrusted to them without noise and panic.

2. Procedure of Instructing

The instructing of operative groups by the district "troika" shall be done as speedily as possible on the day before the beginning of the operations, taking into consideration the time necessary for travelling to the scene of operations.

The district "troika" shall previously prepare the necessary transport for conveyance of the operative groups in the village to the scene of operations.

On the question of allocating the necessary number of motor-cars and waggons for transport, the district "troika" shall consult the leaders of the Soviet party organized on the spot.

Premises for the issue of instructions must be carefully prepared in advance, and their capacity, exits and entrances and the possibility of intrusion by strangers must be considered.

Whilst instructions are being issued the building must be carefully guarded by operative workers.

Should anybody from amongst those participating in the operation fail to appear for instructions, the district "troika" shall at once take steps to replace the absentee from a reserve which shall be provided in advance.

Through police officers the "troika" shall notify to those assembled a division of the government for the deportation of a prescribed number contingent of anti-Soviet elements from the territory of the said republic or region. Moreover, they shall briefly explain what the deportees represent.

The special attention of the (local) Soviet party workers gathered for instructions shall be drawn to the fact that the deportees are enemies of the Soviet people and that the possibility of an armed attack on the part of the deportees cannot be excluded.

3. Procedure for Acquisition of Documents

After the general instructions of the operative groups, documents regarding the deportees should be issued to such groups. The deportees' personal files must be previously collected and distributed among the operative groups, by communes and villages, so that when they are being given out there shall be no delays.

After receipt of personal files, the senior member of the operative group shall acquaint himself with the personal affairs of the families which he will have to deport. He shall, moreover, ascertain the compo-

sition of the family, the supply of the essential forms for completion regarding the deportee, the supply of transport for conveyance of the deportee, and he shall receive exhaustive answers to questions not clear to him.

Simultaneously with the issuing of documents, the district "troika" shall explain to each senior member of the operative group where the families to be exported are situated and shall describe the route to be followed to the place of deportation. The roads to be taken by the operative personnel with the deported families to the railway station for entrainment shall be indicated. It is also essential to indicate where reserve military groups are stationed, should it be necessary to call them out during trouble of any kind.

The possession and state of arms and ammunition of the entire operative personnel shall be checked. Weapons must be in complete battle readiness and magazines loaded, but the cartridge shall not be slipped into the rifle breech. Weapons shall be used only as a last resort, when the operative group is attacked or threatened with attack or when resistance is offered.

4. Procedure for Carrying out Deportations

If the deportation of several families is being carried out in a settled locality, one of the operative workers shall be appointed senior as regards deportation in that village, and under his direction the operative personnel shall proceed to the villages in question. On arrival in the villages, the operative group shall get in touch (observing the necessary secrecy) with the local authorities: the chairman, secretary or members of the village soviets, and shall ascertain from them the exact dwelling-place of the families to be deported.

After this the operative groups, together with the representatives of the local authorities, who shall be appointed to make an inventory of property, shall proceed to the dwellings of the families to be deported. Operations shall be begun at daybreak. Upon entering the home of the person to be deported, the senior member of the operative group shall assemble the entire family of the deportee into one room, taking all necessary precautionary measures against any possible trouble.

After the members of the family have been checked in conformity with the list, the location of those absent and the number of sick persons shall be ascertained, after which they shall be called upon to give up their weapons. Irrespective of whether or not any weapons are delivered,

the deportee shall be personally searched and then the entire premises shall be searched in order to discover hidden weapons.

During the search of the premises one of the members of the operative group shall be appointed to keep watch over the deportees.

Should the search disclose hidden weapons in small quantities, these shall be collected by the operative groups and distributed among them. If many weapons are discovered, they shall be piled into the wagon or motor-car which has brought the operative group, after any ammunition in them has been removed. Ammunition shall be packed together with rifles.

If necessary, a convoy for transporting the weapons shall be mobilized with an adequate guard.

In the event of the discovery of weapons, counter-revolutionary pamphlets, literature, foreign currency, large quantities of valuables etc., a brief report of search shall be drawn up on the spot, wherein the hidden weapons or counter-revolutionary literature shall be indicated. If there is any armed resistance, the question of the necessity of arresting the parties, showing such armed resistance, and of sending them to the district branch of the People's Commissariat of Public Security shall be decided by the district "troika".

A report shall be drawn up regarding the deportees in hiding or sick ones, and this report shall be signed by the representative of the Soviet party organization.

After completion of the search of the deportees they shall be notified that by a Government decision they will be deported to other regions of the Union.

The deportees shall be permitted to take with them household necessities not exceeding 100 kilograms in weight.

1. Suit. 2. Shoes. 3. Underwear. 4. Bedding. 5. Dishes. 6. Glassware. 7. Kitchen-utensils. 8. Foods, an estimated month's supply for a family. 9. Money in their possession. 10. Trunk or box in which to pack articles. It is not recommended that large articles be taken.

If the contingent is deported from rural districts, they shall be allowed to take with them small agricultural stocks - axes, saws, and other articles, so that when boarding the deportation train they may be loaded into special goods wagons.

In order not to mix them with articles belonging to others, the Christian name, patronymic and surname of the deportee and name of the village shall be written on the packed property.

When loading these articles into the carts, measures shall be taken so

that the deportee cannot make use of them for purposes of resistance while the column is moving along the highway.

Simultaneously with the task of loading by the operative groups, the representatives of the Soviet party organizations present at the time prepare an inventory of the property and of the manner of its protection in conformity with the instructions received by them.

If the deportee possesses his own means of transport, his property shall be loaded into the vehicle, and together with his family shall be sent to the designated place of entrainment.

If the deportees are without means of transport, carts shall be mobilized in the village by the local authorities, as instructed by the senior member of the operative group.

All persons entering the home of the deportee during the execution of the operations or found there at the moment of these operations must be detained until the conclusion of the operations, and their relationship to the deportee shall be ascertained. This is done in order to disclose persons hiding from the police, gendarmes and other persons. After verification of the identity of the detained persons and establishment of the fact that they are persons in whom the contingent is not interested they shall be liberated.

If the inhabitants of the village begin to gather around the deportees' home while operations are in progress, they shall be called upon to disperse to their own homes, and crowds shall not be permitted to form. If the deportee refuses to open the door of his home, notwithstanding that he is aware that the members of the People's Commissariat for Public Security have arrived, the door must be broken down. In individual cases neighbouring operative groups carrying out operations in that locality shall be called upon to help.

The delivery of the deportees from the village to the meeting place at the railway station must be effected during daylight; care, moreover, should be taken that the assembling of every family shall not last more than two hours.

In all cases throughout the operations firm and decisive action shall be taken, without the slightest excitement, noise and panic.

It is categorically forbidden to take any articles away from the deportees except weapons, counter-revolutionary literature and foreign currency, as also to make use of the food of the deportees.

All participants in the operations must be warned that they will be held legally accountable for attempts to appropriate individual articles belonging to the deportees.

5. Procedure for Separating a Deportee's Family from the Head of the Family

In view of the fact that a large number of deportees must be arrested and distributed in special camps and that their families must proceed to special settlements in distant regions, it is essential that the operations of removal of both the members of the deportee's family and its head shall be carried out simultaneously, without notifying them of the separation confronting them. After the domiciliary search has been carried out and the appropriate identification documents have been drawn up in the deportee's home, the operative worker shall complete the documents for the head of the family and deposit them in the latter's personal file, but the documents drawn up for members of his family shall be deposited in the personal file of the deportee's family. The convoy of the entire family to the station shall, however, be effected in one vehicle and only at the station of departure shall the head of the family be placed separately from his family in a car specially intended for heads of families.

6. Procedure for conveying the Deportees

The assistants conveying the column of deportees in horse-carts are strictly forbidden to sit in the said carts. The assistants must follow alongside and behind the column of deportees. The senior assistant of the convoy shall from time to time go the rounds of the entire column to check the correctness of the movement.

When the column of the deportees is passing through inhabited places or when encountering passers-by, the convoy must be controlled with particular care; those in charge must see that no attempts are made to escape, and no conversation of any kind shall be permitted between the deportees and passers-by.

7. Procedure for Entrainment

At each point of entrainment a member of the operative "troika" and a person specially appointed for that purpose shall be responsible for entrainment.

On the day of entrainment the chief of the entrainment point, together with the chief of the deportation train and of the conveying military forces of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, shall examine the railway cars provided in order to see that they are supplied with

everything necessary, and the chief of the entrainment point shall agree with the chief of the deportation train on the procedure to be observed by the latter in accepting delivery of the deportees.

Red Army men of the conveying forces of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs shall surround the entrainment station.

The senior members of the operative group shall deliver to the chief of the deportation train one copy of the nominal roll of the deportees in each railway car. The chief of the deportation train shall, in conformity with this list, call out the name of each deportee, shall carefully check every name and assign the deportee's place in the railway-car.

The deportee's effects shall be loaded into the car, together with the deportee, with the exception of the small agricultural inventory, which shall be loaded in a separate car.

The deportees shall be loaded into railway-cars by families; it is permitted to break up a family (with the exception of heads of families subject to arrest). An estimate of twenty-five persons to a car should be observed.

After the railway-car has been filled with the necessary number of families, it shall be locked.

After the people have been taken over and placed in the deportation train, the chief of the train shall bear responsibility for all persons handed over to him and for their delivery to their destination. After handing over the deportees the senior member of the operative group shall draw up a report on the operation carried out by him and briefly indicate the name of the deportee, whether any weapon and counter-revolutionary literature have been discovered, and also how the operation was carried out.

After having placed the deportees on the deportation train and having submitted reports of the results of the operations to be thus discharged, the members of the operative group shall be considered free and shall act in accordance with the instructions of the chief of the district branch of the People's Commissariat of Public Security.

Deputy People's Commissar of Public Security of the USSR.
Commissar of Public Security of the third Rank (signed):

January 21, 1941
No. 2191

S E R O V.

(Translated from the original Russian Text in London).

THE ATLANTIC CHARTER (AUGUST 14, 1941)

The Atlantic Charter of August 14, 1941, a joint declaration of principles issued by the President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Winston Churchill, **was endorsed by the U.S.S.R.** in London on September 19, 1941, and subscribed to in Washington on January 1, 1942. Clause 3 and sequence defined the right of peoples to self-determination.

The signatories solemnly declared that:

they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with **the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned.** They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see **sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.**

The signatories recorded their hope:

to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford assurance **that all men in all lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want...** [and that] all of the nations of the world...must come to **the abandonment of the use of force.**



MOBILIZATION ORDER

1. Latvians born between 1900 and 1905 are called up for active service forthwith.

2. Those born between 1900 and 1918 and liable for active service will present themselves not later than October 11th at 12 A.M. in the Castle of Riga, and will bring their personal belongings with them.

The following are exempt from carrying out the directions laid down in 2:

- (a) dockyard workers
- (b) railway personnel
- (c) workers in water and electricity supply services
- (d) those who will leave for Greater Germany before 8 P. M. On October 10th.

Failure to comply with this order will entail the severest penalties in accordance with martial law.

Riga, October 9, 1944.

Signed: *Jeckeln*

S.S. Obergruppenfuehrer
and Police General



Deputy People's Commissar of Public Security of the USSR
Commission of Public Security of the Baltic States (signed)

January 24, 1945

No. 291

S.S. O.V.

(Translated from the original Russian Text in London)

YALTA AGREEMENT, 1945

The Defeat of Germany

We have considered and determined the military plans of the three Allied powers for the final defeat of the common enemy. The military staffs of the three Allied Nations have met in daily meetings throughout the Conference. These meetings have been most satisfactory from every point of view and have resulted in closer coordination of the military effort of the three Allies than ever before. The fullest information has been interchanged. The timing, scope, and coordination of new and even more powerful blows to be launched by our armies and air forces into the heart of Germany from the East, West, North, and South have been fully agreed and planned in detail.

Our combined military plans will be made known only as we execute them, but we believe that the very close working partnership among the three staffs attained at this Conference will result in shortening the war. Meetings of the three staffs will be continued in the future whenever the need arises.

Nazi Germany is doomed. The German people will only make the cost of their defeat heavier to themselves by attempting to continue a hopeless resistance.

The Occupation and Control of Germany

We have agreed on common policies and plans for enforcing the unconditional surrender terms which we shall impose together on Nazi Germany after German armed resistance has been finally crushed. These terms will not be made known until the final defeat of Germany has been accomplished. Under the agreed plan, the forces of the three powers will each occupy a separate zone of Germany. Coordinated administration and control has been provided for under the plan through a central control commission consisting of the Supreme Commanders of the three powers with headquarters in Berlin. It has been agreed that France should be invited by the three powers, if she should so desire, to take over a zone of occupation, and to participate as a fourth member of the control commission. The limits of the French zone will be agreed by the four

Governments concerned through their representatives on the European Advisory Commission.

It is our inflexible purpose to destroy German militarism and Nazism and to ensure that Germany will never again be able to disturb the peace of the world. We are determined to disarm and disband all German armed forces; break up for all time the German General Staff that has repeatedly contrived the resurgence of German militarism; remove or destroy all German military equipment; eliminate or control all German industry that could be used for military production; bring all war criminals to just and swift punishment and exact reparation in kind for the destruction wrought by the Germans; wipe out the Nazi Party, Nazi laws, organizations and institutions, remove all Nazi and militarist influences from public office and from the cultural and economic life of the German people; and take in harmony such other measures in Germany as may be necessary to the future peace and safety of the world. It is not our purpose to destroy the people of Germany, but only when Nazism and militarism have been extirpated will there be hope for a decent life for Germans, and a place for them in the community of Nations.

Reparation by Germany

We have considered the question of the damage caused by Germany to the Allied Nations in this war and recognized it as just that Germany be obliged to make compensation for this damage in kind to the greatest extent possible. A commission for the compensation of damage will be established. The commission will be instructed to consider the question of the extent and methods for compensating damage caused by Germany to the Allied countries. The commission will work in Moscow.

United Nations Conference

We are resolved upon the earliest possible establishment with our allies of a general international organization to maintain peace and security. We believe that this is essential, both to prevent aggression and to remove the political, economic, and social causes of war through the close and continuing collaboration of all peace-loving peoples.

The foundations were laid at Dumbarton Oaks. On the important question of voting procedure, however, agreement was not there reached. The present Conference has been able to resolve this difficulty.

We have agreed that a conference of United Nations should be called to meet at San Francisco in the United States on April 25, 1945, to prepare the charter of such an organization, along the lines proposed in the informal conversations at Dumbarton Oaks.

The Government of China and the Provisional Government of France will be immediately consulted and invited to sponsor invitations to the conference jointly with the Governments of the United States, Great Britain, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. As soon as the consultation with China and France has been completed, the next of the proposals on voting procedure will be made public.

Declaration on Liberated Europe

The Premier of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, and the President of the United States of America have consulted with each other in the common interests of the peoples of their countries and those of liberated Europe. They jointly declare their mutual agreement to concert during the temporary period of instability in liberated Europe the policies of their three Governments in assisting the peoples liberated from the domination of Nazi Germany and the peoples of the former Axis satellite states of Europe to solve by democratic means their pressing political and economic problems.

The establishment of order in Europe and the rebuilding of national economic life must be achieved by processes which will enable the liberated peoples to destroy the last vestiges of Nazism and Fascism and to create democratic institutions of their own choice. This is a principle of the Atlantic Charter — the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live — the restoration of sovereign rights and self-government to those peoples who have been forcibly deprived of them by the aggressor Nations.

To foster the conditions in which the liberated peoples may exercise these rights, the three Governments will jointly assist the people in any European liberated state or former Axis satellite state in Europe where in their judgment conditions require (a) to establish conditions of internal peace; (b) to carry out emergency measures for the relief of distressed peoples; (c) to form interim governmental authorities broadly representative of all democratic elements in the population and pledged to the earliest possible establishment through free elections of governments responsive to the will of the people; and (d) to facilitate where necessary the holding of such elections.

The three Governments will consult the other United Nations and provisional authorities or other Governments in Europe when matters of direct interest to them are under consideration.

When, in the opinion of the three Governments, conditions in any European liberated state or any former Axis satellite state in Europe make such action necessary, they will immediately consult together on the measures necessary to discharge the joint responsibilities set forth in this declaration.

By this declaration we reaffirm our faith in the principles of the Atlantic Charter, our pledge in the declaration by the United Nations, and our determination to build in cooperation with other peace-loving Nations world order under law, dedicated to peace, security, freedom, and general well-being of all mankind.

In issuing this declaration, the three powers express the hope that the Provisional Government of the French Republic may be associated with them in the procedure suggested.

Poland

A new situation has been created in Poland as a result of her complete liberation by the Red Army. This calls for the establishment of a Polish provisional government which can be more broadly based than was possible before the recent liberation of western Poland. The provisional government which is now functioning in Poland should therefore be reorganized on a broader democratic basis with the inclusion of democratic leaders from Poland itself and from Poles abroad. This new government should then be called the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity.

M. Molotov, Mr. Harriman, and Sir A. Clark Kerr are authorized as a commission to consult in the first instance in Moscow with members of the present provisional government and with other Polish democratic leaders from within Poland and from abroad, with a view to the reorganization of the present government along the above lines. This Polish Provisional Government of National Unity shall be pledged to the holding of free and unfettered elections as soon as possible on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot. In these elections all democratic anti-Nazi parties shall have the right to take part and to put forward candidates.

When a Polish Provisional Government of National Unity has been properly formed in conformity with the above, the Government of the

USSR, which now maintains diplomatic relations with the present provisional government of Poland, and the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of the USA will establish diplomatic relations with the new Polish Provisional Government of National Unity, and will exchange ambassadors by whose reports the respective Governments will be kept informed about the situation in Poland.

The three heads of government consider that the eastern frontier of Poland should follow the Curzon line with digressions from it in some regions of five to eight kilometers in favor of Poland. They recognized that Poland must receive substantial accessions of territory in the North and West. They feel that the opinion of the new Polish Provisional Government of National Unity should be sought in due course on the extent of these accessions and that the final delimitation of the western frontier of Poland should thereafter await the peace conference.

Yugoslavia

We have agreed to recommend to Marshal Tito and Dr. Subasic that the agreement between them should be put into effect immediately, and that a new government should be formed on the basis of that agreement.

We also recommend that as soon as the new government has been formed it should declare that:

1. The anti-Fascist Assembly of National Liberation (Avnoj) should be extended to include members of the last Yugoslav Parliament (Skupschina) who have not compromised themselves by collaboration with the enemy, thus forming a body to be known as a temporary Parliament; and,

2. Legislative acts passed by the anti-Fascist Assembly of National Liberation will be subject to subsequent ratification by a constituent assembly.

There was also a general review of other Balkan questions.

Meetings of Foreign Secretaries

Throughout the Conference, besides the daily meetings of the heads of governments and the Foreign Secretaries, separate meetings of the three Foreign Secretaries, and their advisers have also been held daily.

These meetings have proved of the utmost value and the Conference agreed that permanent machinery should be set up for regular consultation between the three Foreign Secretaries. They will, therefore, meet as often

as may be necessary, probably about every three or four months. These meetings will be held in rotation in the three capitals, the first meeting being held in London, after the United Nations Conference on World Organization.

Unity for Peace as for War

Our meeting here in the Crimea has reaffirmed our common determination to maintain and strengthen in the peace to come that unity of purpose and of action which has made victory possible and certain for the United Nations in this war. We believe that this is a sacred obligation which our Governments owe to our peoples and to all the peoples of the world.

Only with the continuing and growing cooperation and understanding among our three countries and among all the peace-loving Nations can the highest aspiration of humanity be realized — a secure and lasting peace which will, in the words of the Atlantic Charter, “afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want.”

Victory in this war and establishment of the proposed international organization will provide the greatest opportunity in all history to create in the years to come the essential conditions of such a peace.

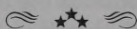
Signed:

Winston S. Churchill

Franklin D. Roosevelt

J. Stalin

Source: The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1944-45 Vol., Victory and the Threshold of Peace, pp. 531-537.



SUMMARY OF THE YALTA AGREEMENTS

At Yalta from February 4 to 11, 1945, the "Big Three" — Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin — agreed to the following main points:

1. To divide postwar Germany into occupation zones and exact reparations for ten years, as well as dismantle factories and reduce the size of Germany's territory.

2. To see that "free and unfettered elections" were held in Poland and the Balkans. (About seven million voters of Polish extraction lived in the United States, giving the Polish question great political import.)

3. The Soviet Union agreed to enter into war against Japan within three months of the end of the war with Germany.

4. To grant the "Big Five" (United States, Great Britain, USSR, France, and China) "veto rights" in the Security Council of the UN.

5. To give the USSR almost half of Poland's prewar territory. (Less than one-fourth of the people living in that area before 1931 were Poles; the majority were "dissatisfied and rebellious Ukrainians," who before the war were regarded as a minority, and a "similar number of dissatisfied Belorussians.") To move Poland's future border westward to the Neisse River — encompassing a territory of about a million Germans.

6. To return to the USSR the southern part of Sakhalin Island (which had been lost in 1905). Japan to also hand over the Kurile Islands.

7. To give the USSR rights to operate the Eastern railroads in Manchuria jointly with China and also pre-eminent rights in Dairen, Manchuria's main port. The Western allies did this without even informing China's premier Chiang Kai-shek.

8. To allow Stalin to use German prisoners of war as a free work force, as part of German reparations due the USSR.

After the Yalta Conference, US Republicans strongly criticized Roosevelt for giving Stalin Eastern Europe and the Far East. By that time the Red Army had already occupied the so-called "Eastern bloc" (except for Czechoslovakia), but the Western Allies had not yet even reached the Rhine.

To gain Stalin's assent to enter the war against Japan, Roosevelt gave him the Far East. At the time the Americans were suffering heavy losses in taking Pacific Ocean islands one by one, and the first atomic bomb

drop was still five months away. Chiang Kai-shek was forced to accept all of Roosevelt's actions, signing the Sino-Soviet Treaty in August. The treaty just affirmed the situation already in existence. The majority of Americans were satisfied with the results of the Yalta Conference: only nine percent judged the agreements to be unfavorable to the United States.



There is a well-known saying in English-speaking countries that Americans are very good at winning the war, but they are also very good at losing the peace. The Yalta Conference and its agreements exemplify the truth of this saying.

Hitler did not start the Second World War on his own; he did it in collaboration with Stalin. Two despots, holding fanatical ideologies of conquest, joined forces for a short time to let loose unimaginably bloody tides over the world.

The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and its secret protocols were well known to Roosevelt. He also knew of Stalin's bloody actions during the collectivizations and large-scale political purges, when tens of millions of innocent people lost their lives. But the Americans still believed this Eastern despot and trusted his promises.

The Yalta Conference agreements and its participants' behavior clearly show Western naiveté and inordinate goodwill towards Stalin and the USSR. The West was ready to give Stalin almost everything he wanted. In so doing they in all sincerity hoped that Stalin would discard his dictatorial practices and over time introduce Western democratic governing principles into his empire and the newly-conquered lands. This would not have been possible even in the unbelievable case that Stalin would have wanted it, as the bloody deeds of his past would have prevented it: they would have immediately generated harsh judgments, which no dictator can allow.

Stalin shamelessly lied about "mutinous Ukrainians and Belorussians" in order to seize Poland's Eastern territories, which had already been handed to him in 1939 upon signing the criminal Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact with Nazi Germany. He also deliberately lied about the shooting of 15,000 Polish officers in Kalinin, Katyn, and Starobelsk, maintaining that these murders were carried out by Nazi German occupation forces.

In truth, being part of Poland saved those Ukrainians and Belorussians from the deliberately created famines and horrific purges of Stalin's dictatorship. It is hard to believe that all this was not known to Roosevelt and his advisors.

If the Western attitude towards Stalin and the Soviet Union was overfull of naive benevolence, then Stalin calculatingly exploited it using flattery, lies, and cunning to further his egotistical and imperialistic goals in Europe. His actions were justified by Russianized Marxist ideology and based on Mongolic brutality, in the administrative and economic as well as military spheres. Stalin tried to squeeze everything he could out of the West, employing the Western leaders as "useful idiots," discarding them when no longer needed and not keeping his promises. The West did not have to wait long, as shown by Roosevelt's humble, complaint-filled letter to Stalin of April 1, 1945. The fighting war was not yet over when the foundations for the Cold War were laid.

The West won the war but lost the peace, which was followed by wars in Korea and Vietnam. Without help from the hated "capitalists and Fascists" Stalin most probably would have left the political stage before Hitler, and a completely new situation would have arisen in Russia. The naiveté of Western leaders saved Stalin and caused the Cold War.



THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COLD WAR

Not long after the Yalta conference it became clear that the Allies disagreed on the interpretation of its terms. The Russians had promised self-determination and free elections in Eastern Europe. It soon became apparent that by Western standards these promises were not being kept. In the following letter written shortly before his death Roosevelt complains to Stalin.

President Roosevelt's Letter to Marshal Stalin

Received on April 1, 1945

Personal and Top Secret for *Marshal Stalin*
from *President Roosevelt*

I cannot conceal from you the concern with which I view the developments of events of mutual interest since our fruitful meeting at Yalta. The decisions we reached there were good ones and have for the most part been welcomed with enthusiasm by the peoples of the world who saw in our ability to find a common basis of understanding the best pledge for a secure and peaceful world after this war. Precisely because of the hopes and expectations that these decisions raised, their fulfillment is being followed with the closest attention. We have no right to let them be disappointed. So far there has been a discouraging lack of progress made in the carrying out, which the world expects, of the political decisions which we reached at the conference particularly those relating to the Polish question. I am frankly puzzled as to why this should be and must tell you that I do not fully understand in many respects the apparent indifferent attitude of your Government. Having understood each other so well at Yalta I am convinced that the three of us can and will clear away any obstacles which have developed since then. I intend, therefore, in this message to lay before you with complete frankness the problem as I see it.

Although I have in mind primarily the difficulties which the Polish

negotiations have encountered, I must make a brief mention of our agreement embodied in the Declaration on Liberated Europe. I frankly cannot understand why the recent developments in Roumania should be regarded as not falling within the terms of that Agreement. I hope you will find time personally to examine the correspondence between our Governments on this subject.

However, the part of our agreements at Yalta which has aroused the greatest popular interest and is the most urgent relates to the Polish question. You are aware of course that the Commission which was set up has made no progress. I feel this is due to the interpretation which your Government is placing upon the Crimea decisions. In order that there shall be no misunderstanding I set forth below my interpretations of the points of the Agreement which are pertinent to the difficulties encountered by the Commission in Moscow.

In the discussions that have taken place so far your Government appears to take the position that the new Polish Provisional Government of National Unity which we agreed should be formed should be little more than a continuation of the present Warsaw Government. I cannot reconcile this either with our agreement or our discussions. While it is true that the Lublin Government is to be recognized and its members play a prominent role, it is to be done in such a fashion as to bring into being a new government. This point is clearly brought out in several places in the text of the Agreement. I must make it quite plain to you that any such solution which would result in a thinly disguised continuance of the present Warsaw régime would be unacceptable and would cause the people of the United States to regard the Yalta Agreement as having failed.

It is equally apparent that for the same reason the Warsaw Government cannot under the Agreement claim the right to select or reject what Poles are to be brought to Moscow by the Commission for consultation. Can we not agree that it is up to the Commission to select the Polish leaders to come to Moscow to consult in the first instance and invitations be sent out accordingly. If this could be done I see no great objection to having the Lublin group come first in order that they may be fully acquainted with the agreed interpretation of the Yalta decisions on this point. It is of course understood that if the Lublin group come first no arrangements would be made independently with them before the arrival of the other Polish leaders called for consultation. In order to facilitate the agreement the Commission might first of all select a small but representative group of Polish leaders who could suggest other names

for the consideration of the Commission. We have not and would not bar or veto any candidate for consultation which Mr. Molotov might propose, being confident that he would not suggest any Poles who would be inimical to the intent of the Crimea decision. I feel that it is not too much to ask that my Ambassador be accorded the same confidence and that any candidate for consultation presented by any one of the Commission be accepted by the others in good faith. It is obvious to me that if the right of the Commission to select these Poles is limited or shared with the Warsaw Government the very foundation on which our agreement rests would be destroyed.

While the foregoing are the immediate obstacles which in my opinion have prevented our Commission from making any progress in this vital matter, there are two other suggestions which were not in the agreement but nevertheless have very important bearing on the result we all seek. Neither of these suggestions has been as yet accepted by your Government, I refer to:

- (1) That there should be the maximum of political tranquility in Poland and that dissident groups should cease any measures and counter-measures against each other. That we should respectively use our influence to that end seems to me eminently reasonable.
- (2) It would also seem entirely natural in view of the responsibilities placed upon them by the Agreement that representatives of the American and British members of the Commission should be permitted to visit Poland. As you will recall Mr. Molotov himself suggested this at an early meeting of the Commission and only subsequently withdrew it.

I wish I could convey to you how important it is for the successful development of our program of international collaboration that this Polish question be settled fairly and speedily. If this is not done all of the difficulties and dangers to Allied unity which we had so much in mind in reaching our decisions at Crimea will face us in an even more acute form. You are, I am sure, aware that the genuine popular support in the United States is required to carry out any government policy, foreign or domestic. The American people make up their own mind and no government action can change it. I mention this fact because the last sentence of your message about Mr. Molotov's attendance at San Francisco made me wonder whether you give full weight to this factor.

(Source: Great Issues in Western Civilization. Volume II. Second Edition)

CHURCHILL SOUGHT TALKS WITH PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

As early as March 1942, Roosevelt had written to Churchill: "I know you will not mind my being brutally frank when I tell you that I think that I can possibly handle Stalin better than either your Foreign Office or my State Department . . . I think that if I give him (Stalin) everything I possibly can and ask nothing from him in return, noblesse oblige, he won't try to annex anything and will work with me for a world of democracy and peace."

The naivete of Roosevelt, shrewd and skilled in domestic politics, but woefully ignorant of European history and diplomacy, was confirmed at Teheran in November 1943. In vain, Churchill sought private talks with Roosevelt to coordinate Anglo-American tactics.

E. C. Farrell

Feature editor of *The Catholic Register*, Toronto, Canada



U. S. ASSURANCES TO CAPTIVE PEOPLES

Statement by Secretary Dulles

Chairman Kersten and Members of the Committee, I appreciate having this opportunity to talk to you of the Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. I shall speak of their past, their present, and their future. Each of these phases is full of meaning.

The Baltic peoples proclaimed their independence of Russia in 1918. In 1920, Soviet Russia made peace treaties with them. By these treaties Soviet Russia recognized, without reservation, the independence and sovereignty of the Baltic States. It declared in these treaties that it voluntarily and forever renounced all sovereign rights over the Baltic peoples and the territories of the Baltic States.

On July 28, 1922, the United States extended diplomatic recognition to the Baltic governments. We did so in application of our traditional concepts.

Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania had shown, by four years of existence as independent states, that their independence had a solid reality. They had successfully maintained internal stability, both political and economic. They had conducted themselves internationally in accordance with good practice. Therefore, they were entitled to our recognition. Indeed, their independence fulfilled the kind of hope for all peoples which our Nation had entertained since its own beginning.

For two decades the Baltic republics showed the good fruits of freedom. Their creative accomplishments were impressive. Their natural resources were meager. But the peoples were skilled in agriculture and by their hard work they achieved a good measure of economic well-being. National arts and crafts flourished. They established a high standard of social justice and won worldwide respect as exemplary members of the family of nations. Their spiritual and moral strength, their love of liberty, their energy, and their self-discipline showed that they possessed those qualities which, more than mere numbers, area, or wealth, make for national worth.

The Baltic republics, during this period, gave the whole world an ever-needed demonstration of the creative power of self-disciplined freedom.

The present dark period began in 1939. It was begun by the ostensibly friendly embrace of the Soviet Union, which pressed "pacts of mutual assistance" upon these Baltic countries.

The Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs carefully explained the innocent and protective nature of these pacts in a major address of October 31, 1939. I quote his words:

The Soviet Union has concluded pacts of mutual assistance with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania which are of major political importance. ... The special character of these mutual assistance pacts in no way implies any interference on the part of the Soviet Union in the affairs of Estonia, Latvia, or Lithuania, as some foreign newspapers are trying to make out. On the contrary, all these pacts of mutual assistance strictly stipulate the inviolability of the sovereignty of the signatory states and the principle of non-interference in each other's affairs... We declare that all the nonsensical talk about the Sovietization of the Baltic countries is only to the interest of our common enemies and of all anti-Soviet provocateurs.

Scarcely had these passionate and authoritative words been uttered when the "Sovietization" begun. The concluding acts occurred about eight months later when the Soviet Union marched its Red armies into the Baltic territories, set up puppet governments, and caused them to apply for admission into the Soviet Union, an admission that was graciously granted. The "nonsensical talk" of the "foreign newspapers" had come true.

The free nations of the world were shocked by this aggression. The United States promptly made its position known. On July 23, 1940, our Government described and denounced 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 neighbours."

The "devious processes" still went on until today over 15 once independent nations, representing much of the human race, have been "Sovietized".

Today the Soviet leaders still ask the free peoples to accept and rely on Soviet mutual security pacts. We should know by now that when the Soviet rulers use the word "security" they mean an opportunity for the Soviet Union to secure new victims.

What of the future? First of all, let us never lose hope that there is a future.

I recall some of the earliest history recorded in the books of the Old Testament. The nations there mentioned are such as Israel, Arabia, Egypt,

and Lebanon. How many times have these nations of many thousands of years ago been submerged, to rise again?

The Baltic peoples, in the face of every imposition, retain their will to be free and maintain their steadfast opposition to Soviet despotism. Terrorism has been prolonged now for thirteen years. Many of their courageous and noble representatives have been executed, deported, or driven into exile. But their martyrdom keeps patriotism alive.

The United States, for its part, maintains the diplomatic recognition which it extended in 1922 to the three Baltic nations. We continue to deal with those diplomatic and consular representatives of the Baltic countries who served the last independent governments of these states.

Some may say that it is unrealistic and impractical not to recognize the enforced "incorporation" of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union. We believe, however, that a despotism of the present Soviet type cannot indefinitely perpetuate its rule over hundreds of millions of people who love God, who love their country, and who have a sense of personal dignity.

The Soviet system, which seeks to expunge the distinctive characteristics of nation, creed, and individuality must itself change or be doomed ultimately to collapse. The time of collapse depends largely on whether the peoples who remain free produce spiritual, intellectual, and material richness and faith which can penetrate any iron curtain. The captive peoples should know that they are not forgotten, that we are not reconciled to their fate, and, above all, that we are not prepared to seek illusory safety for ourselves by a bargain with their masters which would confirm their captivity.

These are our purposes. We have not forgotten the Atlantic Charter and its proclamation of "the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live." We still share the wish expressed in that Charter "to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them."

This is an hour when it is particularly important that our Nation's dedication to these principles should be made manifest. We approach a possible meeting with the representatives of the Soviet Union. I can assure you that we welcome opportunities to settle specific disputes between us; to end the race in armament, particularly atomic armament; and to reduce the risks of war.

But let me also assure you of this. We do not look on the conference table as a place where we *surrender* our principles, but rather as a place for making our principles prevail. That is our resolve, a resolve which I

am confident is backed by the Congress and by the American people.

Source: Dulles, John Foster. U. S. Assurances to Captive Peoples. The Department of State Bulletin, December 14, 1953, Vol. XXIX, No. 755, p. 818-819. (Made before the Select Committee To Investigate and Study the Seizure and Forced Incorporation of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Treatment of Said Baltic Peoples, House of Representatives, on Nov. 30 (press release 644)).

GREETINGS SENT TO PEOPLES OF BALTIC STATES

Statement by Secretary Dulles

Press release 90 dated February 16, 1953

Thirty-five years ago the Lithuanian and Estonian nations won their independence, only to fall victim later to a ruthless Soviet imperialism. Deeply conscious of the suffering that the Baltic peoples are now enduring, I take this occasion to send warm greetings and best wishes to the Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians.

This year has special significance to Lithuania, as the 700th anniversary of the Lithuanian State. Seven hundred years ago Mindaugas was crowned the first King of Lithuania.

In refusing to recognize the incorporation of the Baltic States into the Soviet Union, the Government of the United States has expressed the conviction of the American people that justice and law must govern the relations between the nations, great and small.

It is not the number of people, nor area and wealth, which makes nations great. Rather it is their spiritual and moral strength and their love of freedom and liberty. These qualities have carried your nations over many difficulties in the past. I am confident that they will also carry you, with the help of God, over the present period of oppression to a new day of freedom.

Source: Dulles, John Foster. Greetings Sent to Peoples of Baltic States, Statement by Secretary Dulles, (Press release 90 dated February 16), The Department of State Bulletin, March 2, 1953, Vol. XXVIII, No 714, p. 330.

DECLARATION

During these past few days the devious processes whereunder the political independence and territorial integrity of the three small Baltic republics — Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania — were to be deliberately annihilated by one of their more powerful neighbors, have been rapidly drawing to their conclusion.

From the day when the peoples of these republics first gained their independence and democratic form of government the people of the United States have watched their admirable progress in self-government with deep and sympathetic interest.

The policy of this Government is universally known. The people of the United States are opposed to predatory activities no matter whether they are carried on by the use of force or by the threat of force. They are likewise opposed to any form of intervention on the part of one state, however powerful, in the domestic concerns of any other sovereign state, however weak.

These principles constitute the very foundations upon which the existing relationship between the 21 sovereign republics of the New World rests.

The United States will continue to stand by these principles, because of the conviction of the American people that unless the doctrine in which these principles are inherent once again governs the relations between nations, the rule of reason, of justice, and of law — in other words, the basis of modern civilization itself - cannot be preserved.

Sumner Welles
Acting Secretary of State

(Reprinted from The Department of State Bulletin, July 27, 1940, Vol. III, No. 57, p. 48.)



**JOINT RESOLUTION
DESIGNATING "BALTIC FREEDOM DAY"**

Whereas the people of the Baltic Republics of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia have cherished the principles of religious and political freedom and independence; and

Whereas the Baltic Republics have existed as independent, sovereign nations, belonging to and fully recognized by the League of Nations; and

Whereas the people of the Baltic Republics have individual and separate cultures, national traditions and languages, distinctly foreign to those of Russia; and

Whereas the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) in 1940 did illegally seize and occupy the Baltic Republics and by force incorporate them against their national will and contrary to their desire for independence and sovereignty into the U.S.S.R.; and

Whereas the U.S.S.R. since 1940 has systematically removed native Baltic peoples from their homelands by deporting them to Siberia and caused great masses of Russians to relocate in the Republics, thus threatening the Baltic cultures with extinction; and

Whereas the U.S.S.R. has imposed upon the captive people of the Baltic Republics an oppressive political system which has destroyed every vestige of democracy, civil liberties, and religious freedom; and

Whereas the people of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia find themselves today subjugated by the U.S.S.R., locked into a union they deplore, denied basic human rights, and persecuted for daring to protest; and

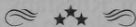
Whereas the United States stands as a champion of liberty, dedicated to the principles of democracy, human rights, and religious freedom, and opposed to oppression; and

Whereas the United States, as a member of the United Nations, has repeatedly voted with a majority of that international body to uphold the right of other countries of the world to determine their fates and be free of foreign domination; and

Whereas the U.S.S.R. has steadfastly refused to return to the people of the Baltic States the right to exist as independent republics separate and apart from the U.S.S.R. or permit a return of personal, political, and religious freedoms: Now, therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled. That the Congress of the United States recognizes the continuing desire and the right of the people of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia for freedom and independence from the domination of the U.S.S.R. and deplores the refusal of the U.S.S.R. to recognize the sovereignty of the Baltic Republics and to yield to their rightful demands for independence from foreign domination and oppression and that the fourteenth day of June 1982, the anniversary of the mass deportation of Baltic peoples from their homelands in 1941, be designated "Baltic Freedom Day" with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

(Source: June 18, 1982 Congress Records. Vol. 128, 1982.)



COPENHAGEN MANIFESTO

The Baltic Tribunal in Copenhagen declares that the occupation and annexation of the once independent States of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania serve as prime examples of the violations of international public law and treaties ratified by the Soviet Union.

Mass Russian immigration has seriously damaged Baltic identity and political structure; language, culture, religion, even the learning of history in schools, have suffered under Soviet rule. The militarization of the Baltic States serves as a constant reminder of the continuing threat to world peace.

The right of the Baltic peoples to self-determination, to non-discrimination and to non-interference on their ancestral soil must be reinstated. After hearing experienced witnesses on numerous aspects of life and law and practice in occupied Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the Baltic Tribunal concludes that severe injustice has been and is being done to these people by the Soviet Union.

The fate of the three Baltic States is unique in human history. Nowhere else in the world are former parliamentary democracies occupied, annexed and colonized by a conquering power. A unique fate deserves unique policies from the democratic governments of the world. We call upon them to raise the issue of Soviet occupation of the Baltic countries in all world forums, demanding freedom and independence for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

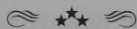
By this Copenhagen Manifesto we declare that the present situation in the Baltic countries is damaging the chance of peace and freedom in Europe and the world.

Theodor Veiter, Chairman

Per Ahlmark
Jean - Marie Daillet

Rev. Michael Bourdeaux
Sir James Fawcett

July 26, 1985



DECLARATION BY THE SAEIMA OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA ON THE OCCUPATION OF LATVIA

With this declaration, the supreme representative institution of the people of Latvia, the Saeima, turns to the countries of the world and international organizations to remind them of the tragic fate of our country and people in the 20th century.

The Republic of Latvia was proclaimed on November 18, 1918, and on September 22, 1921, it became a member of the League of Nations. Latvia's development as an independent state was cut short by the nonaggression pact (the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact) signed on August 23, 1939, by two totalitarian superpowers – Nazi Germany and Communist USSR, whose goal was to divide Europe into spheres of influence. Violating the basic principles of international law, as well as treaties between Latvian and the USSR, the USSR occupied Latvia using military force on June 17, 1940, and unlawfully incorporated (annexed) it into the USSR.

With that, the political and legal systems of the USSR were imposed on Latvia.

In the summer of 1941, when the front lines of World War II reached Latvian territory, it was occupied by Nazi Germany, which imposed its systems, carried out deportations and other repressions against the inhabitants of Latvia, and also used the territory of Latvia to exterminate people from other occupied countries.

Toward the end of World War II, the USSR renewed its occupation regime in Latvia. In 1944, part of the Abrene district (approximately 2,000 km²) was unlawfully annexed to the territory of Russia.

Throughout the entire occupation, the USSR deliberately carried out genocide against the Latvian people, thus violating the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of December 9, 1948. The occupation regime exterminated innocent people, repeatedly carried out mass deportations of the inhabitants and other repressions, ruthlessly punished those who called for the restoration of Latvia's independence by armed or passive resistance, unlawfully and with no compensation expropriated the property of the inhabitants of Latvia, and suppressed any manifestation of free thought. The government of the USSR deliberately flooded Latvia with hundreds of thousands of newcomers for the purpose of destroying the identity of the Latvian

people. As a result of this policy, the proportion of Latvians in their own country decreased from 77 percent to 52 percent.

In Latvia, armed resistance against the USSR continued for ten years after the end of World War II. More than 30,000 national partisans and supporters took part in the resistance movement. After armed resistance was suppressed, resistance continued in other forms, despite the repressions carried out by the Soviet regime.

Even before the collapse of the USSR, there was a broad-based movement in Latvia aimed at restoring independence by peaceful and democratic means. In the 1990 elections, this movement gained a majority in the highest representative body, the Supreme Council, which on May 4 of that same year adopted the Declaration on the Renewal of the Independence of the Republic of Latvia, setting a transition period for the re-establishment of *de facto* independence of the state. This declaration proclaimed the June 17, 1940, military aggression by the USSR to be a violation of international law.

Due to the will of the people and the support of the world's democratic forces, Latvia's independence was renewed on August 21, 1991.

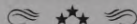
The Saeima of the Republic of Latvia affirms that Latvia, not bearing enmity and not seeking revenge for the past, will continue to remind the countries of the world of its tragic fate and call for understanding, because the half-century long occupation had heavy consequences which are difficult for a small country to overcome by itself. Latvia is disturbed by the fact that Russia has not acknowledged the occupation of Latvia by the USSR and does not wish to be guided by the principles of the Peace Treaty between Latvia and Russia of August 11, 1920, in which Russia forever renounced its claims to Latvia's territory.

Therefore, in the name of the people of Latvia, the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia appeals to the countries of the world and international organizations to:

- 1) acknowledge the fact that Latvia was occupied;
- 2) help Latvia overcome the consequences of the occupation, rendering political and economic assistance;
- 3) help those persons who wish to leave Latvia and return to their ethnic homeland, and those Latvians abroad who wish to return to Latvia.

Chairman of the Saeima, I. Kreituse

Riga, August 22, 1996



POSTSCRIPT

Unpunished Crimes consists of selected parts, in English, of the publication known as the *Black Book* (*Melnā Grāmata*). Its purpose is to provide information about the Baltic states and peoples. The full title of the *Black Book*, in the original Latvian and in translation, is: *Okupācijas varu nodarītie postījumi Latvijā 1940–1990* (*Destruction Caused by the Occupying Powers in Latvia 1940–1990*). The *Black Book* was published by Memento, Stockholm, in 2000. *Unpunished Crimes* is primarily designed to be a source of factual material for persons dealing with those who have little knowledge of the Baltic peoples. **As such, it must again be emphasized that during and after the Second World War, the three Baltic states were occupied by hostile powers three times.**

The large amount of factual material to be encompassed within the book's size parameters did not allow the inclusion of footnotes. These are all straightforwardly accessible in the first publication, as the articles are essentially identical. With this work, the editors want to again bring attention to Russia's on-going campaign of lies and accusations against the Baltic states, systematically carried out worldwide. Russia endlessly trots out alleged "violations of human rights" and lies about the "rebirth of fascism," forgetting to judge its own horrific actions in Chechnya. Providing this disinformation to the West is necessary for them to justify the activities of the Russian secret police in the Baltic states, to delay by traditional scare tactics the Baltic states' admission into NATO, and lastly, to give Russia itself some motivation to try for closer cooperation with the West in the economic and technological spheres.

Despite everything, Latvians can derive satisfaction from the fact that it was precisely the Russian government's crass interference in their country's internal affairs and its aggressive, primitive propaganda against the Latvian government and people that caused many of those undecided to support Latvia's membership in NATO and the European Union, increasing national safety and welfare.

Nazism and fascism have been exhaustively studied and the entire civilized world has condemned them as a great evil, but the crimes committed by communism and Bolshevism are still being covered up by Russian institutions. They have not been condemned even in an historical context.

Why the difference? This is an urgent question that should be addressed by the international community.

The Editors

ACRONYMS

Cheka – From *Vecheka*, the first Soviet security apparatus formed in 1917. General term for the Soviet state security and intelligence organs in any of their incarnations: GPU, NKVD, KGB, etc.

CC – Central Committee

CK – *Centrālā komiteja* - (Latvian) Central Committee

CPSU – Communist Party of the Soviet Union

LCP – *Latvijas Centrālā Padome* – Latvian Central Council

LK(b)P – *Latvijas Komunistiskā (bolševiku) partija* – Latvian Communist Party

LKP – *Latvijas Komunistiskā partija* – Latvian Communist Party

LSDSP – *Latviešu Sociāldemokrātiskā strādnieku partija* – Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party

LSSR – Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic

MGB – *Ministerstvo Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti* – (USSR) Ministry of State Security after March 1946; formerly NKGB

MVD – *Ministerstvo Vnutrennikh Del* – (USSR) Ministry for Internal Affairs after March 1946; formerly NKVD

NKGB – *Narodny Kommissariat Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti* – (USSR) People's Commissariat of State Security until March 1946, then MGB

NKVD – *Narodny Kommissariat Vnutrennikh Del* – (USSR) People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs until March 1946, then MVD

RSFSR – Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic

SS – *Schutzstaffeln* – Nazi Party protection squads

SD – *Sicherheitsdienst* – Nazi Party security service

VDK – *Valsts drošības komiteja* – (Latvian SSR) Committee for State Security

VDM – *Valsts drošības ministrija* – (Latvian SSR) Ministry of State Security

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