



NATIONALISM AND LITHUANIAN DISSENT

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At least two important theoretical questions about the Soviet Union's existence are posed when discussing the nationalities contained in its borders. According to Helene Carrere D'Encausse, in her 1979 book *Decline of an Empire* (Newsweek Books, Inc. in translation from the French), they are: "Has the Marxist ideology of human uniformity gained mastery over this diverse society in which for the first time in history it has taken root and come to power? And is the Soviet Union a workers' state or does it perpetuate an empire? Has Marxism attained its goal of creating a new society which by transcending its differences has realized its communal destiny? ... or has the diversity of nationalities, historic inheritances and mentalities prevailed over an ideology and a government for whom the only reality is the community of workers, with fraternal ties extending across frontiers and ethnic and cultural differences?"¹ Is the Soviet Union really building a new world or is it, in spite of the radical break of 1917 and the years that followed, turning into a society in which national differences still prevail over the sought for uniformity of thought and action?

"According to history, the Empire of the Czars was a 'prison of the peoples' and Lenin opened it."² What Lenin had done was to grasp the breadth of the desire of the national minorities for emancipation from the empire — ". . . and in having understood that by utilizing those desires — which had nothing to do with the working class — he could assure the victory of the workers in his own country."³ His national slogan, added to the Marxist appeal "Workers of the World, Unite!" was "Oppressed Peoples, Rise Up!" With the resulting downfall of the Russian Empire the Bolsheviks were able to set up the Soviet state, hoping for the Revolution to spread quickly to Europe so that the state wouldn't be strictly confined to Russia. When this didn't happen the Bolsheviks had to contend with socialism limited to one country. Before the Civil War it lacked the wheat and iron of the Ukraine, the oil of the Caucasus, and the cotton of Central Asia.

With the end of the Civil War, however, some former nations of the Empire had been reincorporated, such as the Ukraine, Belorussia, Azerbaidzhan, Georgia, Armenia, the Republic of the Far East, Bukhara and Khiva. Countries in the western periphery, such as Finland, the Baltic states and Poland, were outside the U.S.S.R. The Communists had to make a viable, governable state from such diverse elements. What Lenin drafted was a federation plan which he hoped would offset the relations which had grown up between the central government and the republics. He recognized they were characterized by, "nothing short of domination and Russian chauvinism."⁴ National cadres and elites had grown up strenuously protesting against the policy of domination which to their way of thinking was hiding behind the professed internationalism of Moscow. Lenin perceived the extent of the impending setback to the revolution which would occur if Russian chauvinism were to go unchecked. He drafted legal provisions insufficient to offset the actual situation, however, a fact which he acknowledged, but which he attributed to a specific cause about which he could do nothing: "This 100% Russian product, the Great Russian chauvinism that characterizes the Russian bureaucrat." The Russian bureaucrat pervaded the Communist. According to d'Encausse, this was why he scarcely believed in the merits of juridical texts, for, he wrote, the solution arrived at, "reduces the freedom of exit from the Union, with which we justify ourselves, to a scrap of paper."⁵

The juridical texts were a "Federal organization which were to guarantee equality between the Russian nations and non-Russian nations, and this would make all the difference between the 'prison of the peoples' and Soviet egalitarianism."⁶

The goal of the Bolsheviks, in line with Marxist thinking, was for nations to fade away as the Soviet State became united thru class solidarity. Lenin hoped a ... "new community would be achieved in time through education, equal rights, trust."⁷ But, as d'Encausse shows, this ideal was not realizable in fact, something which was recognized by Stalin, who called for "autonomy" rather than federalism. This "autonomy" was to reflect the fact of the Russian nationality's primacy in terms of population and politics. "Its ability to control national territorial formations thru diverse institutions; the Party, economic organs, & the Army, was obvious."⁸ Lenin's idea was won in form, but Stalin's in content. And with each new constitution

drawn up in the U.S.S.R., the original intent of "egalitarian ideology," gave way to highly complicated statutes which responded in principle to highly varied situations.⁹

Today, with the 1977 Constitution, the new historical entity arrived at to describe the situation of the nationalities is, "the Soviet people". This is the historic merger which has supposedly taken place, achieved through the deliberate, planned and successful intervention of the Party, and characterized by a common socio-economic structure, common language of communication (Russian), and common ideology (Marxist-Leninism).

Contrary to this picture of harmony, one of the characteristics of the Soviet scene in the 1970's is the dissent movement, which involves passive and moral opposition to the established order, with periodic violence, and also revolutionary efforts to overthrow the system. The stream of materials reaching the West tends to focus on Moscow to the relative neglect of the periphery, where dissent is often more intense and explosive. *Opposition to Soviet Rule in Lithuania — 1945-1980*, by Thomas Remeikis (Institute of Lithuanian Studies Press, Chicago, Ill., 1980), provides a systematic look at this dissent in one of the Baltic states, one of the buffer states forcibly incorporated by the U.S.S.R. and a prize for the Soviet Union after World War II. He has distinguished between "with-in system" and "system-rejective" forms of opposition, although in a hegemonial regime like the Soviet state, even "reformist" opposition may be essentially subversive. Remeikis points out that "this reformist" dissent is thus mostly restricted to the power struggle at the apex of the ruling elite, or to ... factional opposition."¹⁰ Remeikis, and others, believe that "the unique feature of Lithuanian dissent as compared to that of the Moscow intelligentsia is that the former is largely system-rejective and has considerable mass support."¹¹

He rejects the oft-posed "modernization" theory for dissent in the Soviet Union as not being inclusive enough of the issues addressed by this dissent. The modernization theory emphasizes the need for integration of an increasingly complex society which in the Soviet Union is coordinated through the Party apparatus denying autonomy to the different interest groups. But essential social changes, like collectivization, did not alone bring about the dissent in Lithuania. Rather, thousands opposed the regime from the first day of its imposition — but little was heard about this dissent. And, though modernization creates socio-economic rifts in society, religious, ethnic, tribal and linguistic distinctions cut across socio-economic lines. Marxist economic determination fails to explain non-economic sources of conflict.

Opposition to the Soviet regime in Lithuania stems mainly from national and religious sentiments, although a relative sense of deprivation no doubt aggravates this. The nationalism, or national consciousness and identity of Lithuania had developed over hundreds of years. Lithuania was the last medieval nation to be Christianized and has retained the purity of the Sanskrit roots of its language more than any of the other Indo-European languages of Europe. Its empire stretched, at one time, from the Baltic to the Black seas, and was known for its equitable treatment of all nationalities with-in those boundaries and for the code of laws developed there — the Lithuanian Statute, which was later copied by Napoleon and the United States. Later, in its union with Poland formed by marriage between Polish and Lithuanian nobles, its parliament elected the King who had to be acceptable to both Poland and Lithuania. In this commonwealth both countries had separate armies, currencies and laws. With the partitions of Poland-Lithuania by the Russian Empire, Lithuanian nationalism was forged anew in the crucibles of the 1830, 1863, and 1905 rebellions. In 1920, after armed struggle, Russia reluctantly reneged all interests in Lithuania.* In 1940, Lithuania was again occupied by Russia, and in 1941 there was another uprising, which coincided with the German invasion of Russia. In two days it was free from the Russians, but in 1944, again succumbed to superior force.

The Soviet take-over was not class war, as Soviet propaganda has it, but the stealing of a nation from its people. Any communists in Lithuania at the time were a definite minority and the peasants had their own party, the "Liaudininkai", or Green International party, which was part of a Central European movement for land reform prior to World War II. The Soviet army was not embraced by the majority of the people. Evidence for this is the immediate armed struggle undertaken and the fierce retaliatory repression by the Russians which resulted in thousands of deportations and killings. The definitions of "enemies of the people", "kulaks", and "Hitlerite collaborators" were so broad that whole categories of people, rather than individuals were touched by the excessive terror of the pacification program. After de-Stalinization, even Lithuanian communist leaders admitted that Stalinist terror was responsible for refilling the seemingly endless ranks of the partisan fighters:

"In the period of the personality cult great difficulties used to materialize in our republic since the Soviet government has been established relatively recently. During the class war in those years, when the Lithuanian nation had to break the resistance of bourgeois nationalist bands formed and aided by Hitlerite occupants and intelligence services of America and England, the violations of socialist legality produced considerable harm. The adventurers of Beria's type, unjustly treating innocent people, tried to discredit the policy of the Soviet government, made the struggle against traitors more difficult, and sometimes enabled the true enemies of the people and socialism to evade responsibility. Violations of legality created grave difficulties in our work to rally the masses of working people around the Party and the Soviet government." (The First Secretary of the CPL Antanas Sniečkus, in a speech before the Twenty-Second Congress of the CPSU in 1961).¹²

This speech, however, with its sanitizing thrust, in no way conveys the struggle waged and supported by all segments of the population of the Partisan war, the longest waged against the Soviet Union by any other occupied country, including the Ukraine — from 1944-1952. It was a battle fought for so long, and in the deepest forests which stretch from Lithuania all the way through Belorussia, that it granted some concessions, in the end, from the rulers in Moscow, because they feared its spread to the heartland of the Soviet Union. The impact of the war was felt by both the agrarian and industrial sectors of the economy, which meant that the republic leaders under Krushchev's decentralization system would be able to shape to a degree the economic future of the republic. "National control over economic and political institutions and

containment of immigration were among the consequences of delayed industrial revolution."¹³ Besides the fact that this war reenforced the popular perception of Soviet rule as illegitimate, and helped to preserve national consciousness and the determination to survive as a nation, it provides many of the cadres of national and religious dissent today.

The partisan war, the later institutional nationalism, religious dissent and the current differentiated opposition in Lithuania, all point away from the claims of "the Soviet People" ideal. In its stead, Remeikis, and others, propose the reality of the persistence of a Lithuanian, rather than Soviet, identity. What is called the "internal colonial" model, after Michael Hechter, who attempts to explain the persistence of Scottish identity with this concept, based on Emile Durkheim, says, "ethnic identity is maintained by the relations among ethnic collectivities and by a colonial relationship, by processes of communication and interaction within a particular nationality, and by the cultural distinctiveness of a particular national group from another."¹⁴

So ethnic identity, together with a "sense of relative deprivation", (Ted Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*, Princeton, 1970, p. 37), consisting of the subjective cognition that an individual has about status and life chances, provide a model for reasons for opposition. This model negates both the Western and Marxist conception that modernization necessarily predicts the gradual weakening and elimination of separate ethnic identities. Rather, as in the U.S.S.R., status groups are not necessarily eroded, and associational groups do not necessarily emerge as the primary claimants of the political arena. Neither does the internal colonial model, with the relative sense of deprivation accompanying it, see improved social communication resulting and leading to cultural diffusion. This model denies either the structural or cultural diffusion model which predict the weakening and elimination of separate ethnic identities. Without elaborating anymore on speculations about the future of nationalities in the Soviet Union, however, one can still discuss the types of opposition currently at work to the command-type system of the Soviet Communist Party and government.

In Lithuania in the 1970's four principal currents of opposition can be identified: The Human Rights movement, consisting of the Catholic Rights movement, and the Lithuanian Helsinki Monitoring Group; Catholic nationalism, Liberal Nationalism and the National Left.

Catholic Rights Movement

The available *samizdat*, or underground literature coming from this movement is so voluminous that it tends to inflate the role of the religious movement, but this opposition from the clergy and laity is the most prominent, best organized and well-financed element of dissent today. Because the Church provides a framework for autonomous communication between over 1,000 nuns and brothers organized catacomb fashion for pastoral work, its publications have reached the West on an almost regular basis. This two-pronged movement for religious rights is both a with-in system opposition proceeding from the legal relationship of the Church to the State; and one of passive subversion, or proceeding in a nationalistic direction. The *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*, which was modeled on the Russian dissent paper *Chronicle of Current Events*, has been published since 1972 and is more famous than *Aušra*, (The Dawn), the Catholic nationalist publication. The religious movement was a response to the secularization of a society which had been extremely overtly religious before the Soviet occupation. The Soviet state, of course, is intent on abolishing all such "vestigial remnants" still existing in the minds of the people from pre-communist days. Its policy of harassment, deportation and subversion of the church is by now well-known in the West. This systematic attack on church-centered activities has succeeded in keeping the statistics of practicing Catholics low. Soviet statistics are, however, considered problematical and independent statistics are not available. It is surmised that many who are now categorized as "non-believers" are either secret practitioners, a widely-spread phenomenon, or includes those who by Soviet declaration, "have not internalized their atheistic-materialistic orientation to the point of permanence and thus remain susceptible to religious appeals."¹⁵ Or, for many, religion has probably become a personally and privately expressed, rather than institutionally expressed experience, as there are definite sanctions against open believers practiced in the schools and in the job market. While there is no room here to deal very specifically with the issues being dealt with in the *Chronicle*, they can be summed up as four broad areas of concern. Initially, the Catholic rights movement addressed itself to select problems, such as the number of candidates admitted to the seminary, which decreased yearly, but it quickly went beyond petitions and protests and by 1972 had evolved into a comprehensive campaign against secularization. This involves a deliberate confrontation with civil authorities concerning the respect of freedom of conscience and worship and is conducted within the legal framework of the State's Constitution which is to guarantee these freedoms.

Issues such as the teaching of religion to groups of children, unauthorized processions to the cemetery, or visitations by priests to neighboring parishes are some concerns addressed.

Secondly, it involves mobilization of the laity as well as the Holy See, and Catholics and clergy around the world. The 1972 petition to Brezhnev, signed by 17,000 believers and sent through the United Nations is the best-known example of several such massive actions.

The third component is the development of unofficial means of communication. This involves all publications which are illegal, including prayer books and the *Chronicle*, which has published about 54 issues, averaging 50 single-spaced pages. Four major trials have resulted in convictions in an attempt to silence its voice. The *Anti-Chronicle*, which appeared in 1977, seems to represent some genuine thinking of non-dissident clergy who feel the *Chronicle* is "pernicious" criticism and a splintering tactic directed against the Church. Whether its appearance was KGB inspired cannot be ascertained, apparently.

The fourth component of the movement involves a development of a style of pastoral work appropriate for catacomb conditions. This effort is directed at the institutional church, rather than the regime. Among the concerns are the leadership of the Church, (who shall be appointed Bishops), the personal and pastoral behavior of clergymen, and the admission and consecration of candidates to the priesthood. The dissidents are seeking the approval of the Holy See for the Catacomb Church, and clandestine pastoral work. While the allowed number of seminarians has increased, at the same time, the KGB seeks to place its own candidates.

The relation of the Vatican to Moscow continues to be problematical. The Holy See's "Ostpolitik" — the normalization of Church-State relations on the hierarchical level, without significant concessions to the rights of believers, is explicitly rejected by the dissidents. Whether the Kremlin would see it in its interests to make concessions to organized religion is in the realm of possibility, but always depends on its perception of the political gains won by such toleration. One such gain might be to reduce nationalistic pressures which in Lithuania are partly associated with Catholicism.^{[16](#)}

The Lithuanian Helsinki Group

The original skepticism with which the 1975 Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe was greeted by Lithuanian dissidents unfortunately proved to be justified. The *Chronicle* wrote that, "This game of the powerful of the world produces bitterness and disappointment in the hearts of millions. What can this glorified Helsinki Conference give us when we in Lithuania are not even provided with the full text of the Final Act?"^{[17](#)} Within a year, the Moscow Helsinki Group had explained the changing perspective and persuaded five individuals in Lithuania that the Final Act could serve as a legal point of departure and pressure on the Soviet regime with respect to its human rights policy. The Lithuanian group represented a coalition of principle currents of dissent, although no formal organizations were allowed to be associated. The biographies of the Group members indicate its broad basis. *Viktoras Petkus* came from a poor peasant family and had served several sentences for illegal group activities revolving around possession and dissemination of literary works of censored Lithuanian authors. He had established contact with Moscow dissidents, and for his nationalist, and Helsinki Group work, and work with Catholic youths, was again sentenced to ten-years in a labor camp and five years of internal exile in 1978. The Rev. *Karolis Garuckas*, a Jesuit priest, was among the leaders of the Catholic rights movement until his death in April 1979. He had been denied work permits on several occasions. *Ona Lukauskaitė-Poškienė* is a poet and natural scientist and prominent intellectual of the left, who had spent a long term in the Archangelsk and Vorkuta camps for her activity in the national underground formed in 1944. *Tomas Venclova* is the son of a prominent leftist intellectual and writer in Lithuania, Antanas Venclova, who had joined the Lithuanian Communist Party in 1940. Venclova was in a position, therefore, to profit from the Soviet regime, but became involved in *samizdat* projects and Lithuanian culture, including poetry which he writes. His joining the Helsinki group was a non-conformist response for which he eventually became stripped of his Soviet citizenship, "for behavior smearing the name of a Soviet citizen."^{[18](#)} *Eitan Finkelstein* represents the Jewish emigration movement. A doctor of science in physics, he has contributed to the *samizdat* journal *yews in the USSR*, and has written a perceptive essay on the contemporary political and social situation in Lithuania, among many other activities. Threatened by the KGB, he has not yet been arrested.

The aims of the Lithuanian Helsinki Group were somewhat broader than its Moscow counterpart. In addition to the issue of basic human rights it felt it necessary to remind the Helsinki signatories, "that the contemporary status of Lithuania was established as a result of the entrance of Soviet troops onto her territory on June 15, 1940. In effect, Lithuania, as an occupied country, which has never assented to the forcible incorporation into the Soviet Union, is a special case in which national rights are of critical importance."^{[19](#)}

The group produced 13 reports, one jointly with the Moscow group, on specific violations of human rights including: "the exile of two Catholic bishops, the text of the Decree on Religious Societies, the persecution of a Russian pentecostal, the discrimination against former political prisoners and persecution for political beliefs, the harassment of two Estonian dissidents, the discrimination against Volga Germans living in Lithuania, and the psychiatric mistreatment of non-conformists."^{[20](#)} Soviet repression of the monitors was swift and ruthless. The group has not been able to reconstitute itself to its former level of activity.

Catholic Nationalism

According to Remeikis, the Catholic nationalism in contemporary Lithuania reflects in a moderate way the division between the clerical and secular ideologies in Lithuania. There was early cooperation between the two political trends in the attempt to establish an independent nation but after 1922, with independence, the secular left and the clerical right tore the nation apart, with a resultant coup d'etat which was dictatorial in nature and headed by the secular Nationalists. This ideological division has apparently not been completely eroded by three decades of Soviet rule. Remeikis sums up the situation this way:

"The Catholic Church fought separation of State and Church during the years of independence, seeking something approaching a church state. Ironically, the Soviet policy, if implemented completely, would merge the State and Church, actually creating state church, despite the formal acceptance of the principle of separation of Church and State. The Catholic Church today, fighting to survive the takeover attempts of the State, has now accepted the principle of separation of Church and State, but with certain reservations. It still sees an integral role for itself in society and expects State cooperation in carrying out its pastoral functions. Judging from the contents of the *Chronicle*, the Catholic Church has not made explicit the acceptance of the principle of freedom of conscience and so far has not shown concern for the plight of other religious denominations under the Soviet heel."²¹

The underground journal *Aušra*, (The Dawn), is considered the organ of Catholic Nationalism and has even continued the numeration of its predecessor published in Lithuania from 1883-1886. Considering itself the press of a national rebirth, it seems to consider that national consciousness has been dulled by Soviet oppression and feels its primary task today to work toward the regeneration of national spirit and morality.²² National independence is the long-term goal, but *Aušra* rejects revolutionary activity, concentrating on preserving a nationally conscious and morally strong people — a precondition for independent statehood. It tries to educate the younger generation by including essays on recent history and counters apparently existing opinion that independence for a small nation is not a viable proposition. It views moral degeneration in society as a threat to national survival and fights what it considers this moral decline brought about by atheism and addiction to alcohol. It documents cases of repression against individuals and regime policies of denationalization. It proposes a state much like Israel, in which citizenship would be based on Lithuanian nationality and Catholic religion. It proposes that future economic emphasis should be on agriculture, as Lithuania lacks many natural resources. Industrial development would be geared to the agricultural sector. Labor intensive industries, requiring few natural resources, would be developed, with large industries state-owned and governed on the workers' councils model of Yugoslavia. Small industrial establishments would be privately owned, trade unions and strikes would be permitted. It sees Soviet influence as a slavery, the degenerating effects of which would have to be overcome.

Liberal Nationalism

Politically centrist, Liberal nationalism emphasizes nationality and advocates a more aggressive opposition to the Soviet regime than does the Catholic movement, but it has lacked the resources, central focus, or internal and external communications for a sustained opposition effort.²³ It is, therefore, difficult to define structurally and ideologically but it is manifested in the activities of ethnographic clubs, in the underground publications *Varpas*, (The Bell), and *Laisvės Šauklys*, (The Herald of Freedom), and various clandestine organizations, such as the *Lithuanian Revolutionary Liberation Front*, which underwent periodic changes.

The ethnographic clubs are part of the cultural movement that inspired attempts to form underground political organizations. They were engaged in a broad program of rediscovery and preservation of Lithuanian past, its history and culture which were attacked by the Communist Party and the KGB. Several groups were liquidated, but each time, a new organization appeared. Issues of *The Bell* were devoted to a particular topic such as a statement on Soviet nuclear arms in Lithuania, an appeal for joining the Liberation Front, demand for the reestablishment of Lithuanian independence, an appeal for amnesty for political prisoners, and an issue which contained a lengthy article on the role of M. Suslov in the pacification of Lithuania, an article that he previously circulated as a separate *samizdat* publication. No issues of *The Herald of Freedom* have reached the West and its orientation is judged only indirectly from Catholic circles which republished some of its articles in a journal called *The Little Dawn*, another Catholic publication, which *The Herald of Freedom* criticized. These criticisms give some interesting insights into differences of opinion between the Catholic circles and the liberal nationalist orientation.

It attempted to document, "the lasting national yearning for liberty, the efforts of those people, who under the most impossible circumstances continue the tradition of free Lithuanians."²⁴ There are detailed accounts of the machinations of Hitler and Stalin that led to the destruction of independent Lithuania. It attempted to fight "bolshevik misinformation wherever it manifests." But, most importantly, perhaps, it wanted to be a bridge between those who consider religion as fundamental to nationality, and those who felt nationality was primary. It attacked "cosmopolitanism", as propagated by both the regime and some clergy, and criticized those who negate the role of the Catholic Church, (those anti-clerical liberals or integral nationalists), thus attempting to take a position between extreme clericalism and secular nationalism. It accused the Catholic press of lack of political judgement; criticized it of overemphasizing religious freedom as a goal; reproached it for being unwilling to help finance other underground publications; and charged it with censorship. Lastly, *The Herald of Freedom* objected to the Catholic treatment of atheists as both anti-Church and anti-national, implying that secularization immediately implies being soft on russification. These types of complaints were apparently echoed in a

liberal-socialist underground journal called *Perspektyvos*.²⁵ This Liberal-Socialist point of view was aggressively expressed at a "press conference" of Lithuanian dissidents with three Western journalists who were official guests of the republic government. The Lithuanian dissidents expressed strong criticism of the Russian dissidents, who they claim attempt to be "democratic" without shedding completely a tendency for imperialism by the Soviet Union:

"One cannot liberate man and leave nations in slavery. Russian imperialism is incompatible with democracy. To some Russian dissidents it seems that it would be sufficient to implement human rights in the empire and there would be no need for the enslaved nations to create their own states. But we do not want voluntary slavery. And our goals will not coincide until the Russian dissidents come out for complete freedom for the colonies. The right of national self-determination is now recognized by separate individuals, but this does not change the general outlook of the dissidents. For us there is no common road with the Russians."²⁶

According to Remeikis, this statement reflects the fear that the regime could utilize the nationalism of the Russian masses to keep the national periphery under control. At the same time, these dissidents see a challenge to Russian imperialism in the growing national movements within the Soviet Union. Their advice to the West is, "to support and encourage the struggle of the enslaved nations in Russia for independence. Exactly here is the weak spot of the empire."²⁷

The Nationalist Left

The nationalist left, or nationalist Communist tendency, in Lithuania, has been expressed, as previously mentioned, in the 1978 underground journal *Perspektyvos*, which stated in its first editorial that, "*Perspektyvos* will raise the most topical problems of daily life, will indicate the possible ways of solving them, will provide the readers with an opportunity to express their views and opinions . . . , *Perspektyvos* wants to help find ways out of the present dead end to a renovation, founded on the principles of true democracy and on the basis of international agreements."²⁸ This group has articulated a criticism of the present regime which Remeikis views as a reflection of the Czechoslovak attempt at "socialism with a human face", and the Eurocommunist point of view. In the 11th issue (1979) an article titled, "Concerning the Existing and True Socialism", was indicative of this. Because it is interesting, and informative of what could develop from the Lithuanian-Soviet experience if the existing regime were to be transformed or overthrown, I would like to present the gist of the essay as it was expressed in its first and last paragraph as follows:

"Among the most important accusations against Eurocommunists is that they allegedly are inciting an anti-Soviet mood when they contend that socialism created in Eastern European countries is not yet true socialism, i.e., it is not the same as that about which mankind has dreamt and is still dreaming. In other words, the real, existing socialism does not correspond to the image, which was created, on the basis of historical development, by the brightest minds of the world and which is the realization of liberty and justice. It is a distorted socialism that lacks political liberty, and if this is absent, then there is neither democracy, justice, nor truth itself. Western social democrats go even further. They contend that without liberty in general socialism does not and cannot exist. But this is not quite true because just as capitalism can exist without freedom and democracy, so can socialism. Life confirms this truth; socialism as an economic system exists in the USSR as well as in other countries of Eastern Europe. The matter is this; that the superstructure of this economic formation (and not the whole superstructure but only the method of governing) does not correspond to the principles of socialism. This is why such a socialism cannot be true socialism ...(). It thus follows that socialism, divorced from freedom, is not and cannot be true because it does not correspond to the concept of socialism and at the same time to the truth. Such is the socialism created in the Soviet Union and which the Kremlin wishes to present as the truest of all. Reflecting only a part of the concept, this socialism is incomplete, distorted, and not something completely different, as the social democrats like to contend.

This latter circumstance enables us to draw an important conclusion. Because the really existing socialism is incomplete, it could have the greatest possibility in the future to become the truest socialism. It is only necessary to change the method of governing which contradicts the concept of socialism. As long as the governing method negates political liberties, so long will socialism be freedom without freedom, democracy without democracy, i.e., it will not be true socialism. A truthful viewpoint requires this alleged paradox to be recognized as reality. And not only to recognize that which exists, but also to internalize the factuality, to consider why the created reality is not the same as was the desired and which must be desired. Without the fulfillment of this condition — truthfully and openly — the transformation of (existing) socialism into a true socialism is impossible."²⁹

In conclusion it appears to me that nationalism as a force acting on the Soviet Union, even as shown by only a small, western country such as Lithuania, is an ideological force, if not a physical one, to be reckoned with. Unlike d'Encausse, who foresees Lithuania disappearing as a national consciousness because of its small size and proximity to the West, I do not see the necessity of such an analysis. Given the potentially fluid situation developing in the U.S.S.R. as it faces more crises like the one it is dealing with in Poland, it would seem just as accurate to foresee a culturally pluralistic, or politically independent region developing from the East European area of which Lithuania is a part. Just as the Moslem regions of the U.S.S.R. are constantly developing a more assured stance of independent thinking from the Russian chauvinism of the Soviet system, why cannot the same striving for independence by Lithuanians be recognized? And while nationalism as we know it today may be transformed in the future, the "self-determination of nations" as envisioned by Lenin has yet to become a reality. For those who have died, are imprisoned, been tortured, or forced to leave their homeland because of Soviet domination, may it become one soon.

* In 1920, Lenin personally, on behalf of the Soviet Union signed a peace treaty with Lithuania guaranteeing the latter's independence "for ages and ages".

1 Decline of An Empire, The Soviet Socialist Republics in Revolt, Helene Carrere d'Encausse, 1979 — 1st English Lanugage Ed., Newsweek. Inc., Original title, L' Empire eclate. p. 12.

2 Ibid. p. 13.

3 Ibid. p. 13.

4 Ibid. p. 22.

5 Ibid. p. 23.

6 Ibid. p. 19.

7 Ibid. p. 23.

8 Ibid. p. 23.

9 Ibid. p. 24.

10 Ibid. p. 19.

11 Ibid. p. 20.

12 Ibid. p. 53.

13 Ibid. p. 64.

14 Ibid. p. 31.

15 Ibid. p. 125.

16 The Catholic Church, Dissent and Nationality in Soviet Lithuania, V. Stanley Vardys, East European Quarterly, Boulder, Distributed by Columbia Univ. Press, 1978. p. 221.

17 Opposition to Soviet Rule in Lithuania, 1945-1980, by Thomas Remeikis, Institute of Lithuanian Studies Press, Chicago, Il. 1980. p. 144.

18 Ibid. p. 49.

19 Ibid. p. 150.

20 Ibid. p. 151.

21 Ibid. p. 157.

22 Ibid. p. 155.

23 Ibid. p. 157.

24 Ibid. p. 160.

25 Ibid. p. 161.

26 Ibid. p. 162.

27 Ibid. p. 163.

28 Ibid. p. 164.

29 Ibid. p. 166-167.