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LITUANUS DATA BANK

- Archbishop Vincentas Sladkevičius has been consecrated a cardinal in Vatican this June. The event is a major first for the modern day Catholic Church in Lithuania and Lithuanians in general.

The new Cardinal has been appointed bishop at the age of 37 in 1957 and, because of government suppression, secretly consecrated.. The Soviets prevented him from assuming his Episcopal duties until 1982, forcing him to live in exile confined to a remote locale in Lithuania. Finally, he was allowed to return to Kaišiadoriai to take up the post of the Apostolic Administrator.

- Nijolė Sadūnaitė and Antanas Terleckas were two Lithuanians included in President Reagan's meeting in Moscow with Human Rights activists and dissidents behind the Iron Curtain. Latvians and Estonians were represented, respectively, by Rev. M. Plate and L. Parėk.

- The Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies (AABS) 11th Conference took place June 9-11, 1988 at the University of Maryland College Park Campus, outside of Washington, D.C. The theme was "War and Peace in the Baltic" and covered such subjects as history, social sciences, literature, linguistics, music, and art. Approximately 200 registrants participated in the 50-odd sessions.

Soviet War Criminal in Office

A Soviet war criminal now has a responsible government post in Russian-occupied Lithuania, according to reliable underground sources. He is colonel Petras Raslanas, the organizer of the infamous 1941 Rainiai forest massacre.

Petras Raslanas now lives in Vilnius (capital city of Soviet-occupied Lithuania) and works for the so-called Soviet ministry for religious affairs. The ministry determines who is permitted to enter the Kaunas Catholic priests' seminary, appoints priests to parishes and monitors sermons for anti-Soviet content.

The massacre of Rainiai took place in a small forest near the city of Telšiai (Lithuania) on June 24-25, 1941. Throughout that night Raslanas and his assistants tortured and killed 73 Lithuanian "political" prisoners, many teenagers and high school students among them. Their bodies were mutilated so badly that when they were exhumed three days later, only 27 victims could be identified.

Raslanas and all of his associates should be put on trial for war crimes.

—Excerpt from Baltic Bulletin, March 1988.

LITHUANIAN JEWS

Words pronounced by Dr. Aba Gefen, Ambassador of Israel (Ret.) Chairman of the "Association of the Lithuanian Jews in Israel", on the occasion of the inauguration of the Lithuanian Section of the Memorial "Valley of the Destroyed Communities" at Yad-Vashem, Jerusalem on Sunday, 24 April 1988.

Dear friends,

We have gathered here today to inaugurate the Lithuanian Section of this Memorial, "Valley of the Destroyed Communities", where there are engraved the names of all the Jewish Communities of Lithuania which were the first victims of the German attack on the Soviet Union 47 years ago, and the "Association of the Lithuanian Jews in Israel" considers it as its obligation to remind once more the Jewish as well as the non-Jewish world of the atrocious role of Lithuanians in the destruction of Lithuanian Jewry.

The few remnants of the Lithuanian Jews, whose number before the Second World War was about 160,000, cannot forget and will not forget that on the outbreak of the war the smaller Jewish communities of Lithuania were exterminated exclusively by Lithuanians and the bigger ones — with their active participation. Well known is also the terrible part played by Lithuanians in the liquidation of Jewish ghettos and concentration camps outside Lithuania. Unfortunately, a significant number of the Lithuanian murderers move around freely and even enjoy the support of Lithuanian organizations.

Even the existence of a handful of Lithuanian Righteous, Chassidey Umot Haolam, Gentiles who helped Jews to survive at the risk of their own lives, does not lessen the heavy guilt of Lithuanians — intelligentsia, officials, farmers, workers and artisans; young, and old — for their atrocity toward their Jewish neighbours during the Nazi occupation of Lithuania.

EDITORIAL RESPONSE

Dr. Aba Gefen's defamatory statement against the entire Lithuanian nation cannot go unanswered. It would be useless to address ourselves solely to an emotional and malicious anti-Lithuanianism. Instead let us consider more dispassionately some of the facts known to us.

The history of Lithuania during WW-II was a continuing series of occupations: initially the Soviets (1940-1941), followed by Germans (1941-1944), followed by the Soviets again in 1944. Let the record show that both, the Nazis and the Soviets, were aggressors and enemies of Lithuania. Lithuanians had effective underground movements resisting the Soviets, the Germans, then the Soviets again.

The persecution of Jews which took place during the German occupation was not the commencement but the grim continuation of a painful history of perfidy, torture, and death. A year before, in June of 1940, starting with the onset of the Soviet occupation, Lithuanians were being arrested, tortured, deported, or massacred. There were Jews who served the Soviets and in so doing participated in criminal acts against the Lithuanian nation. Some Jewish scholars of this period admit that this active role in the Sovietization of the country led to subsequent tragedies. However, in our view, this interpretation gives Lithuanians no basis to blame all the Jews for the atrocities committed. We subscribe to this position in spite of the fact that we know of no Jewish participation in the Lithuanian underground during the first Soviet occupation.

There were individual Lithuanians who participated in the German-driven murder of the Jews. However, at the time the country was paralyzed by the German occupation. The Lithuanian provisional government of 1941 was severely restricted by the Germans and later dissolved. The German policy of annihilation of the Jews by no means represented the attitude of the Lithuanian nation, nor the consensus of its people.

After WW-II, without a genuine, free Lithuanian government, there was no way to try or otherwise to assess the accountability of those individuals, who chose to serve either Nazi or Soviet interests and in doing so committed criminal acts against humanity, the Lithuanian nation, Lithuanian Jews included. This situation exists today, in spite of the Soviet propaganda, Soviet "evidence" against certain individuals, or the recent U.S. Office of Special Investigation trials — the latter, cynically, not based on criminal evidence, but rather on immigration statements.

It is a fact that the Lithuanian nation was inimical to Nazism from the beginning. Lithuania was the first country in Europe to bring the brown shirt gangs of Klaipėda to trial in the mid-1930's and to sentence their leaders, Neumann and Sass, to long prison terms.

During the Nazi occupation of the country, Lithuania refused to form an SS legion, thus becoming the only European nation to do so. German attempts at mobilization were not successful, even though refusal to join the work battalions or army

units was punishable by death.

During Lithuania's period of independence not one law was enacted restricting the rights of Jewish citizens.

Lithuania acted very energetically to protect the property rights of Jewish Lithuanians when, in 1938, Germany enacted a measure whereby Jewish owners of industrial firms could be ordered to sell or to liquidate. Lithuania was one among only eight European nations which protested against this measure.

During the German-Soviet-Polish war of 1939, the Lithuanian government allowed Jewish people to enter the country ahead of the advancing Germans and Soviets. Subsequently in 1940, over 5,000 of these Jews emigrated to China, to an area then occupied by Japan.

In drafting this reply we were strengthened by an statement attributed to Israel's Golda Meir in 1972, in Vienna, Austria. During an international congress of social democrats, a demand was put forth that the Lithuanians be thrown out since they were not representatives of their country. Mrs. Meir stood up and declared that if the Lithuanians were denied admittance, she would leave the conference as well.

It is the saddest of facts that man is capable of the most ineffable acts of inhumanity against his fellow man.

When, in W.B. Yeats' phrase, "mere anarchy [was] loosed upon the world," and "while the wars [were] full of passionate intensity," let us at least begin to show that the best did indeed not "lack all conviction", at least not all of the best. Certainly what was best in the Lithuanians, their humanism in the midst of the war's blood tide, has lacked a voice. The voices that could have spoken were silenced, and continue to be silenced, by the Soviet occupiers of Lithuania whose interests are very well served by the purposeful distortion of history. We also see calculated manipulations of those deeply wounded by the war and of those others who, for whatever reasons of their own, are willing to be a party to the defamation of an honorable and long-suffering nation.

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SILVER JUBILEE OF LITHUANIAN FOUNDATION

Twenty-five years ago, Dr. Antanas Razma approached some of his colleagues (economists, financiers, lawyers, physicians, businessmen, and other professionals) with a proposition to found a \$1 million institution in the hope of contributing to the reconstruction of a free Lithuania. The fundamental principle of the organization consisted of the idea that the donated capital would not be spent, but would rather be saved for the day when Lithuania, one of the Baltic states occupied by the Soviet Union during World War II, would regain its independence. The earnings obtained from this capital would be used to fill the short-term needs of those who had emigrated.

The Lithuanian Community of the USA, Inc., having been informed of the plans to establish such an institution, abandoned its own similar project and chose to join Dr. Razma and his associates in this venture. The Board of Directors of the Lithuanian Community of the USA confirmed the statutes on February 4, 1962. The organization was incorporated in the state of Illinois on March 14, 1962 under the name Lithuanian Foundation.

Committees were immediately formed in the cities where larger numbers of Lithuanians had settled for the purpose of conducting membership drives. Since the concept was a new one to the recent émigrés, authorized representatives of the foundation had to become fully informed of the details of the operation in order to explain effectively the organization's goals to would-be contributors. The Lithuanian press, radio, and prominent community leaders helped to popularize the idea and raise substantial sums. Many newcomers to the U.S. proved hesitant to donate their hard-earned money to a cause of which the results were not immediately visible. Consequently, the Foundation began to sponsor concerts, recitals, plays, and banquets. Soon, bequests also became a major source of funds. At present, close to one million dollars have already been willed to the Foundation.

Twelve years passed before the one-million-dollar mark was attained. The second million dollars were collected by 1980, in half of the previous donation period. The capital surpassed four million dollars recently and three million dollars in 1984, when an anonymous individual promised \$100,000 to the Foundation on the condition that at least half of this sum be matched by other private donations within three months. Public response was overwhelming. Not only was the \$50,000 challenge met within that brief time period, but this benefactor's actual pledge was actually eclipsed. A new annual contribution record was set at \$420,437, increasing total capital to \$3,102,297 and total membership to 5,560. With the hope of being able to finance all American-Lithuanian cultural and educational activity fund requests in the future, the Foundation has ambitiously announced its sights set upon \$5,000,000.

A Finance Committee is assigned the task of ascertaining that this capital is invested in the safest, most profitable manner under the given economic conditions. Investment counselors are employed to manage liquid assets consisting of

government obligations and corporate shares.

The Foundation owns real estate and, through its subsidiary, the Lithuanian Institute for Fine Arts, some works of art: paintings by critically acclaimed artist Pranas Domšaitis and collections of works by V. Dubožinskis and Viktoras Petravičius. The Institute is incorporated in the state of Illinois where it operates independently from the Foundation and has its own tax-exempt status. It arranges gallery exhibitions for the artworks which it numbers among its holdings.

Both the Lithuanian Foundation and the Lithuanian Community of the USA participate in the Grants Committee, where they are each represented by three members. This committee and the Scholarship Subcommittee hold a series of meetings to hear project proposals and evaluate hundreds of requests. During its existence, the Foundation has allotted more than \$2,000,000 worth of grants to individuals and organizations. In each of the last two years, a quarter of a million dollars was entrusted to the Grants Committee for distribution. Unfortunately, there are sufficient funds to respond positively, in whole or in part, to only about 42 percent of these requests.

At the annual members' meetings, Lithuanian Foundation members receive one vote for each \$100 contributed to the organization. Members elect an 18-person Board of Directors to the Foundation as well as a three-person Audit Committee. All of the leadership, except for the salaried general manager and accountant, donate their time and efforts to the organization.

Through their contributions, the members of the Lithuanian Foundation have demonstrated their commitment to preserving their ethnic heritage and national identity. Among the many who have benefited from the distribution of the Foundation's income are individual students, organizations and publications, the Lithuanian press and radio, language and cultural-education institutions, Lithuanian arts, and various community events and programs.

For the last twenty-five years, the Foundation has played a vital role in sustaining American-Lithuanian activities. It is hoped that the Foundation will continue to flourish, and that it will succeed in attaining all of its ambitious goals.

Ramoną Steponavičius

Inquiries for information on fundable proposals or tax-deductible donations are invited. Write to the Lithuanian Foundation, 3009 W. 59th Street, Chicago, IL 60629.

DIALOG WITH POLISH UNDERGROUND

In 1985, the Paris-based Polish language Journal "Kontakt" (No. 4, p. 78), published a joint statement by four of Poland's underground organizations, offering a suggestion concerning the borders of Poland with those of the Ukraine, Byelorussia, and Lithuania. This statement also appeared in the French publication "Diagonale Est/Ouest" (Oct. 1985, No. 5, pp. 3-4).

The World Lithuanian Community (WLC) maintains contact with one of the signatory groups — the Liberal Democratic Party "Independence" (Niepodleglosc). Upon inquiry, it was learned that the Poles await responses not only from Lithuania, Byelorussia, and the Ukraine, but also from the emigre organizations of these nations (among them the Lithuanian Community). The WLC Commission of Social Affairs has suggested that the Lithuanians not allow the aforementioned statement to languish in silence, but to respond to it, indicating essential conditions for renormalizing relations between Lithuanians and Poles. The WLC Executive approved such a response. Therefore, we announce the translation of the original Polish underground statement as well as the response of the WLC.

To our brother Ukrainians, Byelorussians, and Lithuanians,

An Offer to Adopt a Common Position Regarding the Borders of Poland-Ukraine, Poland-Byelorussia, Poland-Lithuania

In the wake of increased international dialogue and cooperation, it is essential to finally resolve the issue of boundaries of Poland with those of the Ukraine, Byelorussia, and Lithuania. Because the resolution of boundary problems inherently requires the cooperation of both parties, we suggest that the independent representatives as well as political centers of the interested nations join us in undersigning the document below. This document becomes binding for the above-mentioned nations contingent upon unanimous endorsement.

Our Common Resolution

Territorial conflicts among the Poles, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, and Lithuanians have often engendered discord among these nations thereby precariously weakening them. The only means available to quench these conflicts is the preservation of the present frontiers. This is a vital interest to our nations seeking independence. We will seek that this principle be confirmed by representatives of all the above-mentioned nations.

To those who would accuse us of sanctioning violence and coercion because we concur — as did the 1975 Helsinki Conference — with the implication of the Yalta agreements regarding this region, we reply:

— we condemn and recognize as void each and every division, seizure, annexation, occupation, partitioning into "spheres of influence," as well as other coercive acts within our regions, and particularly the crimes of Stalin, including any and all pacts and agreements made by him with any partner; no one has the right to decide our affairs except we;

— we are of a uniform opinion that revisions of boundaries between the territories of our nations would be contradictory to our national interests as well as our friendship and cooperative spirit, because such revisions in this region would never satisfy all and someone would inevitably feel short-changed;

— therefore, we believe that justice should not be sought at the expense of further injuries; the traditions of most of the cities and towns are different now than they had been for centuries and if we attempt to resume the old identity, we would have to destroy the new one, once again injuring multitudes and leveling monuments of our new age.

— therefore, we believe, that what has occurred must remain, even though we condemn the injury which has been inflicted. The present boundaries must remain, because we understand that to be in the best interests of our nations and such is our common will.

We understand, that the borders must be open and the population must be allowed to reside on either side pursuant to statutes effective on both sides. May the seas of blood and tears never repeat, nor the destruction of unique civilizations and cultural values, nor the infinite human tragedies which so many times in the past have afflicted our countries and their neighbors in the form of genocide, deportations and other methods of ethnic persecution. May these never again occur even in a lesser degree or a diluted fashion. The Polish minority in the Ukraine, Byelorussia, and Lithuania, as well as the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, and Lithuanian minorities in Poland, must exercise all rights which empower them to maintain their national identity and national culture, and the legacy of past generations must be preserved.

We recall the past but must look toward the future. Our nations vitally need mutual respect and concord, just like Oxygen and Light, that they may be strong and able to pursue the noble ideals of Europe.

We wait responses from interested parties, whether by agreement, by offer of alternatives, or even by polemics. It is only through agreement, and not by way of unilateral declarations, that we can and must approach mutual and constructive assurance.

Warsaw, December 16, 1984

the organization "Freedom-Justice-Independence"

the political movement "Liberation"

the Liberal Democratic Party "Independence"

the political group "The Will"

REPLY TO THE FOUR POLISH UNDERGROUND ORGANIZATIONS

*The Lithuanian World Community welcomes the joint proposal of the four Polish underground organizations — the Organization **Wolnosc-Sprawiedliwosc-Niepodleglbs'c** (Freedom-Justice-Independence), the Political Movement **Wyzwolenie** (Liberation), the Liberal Democratic Party **Niepodleglosc** (Independence) and the Political Group Wola — regarding Polish-Ukrainian, Polish-Byelorussian and Polish-Lithuanian boundaries. It is obviously true that "Territorial conflicts have often divided, led to struggles and dangerously weakened the Poles, as well as the Ukrainians, the Byelorussians and the Lithuanians." The four Polish underground organizations state that "The only way to overcome such conflicts is to preserve present boundaries. This is in the vital interest of our nations, engaged in a struggle for freedom . . . Present boundaries must be retained since that is our nations' interests, as we understand them, and since that is our common will." We believe that this proposal is an important step toward resolution of all problems dividing the Lithuanian and Polish nations, their mutual reconciliation and effective cooperation in the common struggle for freedom and independence.*

In order to achieve such a reconciliation, it is essential that the Polish nation fully and unconditionally recognizes and respects Lithuania's (of Lithuania) independence and territorial integrity with Vilna (Vilnius) as its capital and the Vilna (Vilnius) territory as an integral, and undivided (unpartitioned) part of Lithuania. We maintain that the historical boundary that existed before the last partition of the Commonwealth of Two Nations in 1795, remains the valid border between Lithuania and Poland except in those sectors where it has been changed by treaties. Nevertheless, we agree that in spite of any legal, historical or ethnic territorial claims by any country, the existing factual Polish-Ukrainian, Polish-Byelorussian and Polish-Lithuanian boundaries must remain as they are, and they have to be accepted as inviolable from either side of the frontier. Any conflicting claims can only be resolved by free and equal agreements (reached) signed by free and independent nations according to their free will after their liberation.

The rights of ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities must be respected in all four countries. Historical and cultural monuments significant to any of the four nations or any minority have to be preserved and protected. Minorities, however, have an obligation to be loyal to their country and to respect its independence and territorial integrity.

We also condemn and hold null and void any and all partitions, seizures, occupations and annexations, fraudulent elections and incorporations, establishment of spheres of influence and other coercive actions in Byelorussia, Poland, Lithuania and the Ukraine whether they were perpetrated by outside powers or by any of our four nations against each other. Thus, we condemn the secret Molotov-Ribbentrop agreements, the fraudulent elections in the Soviet occupied countries and annexations imposed by threats, fraud and coercion. At the same time we must recall the fact that Lithuania and the Lithuanian nation have never recognized the 1920-1939 occupation of Vilna (Vilnius) and the Vilna (Vilnius) territory.

We agree that without forgetting the past we should look toward the future and seek mutual respect, accord and cooperation.

We salute the four Polish underground organizations engaged in the struggle for freedom and independence of Poland, and we express to them our respect and solidarity.

Lithuanian World Community

Chicago, 24 November 1986.