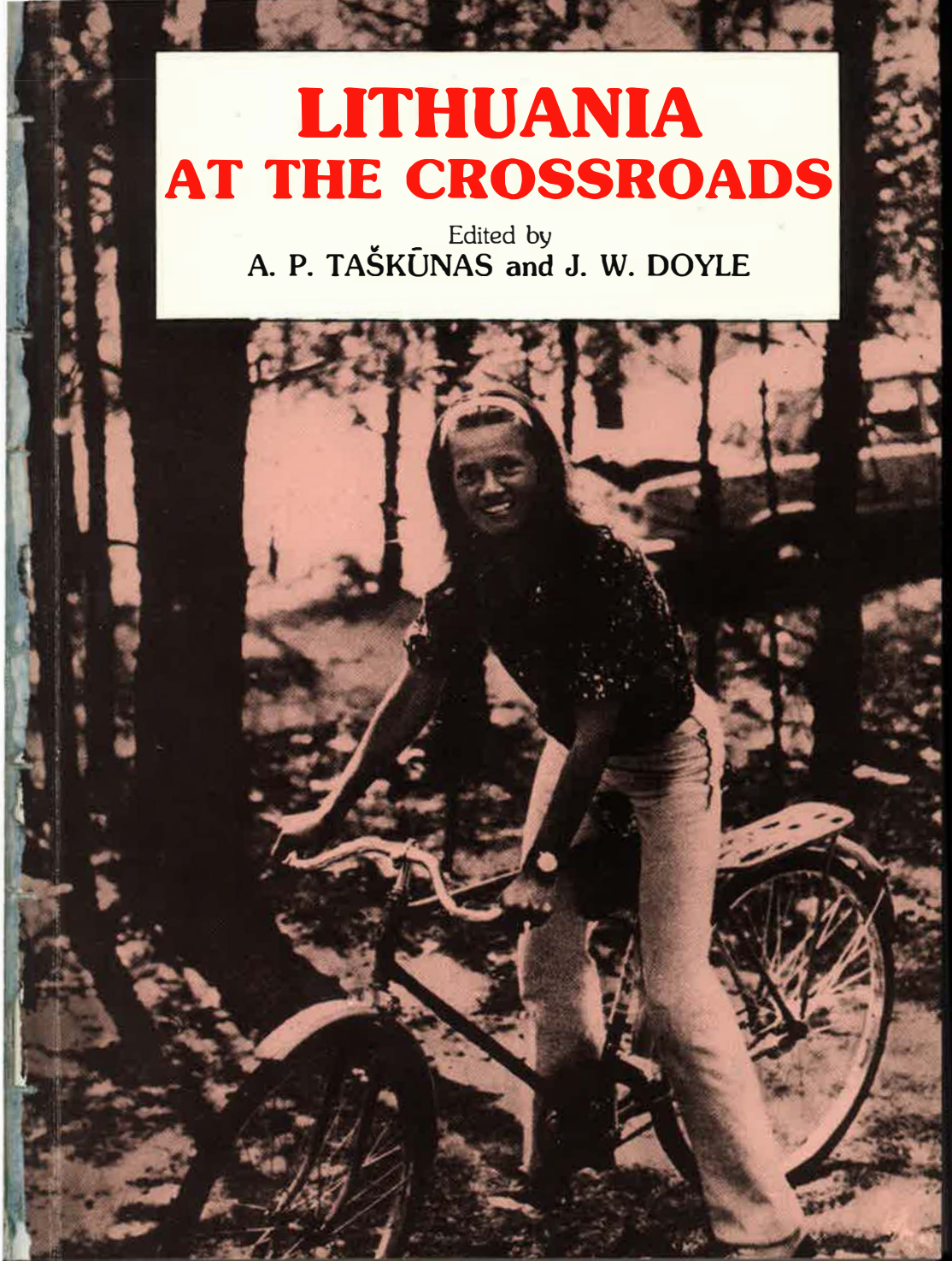



LITHUANIA AT THE CROSSROADS

Edited by
A. P. TAŠKŪNAS and J. W. DOYLE





LITHUANIA was the first republic to break away from the giant Soviet Union. On March 11, 1990, the newly elected Lithuanian Parliament restored the country's independence, and started off on the thorny road to freedom.

Many in the West believed that the new Lithuania — with 3½ million people living in the same land area as Tasmania — would not be able to survive economically. But Lithuania has. By now, virtually all Western countries have recognised Lithuania as an independent state.

This book offers an excellent insight into present-day Lithuania: a fascinating country about which insufficient is known. A panel of experts from the University of Tasmania discuss the legal, economic and environmental challenges facing Lithuania now. There are also poems, a historical essay and a glimpse at the Lithuanian folk-art.

LITHUANIA AT THE CROSSROADS

Recommended Retail Price \$7.50.

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LITHUANIA AT THE CROSSROADS

Selected Readings

Edited by
Algimantas P. TAŠKŪNAS
and
John W. DOYLE



Sandy Bay, Tasmania:
T.U.U. Lithuanian Studies Society
1991

ŪRA NESVA

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Foreword

I am delighted to see the Tasmanian University Union Lithuanian Studies Society publish the fourth volume of papers on Lithuanian matters, this time entitled *Lithuania at the Crossroads*.

Perhaps the motif for this collection is supplied by the author of one of the essays, Lithuanian President Landsbergis, who writes:

“There is no shortage of advice for solving the Lithuanian question these days. But to solve the problem, one has to understand it.”

These papers are valuable because they enable the Lithuanian situation to be understood. The collection includes contemporary politics, Lithuanian ecological issues, the legitimacy of Lithuania’s claim on independence, economic issues, Lithuania and international affairs and models of a Lithuanian/Soviet relationship.

I commend the work of the society in sponsoring serious debate on Lithuanian matters — a debate which must also enrich our community beyond the immediate University sphere. That the TUU Lithuanian Studies Society has been successful in its work may be judged by the quality of a Hobart Senior Secondary Student’s independent project on Lithuania undertaken as part of her history course, which is included as part of this volume.

I, for one, will read and watch news reports of Lithuanian developments with greater understanding.

Michael FIELD
Premier of Tasmania



● The old city of Vilnius

A woodcut by Birutė Demkutė, a contemporary Lithuanian graphic artist. Born in 1924, she graduated in 1951, from the Institute of Art in Kaunas, Lithuania. Miss Demkutė is best known for her landscapes and book illustrations.

She has exhibited in Lithuania, as well as in England, Czechoslovakia, USA and Canada.

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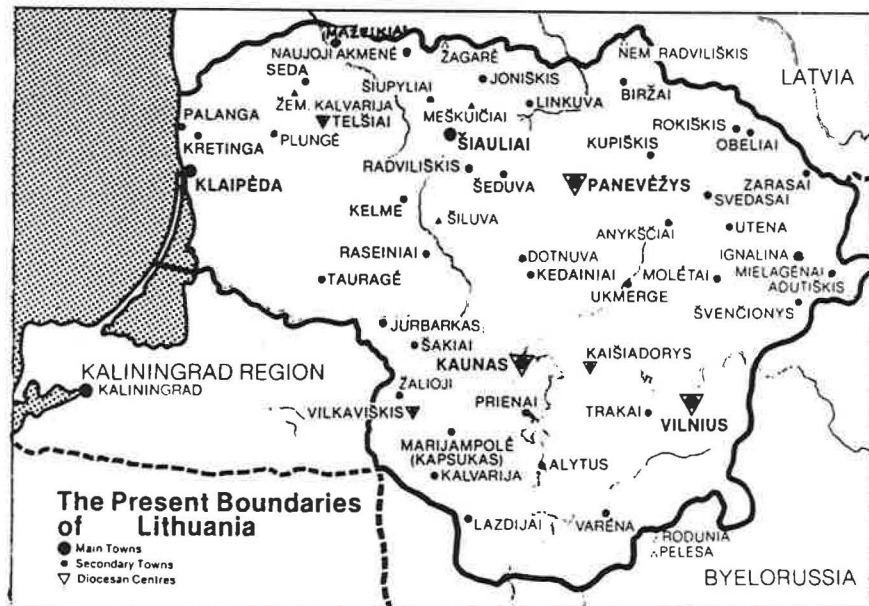
Introduction

On March 11, 1990, the Parliament of Lithuania restored the Republic's independence. This was a courageous action by the first freely elected Lithuanian Parliament in 50 years. The Lithuanian breakaway from the Soviet empire was met with enthusiasm by some observers, and with caution by others. Many in the West believed that the new Lithuania could not survive economically. But it has, and virtually all Western countries have since recognised Lithuania's independence.

Last year, within weeks of this historic declaration of independence, the Lithuanian Studies Society at the University of Tasmania organised a series of lunchtime talks, specifically addressing this event. This book contains a synthesis of those talks, given by leading experts in their fields. They deal with the legal, economic and environmental challenges facing Lithuania now, as seen by the authors.

I thank all our supporters for their help during 1990. In particular, we are indebted to the Australian Lithuanian Foundation and to the Societies Council of Tasmania University Union. Their generous financial grants have enabled us to sell this book to the public, at a greatly reduced price.

Simon TAŠKŪNAS,
President,
Tasmania University Union Lithuanian Studies Society



Lithuania — Main Facts

Location — On eastern shores of the Baltic sea.

Area — 67,788 square kilometres (26,173 square miles).
Greatest distances: east-west 336 kilometres (210 miles),
north-south 192 kilometres (120 miles).

Climate — Temperate, mean annual temperature 5°C (41°F).

Capital — Vilnius (500,000 inhabitants).

National holiday — February 16 — day of restoration of
Lithuania's independence (1918).

Population — 3,539,000, urban — 64%, rural — 35%.

National Language — Lithuanian.

Religion — Catholic 85%.

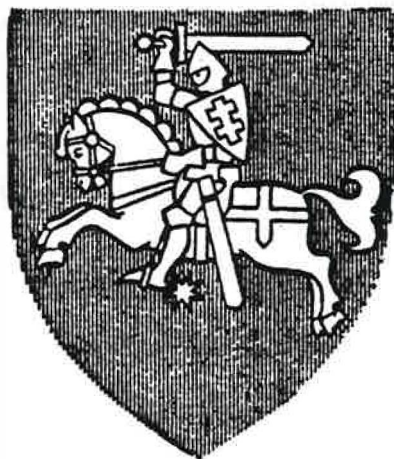
Nationality — Lithuanian 80%.

Agriculture — 24% — barley, cattle, flax, oats, pigs, potatoes,
rye, sheep, wheat.

Forest Products — birch, fir, pine.

Manufacturing and Processing — agricultural and forest
products, electrical products, machinery.

National Flag — three horizontal stripes, coloured (from top to
bottom) yellow, green, red.



Lithuanian Coat of Arms — Vytis (Knight on Horseback).

Lithuania: An Introduction

Katherine Ross

St Michael's Collegiate School, Hobart

Lithuania is a picturesque country, situated on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea, and bordering Latvia on the north, Russia on the east and Poland on the south. It is a country of gently rolling hills, many forests, rivers and streams, and deep clear lakes. Its principal natural resource is fertile agricultural land. Lithuania is roughly the same size as Tasmania. About 80 per cent of the people of Lithuania are Lithuanians, a nationality group that has its own customs and language. About 9 per cent of the population are Russians, and a somewhat smaller number are Poles. About 85 per cent of the Lithuanians are Roman Catholics. Most of the rest of Lithuanians belong to the Orthodox churches. Lithuania was officially converted to the Roman Catholic faith in 1387. Lithuania's culture developed under Roman Catholic influence, and Catholic traditions remain part of the people's lives. The Lithuanians are a distinct group of the Indo-European family of nations, distinct from the Slavic and German branches, with their own ancient culture and language. They inhabited the Baltic shores long before the Christian era, and at the dawn of European history, had attained a level of civilization equal to that of many other European peoples of those days.

A long history of freedom

Lithuania has suffered from many major Eurasian movements throughout history because of its geographic location and aggressive neighbours. Starting with the Tartar invasion from the East and the Teutonic onslaught from the West in the 13th and 14th centuries, and ending with the First and Second World Wars in the 20th century. Lithuania has been frequently cast into the midst of conflict. It had to withstand crushing forces from all sides, but never lost its determination for survival.

The year 1236 A.D. is generally designated as the beginning of the Lithuanian state. During the next 200 years, under the leadership of powerful and wise rulers, the Lithuanian state extended its borders deep into Slavic territory, reaching the Black Sea on the south and the Baltic Sea on the west. Under the rule of Vytautas the Great Lithuania was elevated to a rank equal to the great European powers of the period.

The growing power of Russia forced the Lithuanians to enter into a union with Poland. The union, however, did not prevent the decline of the state, which continued for the following two centuries. Wars and internal strife weakened the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth to such a degree that in the 18th century it was partitioned by Russia, Prussia, and Austria. With the last partition in 1795, most of Lithuania fell to Russia, an occupation which lasted until 1915. During the period of Russian rule, Lithuanians experienced many serious economic, cultural, and political hardships. A number of revolts were staged by the Lithuanian people. In 1863, after the second major revolt, the printing of Lithuanian books using the Latin alphabet was outlawed by the Russian administration. This prohibition fuelled a tremendous Lithuanian national revival before the ban on printing books was lifted in 1904.

During World War 1 German troops occupied Lithuania. The idea of national self-determination could not help but encourage the intensely nationally aware Lithuanian people to seek political independence. On February 16, 1918 the Lithuanian National Council, meeting in Vilnius, declared the restoration of Lithuania's independence with a president and a parliament. The first president was Antanas Smetona (1874-1944).

A land-reform program broke up large estates and divided them among the volunteers and landless farmers who had fought for Lithuanian independence. During the period of independence Lithuania made great strides in all fields of life. The economy was reconstructed and ready for a take-off of intense industrialization. A system of national education was created and illiteracy was practically wiped out. National culture finally could develop without the impediments of foreign oppression. A new generation of artists, scientists, politicians, and economists was ready to take on further challenges of national development. However, the hopes of a bright future and freedom vanished with the Soviet occupation and the Second World War.

Lithuania again became a victim of its powerful neighbours. In 1939 Germany and the Soviet Union reached an agreement which led to the Soviet occupation of Lithuania. In 1940 Lithuania was invaded by the Red Army. Atrocities followed, including the murder or deportation to Siberia of over 40,000 people in the first year of occupation. They quickly set up a puppet government and Lithuania was 'admitted' to the Soviet Union. The Western democratic world



● During their occupation of Lithuania (1941-44), the Nazis killed many thousands of innocent Lithuanian citizens — Jews as well as non-Jews. The death toll would have been even higher, but for the Lithuanians who risked their lives to rescue the unfortunate victims. Pictured above: Mrs Gita Belkindienė, a Jewess (centre) and her family were saved by Lithuanian farmers in the Alsėdžiai area.

denounced the illegal Soviet and Nazi acts in and against Lithuania. A number of Western democracies, including the United States, Great Britain, France, Canada, Australia, the Vatican and others are not recognizing the incorporation of Lithuania into the USSR to the present day. According to international law, Lithuania's sovereignty has been temporarily suspended, but not abolished.

On June 22, 1941, Hitler's Germany invaded its former partner, the Soviet Union. The Lithuanian people at that moment revolted against the Soviet occupant and, before the German armies occupied the country, declared the re-establishment of independent Lithuania. A Provisional Government was formed and began the task of reconstruction.

It was opposed by the Nazi Germans though and it ceased to function. Under strict Nazi German control the Lithuanian economy and the Lithuanian people were exploited for the Nazi war aims. Most of the Jewish population which was 7.15% in 1935 was ruthlessly exterminated by the Nazis or died fighting against them. (About 10% of Lithuania's Jews managed to survive the Holocaust). In the summer of 1944, as the German armies retreated, the Soviet Red Army again began the occupation of Lithuania. Lithuanian resistance against the Soviet suppression of Lithuania's independence began with the Soviet

invasion and continues to this day. From 1944 to 1952, well organised military units of the Lithuanian resistance movement waged a guerilla war against the Soviet military occupation in which about 50,000 lives were lost on each side. A large Soviet military force and massive deportations to Siberia were used to contain the resistance movement. The late 1950's and the 1960's were relatively quiet years, when Soviet institutions were finally established.

Soviet government had made the practice of many of the old Lithuanian customs very difficult. Soviet laws forbade religious instruction, religious publications, and charity work. The Soviet government also discouraged church attendance. A person who attended church may have been kept from good educational and job opportunities. Before the beginning of World War II Lithuania's best customers were Germany and Great Britain. After Lithuania was annexed to Russia, most of its trade was with other parts of Russia.

The Communists directed all education. The Lithuanian people spoke Lithuanian, but the Soviet government tried to increase the use of Russian. All schools had to teach Russian and most television programs were in Russian.

Lithuania was a rural society until the Soviet conquest. About three-fourths of its people lived in rural villages. The Soviet government ended the traditional Lithuanian style of life by industrializing the country. The government took away private land and combined small farms into large state-owned farms. They built many factories and large numbers of people moved from rural areas into cities to work in these factories. About two-thirds of the people lived in urban areas. Many Russians moved to Lithuania after the Soviet take-over. They made up only a small minority of the population, but they held many important management and policy making positions.

It is through culture and faith that the Lithuanian people today seek to assure for the coming generations a free and independent life.

After forty years of Soviet rule, the quest for national freedom and independence remains an obvious goal in the life of the Lithuanian nation.

A momentous event for the Lithuanian nation occurred on March 11, 1990. By unanimous vote, newly elected representatives declared the restoration of the free, independent Republic of Lithuania. The declaration, which was proclaimed in the capital city of Vilnius,

followed the first freely held elections during 50 years of continuing occupations. The declaration was no small task for a country that is still occupied by the Soviet Union. It was made in the face of Mr Gorbachev's recent mixture of threats and veiled promises.

Lithuania's idea of liberty and independence is much stronger than the armour of war machines or spiritual and physical oppression. In Lithuania this idea has survived half a century of intensive brainwashing. This victorious idea belongs to the people of Lithuania. Ever since the Soviet ultimatum of June 14, 1940 Lithuanians resisted the occupations of the Soviets, the Nazis, and the Soviets again.

Lithuania's recent aspirations are also shared by their Baltic neighbours. On August 23, 1989 two million people linked hands from Tallinn to Vilnius and announced their programme called the Baltic Way. The peaceful restoration of statehood for Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, while guaranteeing the rights of all nationalities in the Baltic republics, would seek freedom, democracy and economic progress. By publicly declaring their independence, Lithuanians left no doubt that they wanted democracy and justice peacefully, a way of life denied to them for half a century.

Events leading up to Lithuania's declaration of independence

June 3, 1988. At a meeting of intellectuals in Vilnius the Lithuanian citizens' movement, Sąjūdis, is formed, calling for greater political, economic and cultural autonomy. A rally of 50,000 demonstrate support for Sąjudis, and demand that delegates to the 19th Communist Party Conference press for greater national autonomy.

July 9, 1988. Lithuanian Communist Party Secretary announces the forthcoming legalization by Moscow of the banned flag of independent Lithuania.

September 3, 1988. Tens of thousands form a human chain along the Baltic sea coast to protest its pollution.

10,000 form a human chain around the Ignalina nuclear power plant demanding safety inspections by an international team of experts.

October 7, 1988. 100,000 gather in Vilnius to witness the raising of the now legal Lithuanian national flag over the tower of the historic medieval castle on Gediminas hill.

October 22-23, 1988. Sajūdis holds its founding Congress in Vilnius, attended by more than 1100 delegates, and elects a 220 member national assembly and an executive council of 35. Professor Vytautas Landsbergis is elected to head Sajūdis. Proceedings are broadcast live on TV including an address by Antanas Terleckas, leader of the Lithuanian Freedom League, calling for immediate restoration of Lithuania's independence. The government announces the return to the faithful of the historic Vilnius cathedral which had been turned into an art museum 48 years ago. The next day the recently anointed Cardinal Vincentas Sladkevičius celebrates Mass outside the cathedral with thousands of worshippers in attendance.

November 11-14, 1988. Politburo member Nikolai Styunka visits Lithuania in an attempt to counter demands by the Baltic republic for greater local self-rule. Lithuanians are angered by this reference to Lithuania as a 'territory'.

November 20, 1988. Sajūdis declares the 'moral independence' of Lithuania, and that "henceforth only those laws will be honoured which do not limit Lithuania's independence".

January 10, 1989. 50,000 demonstrate in Vilnius demanding independence and withdrawal of the Red Army. Four Sajūdis candidates win seats in the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet.



● About 5,000 people overflowed outside the Cathedral of Vilnius, Lithuania, when the first Mass for 38 years was celebrated there on Sunday, October 23, 1988. — Photo: A. Žižiūnas.

January 25, 1989. Lithuanian is said to be the official language in administration, public services, and in all laws and legislative acts. Senior government officials and managers are allowed two years to learn the language. Sajūdis leadership presents a statement emphasizing that Lithuanians will accept nothing less than political independence.

February 21, 1989. At the Lithuanian Communist Party plenum officials angrily denounce Sajūdis support for political independence and accuse it of deviating from its original intent to support 'perestroika'. Party Secretary Brazauskas threatens to tighten restrictions on the active party members in the leadership of Sajūdis. Broadcast of Sajūdis 90-minute weekly TV program is suspended, but it is re-instated on April 12, 1989.

March 26, 1989. Sajūdis wins a stunning 31-member victory to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies. It is clear that the people of Lithuania want movement for independence.

May 26, 1989. At the Soviet Congress of People's Deputies Vytautas Landsbergis, the head of Sajūdis, threatens to boycott elections in protest at the violation of sovereignty rights. The protest is withdrawn and a crisis averted.

May 31, 1989. Soviet president, Mikhail Gorbachev, tells viewers of Moscow TV that the Baltic national drive for independence would not be tolerated.

July 7, 1989. While in New York, Vytautas Landsbergis, head of Sajūdis responds to Gorbachev's above statement by saying 'Our right to self-determination is ours, and we don't have to beg anyone for it...Some great leaders believe that they can bestow these rights and take them away. This is antiquated mentality of the times of serfdom.'

July 27, 1989. The supreme Soviet endorses a plan to give the Baltic republics an unprecedented degree of economic independence beginning next year. They would control their own trade, industry and resources, and have the right to conduct their economies on a free-market basis.

August 23, 1989. More than one million people stage a human chain demonstration across the three Baltic republics protesting the 1939 Stalin-Hitler pact that led to the loss of their independence.

September 15, 1989. President Gorbachev meets with leaders of the three Baltic republics to discuss a compromise to avert the growing demands for secession.

November 16, 1989. President Gorbachev meets with leaders of the three Baltic republics to discuss a compromise to avert the growing demands for succession.

December 20, 1989. The Lithuanian Communist Party votes overwhelmingly to become independent of Moscow.

December 25, 1989. Speaking to the Central Committee of the Soviet Union's Communist Party, Mr Gorbachev denounces as 'illegitimate' the Lithuanian Communist Party's decision to become autonomous, and warns that the Soviet Union would not permit the breakup of the federal state.

January 4, 1990. Mr Gorbachev meets with Lithuanian Communist Party leaders and leans towards a compromise on the split. He plans a three-day visit to Lithuania.

January 10, 1990. On the eve of Gorbachev's visit, tens of thousands rally in Vilnius in support of total independence, despite a request by Kremlin's ideology Chief Vadum Medvedev to cancel the protest.

January 11, 1990. On his visit to Lithuania, Gorbachev appeals to Lithuanians not to press for independence and promises that the Supreme Soviet will consider laws for secession, as well as more decentralization and more democratization.

January 12, 1990. Leaders of the Sajūdis denounce as a 'cheap lie and propaganda' Gorbachev's announcement that the Kremlin has begun work on a draft law outlining procedures for the republics to secede. Vytautas Landsbergis calls it an insult, saying that the people must decide for themselves, and that accepting such a law would indicate being a legal part of the Soviet Union to begin with.

January 13, 1990. Gorbachev expresses willingness to accept a multi-party system in the Soviet Union, and seems to have failed in his attempt to persuade the Lithuanian Communist Party to end its split with Moscow, or to temper demands for total independence.

January 15, 1990. In a vote of 228 to 4 (19 abstaining) Lithuanian Communist Party head, Algirdas Brazauskas, is elected by the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet as President of the republic, in seeming endorsement of his defiance of Moscow and Gorbachev.

February 24 - March 4, 1990. In a multi-party election Sajūdis endorses the drive for independent Lithuania and wins a sweeping majority in the Lithuanian Parliament.



● As the Lithuanians rejoiced over their newly restored independence, Soviet helicopters scattered leaflets, urging people not to quit the USSR.
— Photo: Arūnas Jonušas.

March 11, 1990. Vytautas Landsbergis, of Sajūdis, is elected President of Lithuania by a vote of 91 over Brazauskas, 38 votes. By an overwhelming vote of 124 (6 abstentions) the parliament declares the restoration of Lithuania's independence.

In the months that follow, Soviet tanks parade in Lithuania, obviously intended to intimidate the Lithuanians. Leaflets scattered over Vilnius from helicopters urge the Lithuanians to abide by the Soviet constitution. As each day passes it is obvious Gorbachev is not going to take no for an answer from the Lithuanians. Each ultimatum from the Kremlin has been ignored or rejected so Gorbachev got tough.

Mikhail Gorbachev is a master politician with an army of 4 million at his disposal. Vytautas Landsbergis, a bookish, bespectacled pianist and professor of music has never before held political office. He is the leader of a breakaway government that has few laws, no army, no currency and no foreign recognition. This man may turn out to be the Soviet President's crack in what could be the collapse of the union that binds the USSR's 15 republics. People believe that Gorbachev would not dare to invade Lithuania, as a full scale invasion would provoke a tremendous crisis.

Instead of invasion Gorbachev has hurt Lithuania in a different way. In April 1990, Gorbachev cuts back drastically on oil and gas shipments. With only one out of four natural-gas pipelines still in operation, Lithuania can meet just 16% of its daily needs. That may be enough to keep bakeries, meat-processing plants and other essential factories running, but brings most facilities 'to their knees'. Each car receives only 8 gallons of petrol a month but the supply is not expected to last for more than two weeks.

The Soviet economic blockade spreads. There are shortages of rubber for making cables and sneakers, no sodium for soap powder and television screens, and no sugar for candies and confections. There is definitely no sign that Lithuanians were about to retreat. Vytautas Landsbergis says the government is ready to carry on discussion with Moscow, but not to discuss the republic's declaration of independence. There are lines of 60 and 70 cars waiting to buy their 2-1/2 gallons before the stricter rationing rules take effect. There are no signs of panic buying or hoarding throughout this crisis. In fact most people walk to work or to look through shops in lovely spring weather. A Lithuanian housewife commented 'We will all be healthier and we will have less pollution now'; but the sanctions that lasted for two months badly hit Lithuania. Hundreds of factories were closed, throwing almost 50,000 people out of work. Lithuania agreed to suspend its declaration from the start of any negotiations, but serious talks have been repeatedly deferred by Moscow.

Many Western countries have never recognized the incorporation of Lithuania into the USSR. They believe Lithuania's sovereignty has been temporarily suspended, but not abolished. Yet today, foreign governments are refusing to recognise Lithuania's move toward independence. Many countries do not want to interfere in case they offend the Soviet Union. Even though the United States have never regarded Lithuania as part of the Soviet Union, Mr Bush is holding back on formal recognition believing Mr Gorbachev needs time and flexibility to deal with Lithuania's unrest. All Mr Gorbachev's attempts to force Lithuania to give up its bid for independence has failed. Vytautas Landsbergis has made it clear that Lithuania would press on with its independence move. The Soviet Union has imposed a temporary ban on the sale of hunting weapons and ordered the surrender of all firearms. Mr Gorbachev has also ordered tougher visa restrictions and border checks.

Mr Vytautas Landsbergis has repeatedly sought world support in the hope that protests will be made against the use of any form of violent force against Lithuania.

Mr Gorbachev is ignoring Western calls to start talking with Lithuania. Instead he has sent more Soviet troop carriers and light tanks to Vilnius.

The Baltic republics present a special dilemma for Mikhail Gorbachev, since they enjoyed independence between the two World Wars, before being 'admitted' to Moscow by the Nazi-Soviet pact of 1939 — an accord the Kremlin has admitted was unjust.

Lithuania claims it has been occupied by the Soviet Union for the past 50 years. Gorbachev says they have the right to secede, though only after Moscow has agreed to the terms of the separation. Gorbachev has finally agreed to begin negotiations with the Lithuanians, who have all along expressed their eagerness to talk. Some criticized Lithuania for its refusal to consider Gorbachev's offer of membership in a Soviet federation, with full autonomy for each republic. If Lithuania were willing to remain in the Soviet Union, Gorbachev would let them do what they wanted on the economic side.

The dispute with Lithuania has been a bizarre war between two men who are absurdly mismatched. Gorbachev has intimidated Lithuanians with tanks rumbling through Vilnius, and hurt Lithuania by cutting off oil and gas supplies. Through all this the Lithuanian people have not given in because they want a life that has been denied to them for half a century.

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Lithuanian National Anthem

Lietuvos himnas

Lie-tu-va, tė-vy. ne mu-šy tu dū-ry. ry. šė-mė
 Jė pra-ei-lies Ta-vo sū-nūs te sup-ry. be se-mia
 Te-gul Ta-vo vai-kau ei-na ven ta-kais do-ry. bėis,
 Te-gul dir-ba Ta-vo nau-dai ir žmo-nių gė-ry-bai.
 Te-gul sau-ris lib-ū. nūs kon-sū-mūs pra-šo. i-na
 Te-gul mei-lis Lie-tu-ros de-ga mu-šy dir-dy-se
 Jė žris. sa in te-sa mus lingorūis te-ly-di
 Kar-dan tas Lie-tu-ros
 vie-ry-ba te-dy-ai

Hail Lithuania triumphant!
 Land of heroes hoary,
 From thy past thy sons may ever
 Draw their strength and glory.
 May thy children ever follow
 Their undaunted fathers,
 In devotion to their country
 And goodwill to others.
 May the sun of our loved shore
 Shine upon us evermore;
 May our faith and the truth
 Keep our pathway lighted.
 May the love of Fatherland,
 Make us strong of heart and hand;
 May our land ever stand
 Peaceful and united!

— English translation by Nadas Rastenis.



● Dr Vincas Kudirka (1858-1899) wrote the words and music of the Lithuanian National Anthem.

Lithuania and the Cold Shower Effect

Tony Hocking
University of Tasmania

When England seriously began to consider joining the European Common Market in the late 1960s, there ensued a vigorous debate within the country on the wisdom of joining. Even at that stage there was a perception that the removal of protective trade barriers would expose British industry to the fierce blast of European competition. Opponents within UK argued it was better to preserve the links with the British Commonwealth, including the preferential tariff system which allied with UK agricultural policy gave Britain food at world rather than European prices. Supporters of European unity conceded the problems would be considerable, but likened the experience to taking a cold shower.

The analogy may be appropriate for Lithuania today. Independence, if it be secured, places Lithuania in a different ball game. It is a game that many of her people will need to play under quite different rules from those that have governed economic activity during their lifetimes.

I take the following aspirations as given:

- (a) improved social and economic conditions and higher living standards,
- (b) perception that Western links are essential to achieve this,
- (c) perception the system must be one based on market forces,
- (d) recognition of the need for continuing close economic ties with USSR.

Lithuania faces the following types of problem:

- (a) future politico-economic relationship with USSR,
- (b) problems in adopting a Western market economy,
- (c) consequences of adopting a Western market economy.

Exactly a year ago I was in Brussels attending the regular discussions that the European Community Farmers, the EFTA Farmers and IFAP hold. Two papers given had great bearing on our subject. One was by the head of Finland's farmers, Seppio Kallio, who spoke on Perestroika and Soviet Agriculture. The other was by a leading Hungarian Agricultural economist who spoke of his country's economic reforms with particular reference to agriculture.

Their papers were of interest for a number of reasons:

- (a) both displayed inside knowledge of the command system and both were familiar with Western market economies;
- (b) agriculture may well turn out to be the key to Lithuania's future;
- (c) Finland is spoken of as the model Lithuania would most likely follow if independence becomes a reality.

In one sense Lithuania, or an Independent Lithuania, falls between the two examples we discussed at the conference. Kallio was talking about agriculture in the Soviet Union and its monumental failures under central planning, and the path to reform. Toth, the Hungarian, was talking about the challenge to reform Hungarian agriculture in a State with certain independence and links forged with the West over 2 decades. Of course it can be argued that both situations are relevant to Lithuania; its agriculture has shared in the failure of Soviet agriculture and its orientations and desires are strongly to the West.

The message from the agricultural sector was

- (a) the task of reforming Soviet agriculture is enormous;
- (b) farmers have no experience with efficient Western models such as the family farm or the market orientated co-operatives;
- (c) it will be difficult to develop an efficient market orientated farm sector until the present generation has passed away;



● June in Lithuania.

A woodcut by M. B. Stankūnienė, a contemporary Lithuanian artist.

(d) there is an urgent need to understand Western models and Western techniques, and to have access to Western investment funds;

(e) having said this, Soviet (including Lithuania) agriculture has the potential in a reorganised system to become self-sufficient in basic agricultural products again, posing a challenge to Western economies that export to the Soviet Union.

For Lithuania the challenge is obvious. As a country with major agricultural surpluses at this stage its principal export markets will be in Eastern Europe in the foreseeable future. It has a vested interest in a reformed Soviet System, and the conditions of its economic relationship with the Soviet Union will be of critical importance. It is probably best placed of the Soviet Republics to develop a prosperous leading agricultural sector. However, it is likely to be many years before it gains a significant place in the sophisticated Western market, where not only quality but marketing skills are essential and where trade barriers are considerable. Even Hungary, whose farmers and economists have had regular contact with the markets of Western Europe for many years, recognises the uphill battle to sell successfully in the West even when access is gained.

This brings us to the wider question of changing from a command, centrally-planned system to a market economy. Such a change will cause great pain precisely because the benefits of a market system are well appreciated by people living in planned economies, but the costs are not — in particular, the costs of change.

The market system, at its best, offers signals through prices and profits and rewards in the form of profit and income incentives. However, the other side of the coin is a system that punishes failure, at individual, provincial and national levels. In contrast, central planning has used soft budgeting methods which have not provided the necessary stimulus to efficiency or to an appropriate allocation of resources. Exchange rates have been a fiction and there is no prospect of convertibility without massive price changes; not even then.

Along with other Eastern bloc countries (see Poland), Lithuania faces massive increases in prices for housing, foods, clothing and transport - areas where planners kept prices down and within everyone's reach, but were not prepared to allocate resources to provide sufficient to avoid queues, massive shortage and lack of choice. Likewise the system gave everyone a job, but did not provide the stimuli to ensure that work was efficient or productive. In consequence change that was to UK likened to a cold shower may instead be the equivalent of a longer dip in the Baltic in winter.



● August: Harvest time.

— A prize-winning woodcut (1969) by M. B. Stankūnienė.

Countries such as Poland and Hungary are placing great stress on the importance of foreign investment including, especially joint ventures, but already the evidence is that they are unable to offer convertibility in the foreseeable future and appeal principally to German firms prepared to wait a long time for returns. Again, the cost of foreign management is personal suffering, as Western technology and organisational methods are demanded by new partners.

Scandinavian models are attractive since they are built on social welfare principles. By and large these models have emerged as refinements on the market system, whereas for Lithuania it would mean their development from a central planning base which, as we have seen, has fundamental weaknesses.

Clearly self-sufficiency models break down. Lithuania will need trade relationships with other countries. Links with the Soviet Union, or what is left of it, will be critical since it offers the largest adjacent market. As that market wakes up, Lithuania has the opportunity to be a major and relatively prosperous participant.

There may also be some value in studying the BENELUX model established after the War - three small independent states were able to coordinate and harmonise policies that led on subsequently to the

formation of the EEC. Whilst that model was no great success in itself, it can be said to have shown the way and furthered the European Ideal.

Another option is membership of a wider Western trading bloc. EFTA is perhaps worth considering since its regime is a relatively gentle one that the Scandinavian countries have found more to their taste than that of the Common Market.

In the end, however, the future prosperity of Lithuania will be influenced critically by the ability of the Soviet Union to undertake fundamental reforms of its own economy. It is clear that Soviet policy makers and economists believe that market forces offer the only general solution for a more efficient economic system. It is equally clear that there is deep division between those who favour a slow, and those who favour a rapid, transition to a market economy. Either way the consequences for the people of the Soviet Union are likely to be painful for the remainder of the Century. Just as depression in the United States deeply affected the rest of the world, so the general collapse of the Soviet Economy, or the agony of changing the system (even a failed system), will impede the progress of its former satellites as they seek to catch up with the rest of Europe.

May 1990



— A woodcut by M. B. Stankūnienė.

The East European Revolutions and the Independence of Lithuania

Jan Pakulski
University of Tasmania

The independence bid by Lithuania has caught political observers by surprise. Most Western students have regarded the Baltic Republics as firmly incorporated into the Soviet quasi-empire; their communist regimes have been seen as stable, ideologically unified and in firm control of the political-administrative apparatus. Their populations have been considered as reconciled, however reluctantly, to communist rule or too tightly controlled to oppose their Soviet-sponsored establishments.

The sudden eruption and overnight success of the independence movement has undermined these diagnoses, giving rise to a host of questions about the causes, patterns and consequences of this revolutionary change. The usual answer for these questions involves references to the relaxation of Soviet control. This is an accurate but insufficient account of the developments in Lithuania. A more adequate account has to place the developments in the Baltic Republics within the broader (historical and sociocultural) context of the gradual struggle for cultural and political emancipation in Eastern Europe. The Lithuanian 'Peaceful Revolution', in other words, has to be seen in the context of the global change in Eastern Europe. The East European Revolutions, of which, as argued here, Lithuanian Revolution is a part, have three important causes which are quite distinct and independent of the Soviet perestroika.

The causes

Because the East European regimes, apart from the Yugoslav, had been imposed by Soviet force throughout the 1940s, and because their strength depended heavily on the maintenance of that force, the principal external cause of the revolutions was the sudden relaxation of Soviet political and military hegemony. This resulted, most immediately, from Gorbachev's programme of reforms - itself an outcome of the USSR's deepening socioeconomic crisis, the increasing costs of the arms race, and the political and military costs of the Afghan embroglio. The Polish case reminds us, however, that

relaxation of the Soviet hegemony, while crucial, was only one of several necessary causes. Polish Solidarity erupted in August 1980, half a decade **before** Gorbachev's accession to power, although the Soviet-instigated crackdown in December 1981, which temporarily stifled Solidarity's 'peaceful revolution', demonstrated that the lid could be kept on so long as the Soviets were willing to exert their hegemony.

The anti-Stalinist drive by Gorbachev destabilised and demoralised the old communist establishments whose power was firmly rooted in the Leninist-Stalinist formula of the party's dominant position (its 'leading role'), hierarchical control of all aspects of society ('democratic centralism'), and Soviet hegemony ('proletarian internationalism'). It also gave a new lease of life to opposition forces by providing them with a powerful, - but safe idiom for expressing dissent: de-Stalinisation, democratisation, *glasnost*, *perestroika*. Last but not least, it opened the way to mass protests animated by longstanding political grievances, economic deprivations, and suppressed national pride. By falling like houses of cards in the winds of *glasnost* - and *perestroika*, the communist regimes revealed their external foundations.

Among the less direct external causes of the East European revolutions one should also mention Western policies that combined political pressure (the Helsinki Agreements, nuclear re-armament) with economic measures (bans on technology transfers, trade concessions) and increasing cultural links with the West via travel and the mass media.



Turning to the internal causes of the revolutions, clearly their groundwork was laid well **before** Gorbachev's reforms. In fact, they must be seen as the culmination of gradual grass-roots pressures for political emancipation combined with an important generational change. The beginning of this process has variously been dated as coinciding with waves of anti-Stalinist dissent 1956 (Hungarian Revolution), 1968 (Prague Spring), and 1981 (Polish Solidarity). Four aspects of the pre-revolutionary situation were particularly important:

1. **Economic crisis.** Although the centrally managed etatist economies succeeded in some aspects of the so-called 'first industrialisation' - formation of a manufacturing capacity, especially heavy industry - they failed to develop a productive agriculture and, more importantly, to stimulate the technological innovations necessary for the 'second industrialisation', i.e. the shift to service oriented and consumer driven economies. They proved unable to satisfy growing consumer aspirations. The frustrations this failure generated, especially among the growing 'new socialist middle class', aggravated by knowledge of Western consumerism acquired through the mass media and travel, outweighed the arguments of full employment and economic security which were used to legitimise the regimes.

2. **Generational change.** All observers agree that the driving force behind the revolutions has been the post-Stalinist generation of young, educated and skilled people, mostly urban dwellers - labelled by some as the 'new socialist middle class'. Despite the frequent use of a 'class' label this population segment is better understood in terms of 'generation' - a category of people sharing similar formative experiences.

Born and brought up after the Second World War and the Stalinist terror of 1945-56, this generation grew to maturity during a period of relative political stability and moderate prosperity. Its members had less fears than the preceding generation which experienced the deprivations of war and the upheavals of the post-war decade. They have tended to be more idealistic and better informed, and to have much higher political and economic aspirations, than their parents. They have also been the beneficiaries of reforms carried out by the communist regimes, in particular, much expanded educational opportunities and considerable occupational mobility associated with communist-led industrialisation. In these respects, to paraphrase Marx, the East European communist regimes created their own grave-diggers.



● On special occasions, the Poles and Lithuanians prayed together. This photograph, showing Lithuanian-language banners, was taken at the famous Shrine of Czestochowa on August 15, 1988.

— Baltic News, Dec 1988

3. **Religious revival.** The communist ideology collapsed completely in confrontation with economic and political failures. Its hold has never been very strong, but in the past it provided some form of quasi-legitimation for the regimes and permeated the popular outlook. This collapse coincided with a revival of religious sentiments, which have been filling the vacuum left by the collapsing official ideology, and with a growing influence of the Christian churches. It must be remembered that the Catholic Church played a crucial role in the Polish and Lithuanian 'peaceful revolutions', the Protestant Churches were at the forefront of reform movements in East Germany, and that the Romanian revolution started from protests against the persecution of a priest.

4. **The mass media.** Both the outbreak and trajectories of the East European revolutions have been crucially shaped by the mass media. The independent publications (the *samizdat*), most notably in Poland, helped to form the social networks and shape opposition orientations. Even when, as in Czechoslovakia, the presence of the *samizdat* was largely symbolic (few people read the Charter 77, though most knew about it and understood its importance), its impact was significant in shaping adversarial cultures and countering the official propaganda. Publicity acquired through the (foreign and underground) mass media protected the dissenters against repression. In the 'Helsinki Era',

published persecution of dissenters generated adverse publicity for communist regimes and increased risks of Western economic sanctions. Perhaps most importantly, oppositional symbols disseminated through the 'unofficial' media were a key to mobilising mass demonstrations. The flow of vital information through Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty and Deutsche Welle (and later from the reformed neighbouring countries) spurred the mobilisation process. At the crucial point of confrontation with established regimes media sympathetic to the opposition helped to mount irresistible public pressure for change. The spectacular success of Solidarity's *Gazeta Wyborcza* during the election campaign of May-June 1989 was one example; and the heavy fighting for the control of the Romanian TV studio during the December revolution in Romania was another.

The importance of the mass media has been enhanced by dramatically increased literacy and media consumption in Eastern Europe. This again was a result of the communists' plan to bolster the support for their policies through mass propaganda. The design backfired badly by generating pro-reformist constituencies and opening channels of communication which were then used by the opposition.

The pattern

The East European revolutions have differed from the 'classic' revolutions of France, Russia and China. Despite the causal links with the Soviet reforms, they also differ from Soviet *perestroika*:

- They have been 'peaceful', 'moral', 'polite', 'velvet', 'self-limiting' revolutions. Religious inspiration has been quite strong and violence has been minimal. Romania apart, old regimes offered little resistance, and the new regimes were installed under concerted public pressure rather than through a typical revolutionary coup d'état. In many cases the period of transition has been marked by accommodation of large sections of the old elites.

- They have been sociocultural, as well as political revolutions. Political power and control of the state have not been their declared goals. Mass mobilisations occurred under general value slogans calling for restoration of justice, dignity, equality and truth. They were frequently led by intellectuals and artists, and their initial result has been the removal of political censorship and the freeing of the cultural sphere.

- They have had an important grass-roots character and have taken the form of *mass movements*. Unlike the Soviet reforms, the stimulus

for which has come almost exclusively from above, the East European revolutions have involved more or less spontaneous mass mobilisations that swept entrenched regimes aside.

- The programmes combine postulates of social reforms with demands for national sovereignty. They call for authentic national autonomy in political, military, and economic spheres.
- Their leading force has been the (largely humanistic) *intelligentsia*. Although the mass mobilisations that powered the revolutions have involved cross-sections of the populations, and although some key figures (like Walesa) have been manual workers, most of the leaders and their expert advisers have come from the traditional 'educated class'.

Despite national idiosyncrasies, a typical revolutionary trajectory can be identified. Economic downturns resulting in mass dissatisfaction and occasional protests and strikes, together with intensified and widely publicised intellectual dissent, marked the first stage. The relaxation of Soviet patronage then led to a second stage of unsuccessful attempts by the old regimes to 'reform' themselves through personal reshuffles and endorsement of reformist rhetoric. These concessions, interpreted as a sign of weakness, spurred mass mobilisations in the form of coordinated strikes, demonstrations, and protest marches. Party programmes, no matter how bold in their rhetoric, were dismissed as 'too little and too late'. In a very short time, escalating public demands exceeded the concessions combining postulates of democratisation with calls for political autonomy, civil freedoms, and economic transformation.

Despite a variety of responses by the partocratic regimes ranging from surrender, as in Hungary, to last-ditch efforts at repression, as in Romania, the third stage has everywhere involved regime collapse prompted by desertions of police and military personnel. This has been greeted with enthusiastic mass celebrations, relaxation of censorship, and dismantling of political patronage. The old regimes have been replaced by temporary 'governments of national unity' - fragile pseudo-coalitions including largely symbolic figures, some sections of the old leadership, and an array of political newcomers. Their unity is precarious, based on shared concerns about the collapsing economy, declining living standard, regional-ethnic dissent, pressure from emerging political groupings (many of them with radical political programmes), and the spectre of mass civil disorder.

When the initial euphoria of victory and the novelty of cultural and informational freedoms wear off, when the major political forces articulate themselves more clearly in the form of parties and pressure groups, and when economic deprivations associated with market reforms - especially high unemployment - become the everyday reality, the East European countries will enter the fourth, post-revolutionary stage.

The Consequences

Will the East revolutions lead to the formation of stable democracies, or will they result in unstable and/or undemocratic regimes? At the present stage, any answer to this question has to be heavily qualified. One can list the main factors conducive to democratic outcomes, and factors hindering such developments.

Among the former one should mention, first of all, a pro-democratic ethos prevalent among the East European humanistic intelligentsia, especially in the areas influenced by Western culture. The emerging leaders seem to be largely pragmatic, and moderate. Their frequently shared religious beliefs temper animosities and may facilitate the development of elite consensus. Such consensus may also be facilitated by strong solidaristic sentiments, which have been generated by shared opposition to Soviet domination and which span quite divergent political orientations. The likelihood of democratic outcomes



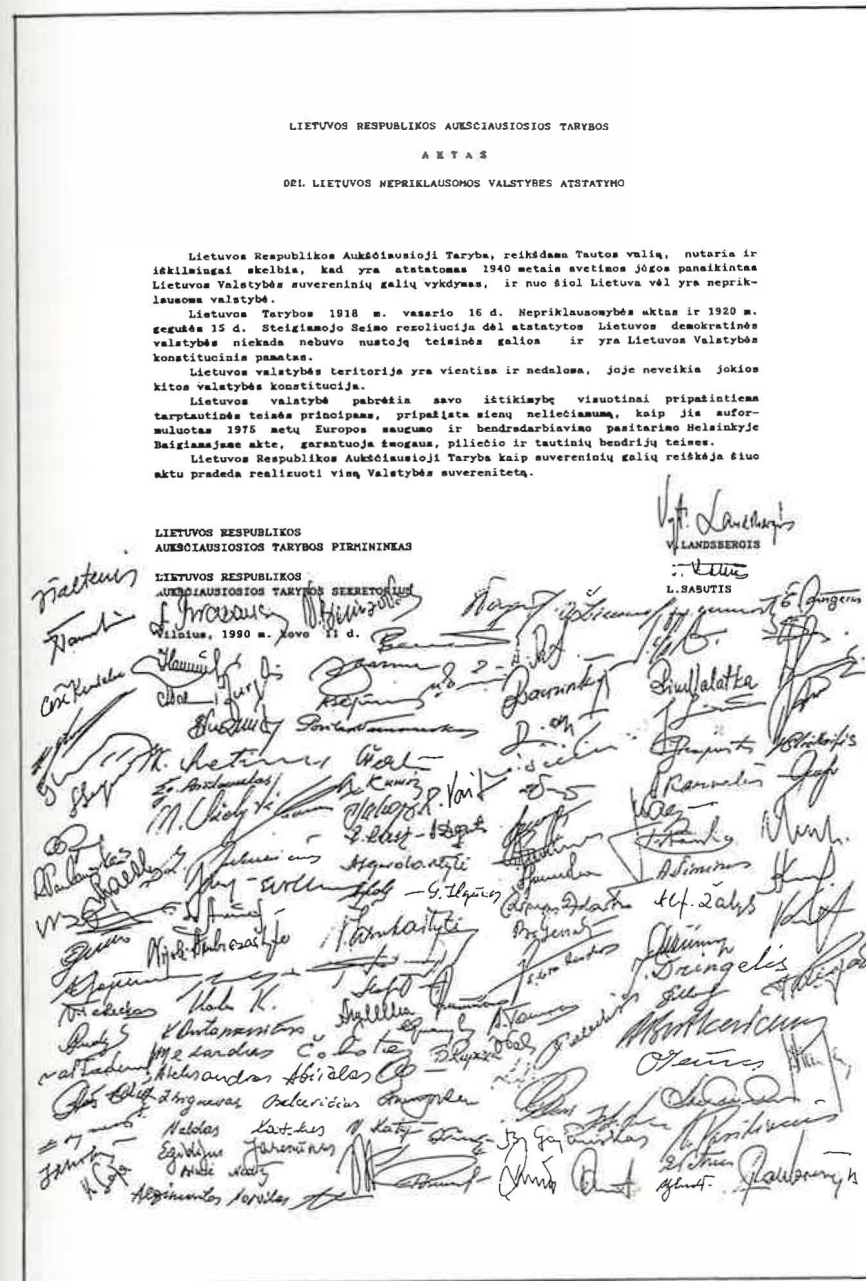
● Will the Eastern revolutions lead to stable democracies, or to new suffering?

is also boosted by strongly pro-Western orientations among elite aspirants. Because the Western parliamentary model is almost universally applauded in East European reformist circles as an ideal to emulate, the political institutions that will emerge from the revolution are likely to incorporate liberal-democratic principles.

The major factor hindering democratic outcomes is the acute economic crisis aggravated by prolonged deprivations. Under such conditions, as the example of Weimar Germany in the 1930s reminds us, demagogic appeals and authoritarian solutions may gain popularity. There is also a danger of an extreme form of nationalism directing mass frustrations against neighbours or ethnic minorities. This may be prompted by old resentments generated by ethnic conflicts and the postwar changes of borders. Inter-ethnic tensions are always close to the surface, especially in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Romania.

The post-revolutionary regimes will also have to overcome mass demoralisation caused by the long period of communist lawlessness and non-legitimate domination. This demoralising heritage, leaving a deep-rooted distrust of all authority, may prove a serious obstacle to the formation of stable and effective governments. Finally, one should point to the weakness of liberal-democratic traditions. Over the last century, most of the East European societies experienced foreign domination and authoritarian governments, followed by decades of communist dictatorships. This left residues of authoritarian sentiments, especially among less educated and rural segments of the populations.

Because of the different strength of these factors, the fortunes of the several East European countries will probably differ. In ethnically homogeneous Baltic Republics, Poland and Hungary, where the oppositional 'counter-elites' gained considerable skills and entered into formal and informal agreements about goals and strategies of reform, stable democratic outcomes are more likely than among their southern neighbours. A similar outcome is likely in Czechoslovakia, where, despite some tensions between Czechs and Slovaks, the political residues of the Prague Spring facilitate the dialogue between the communist and non-communist reformers. In East Germany, the problem of democratic reconstruction is likely to be resolved through the merger with West Germany. In Romania and Bulgaria, where political oppositions were effectively suppressed until the revolution, ethnic tensions are high, and democratic traditions are weak, such outcomes will be more difficult to achieve. Finally, in Yugoslavia bitter ethnic, regional and religious rivalries call into question the viability of a single state itself.



● THE REDECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA MARCH 11, 1990, VILNIUS

Despite the similarities in the revolutionary processes, the outcomes of the East European transformations may vary in different regions. The result may be a divide along north-south lines, with the revived spectre of 'Balkanisation' haunting the southern region.

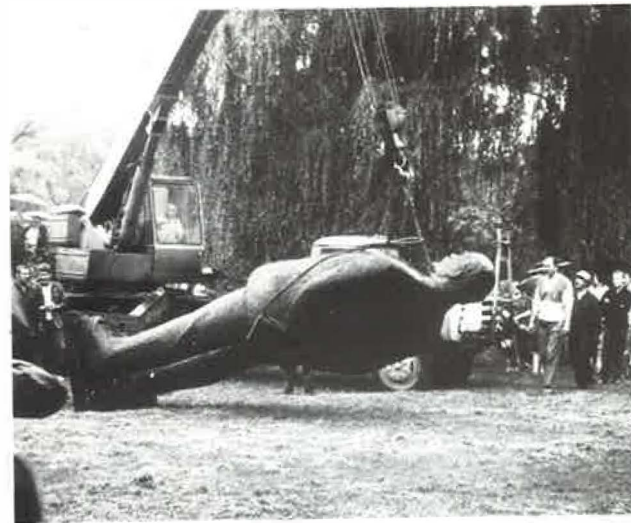
The Future

The East European societies enter the post-communist stage of development. Like all rapid social transformations, this transition is tension-ridden and full of uncertainties. However, some predictions of the general direction of change can be made.

Full national independence and sovereignty is the first and most important goal. It has already been achieved in the independent East European states; the fate of the Baltic Republics is still in doubt. If the Lithuanian drive proves successful, it will undoubtedly pave the way for other northern Republics to break the Soviet domination.

The popular expectation that the reformed East European societies will change into look-alikes of their fully marketised, secular and liberal-democratic West European counterparts may prove false. Economic reforms in Eastern Europe are likely to result in the formation of *mixed economies* with strong public sectors. While dismantling large parts of the over-centralised and inefficient state-controlled economies, privatising industrial enterprises, attracting foreign and domestic investment, and promoting the growth of a popular 'economic culture' in which thrift and calculation are principal elements, the post-revolutionary regimes will have to maintain a large number of state-owned businesses. The reason is not so much their reluctance to privatise, as an inability to sell the deficit-producing enterprises, plus fear that this would result in mass unemployment and social unrest. Many reformists also believe that state control over strategic industrial and financial enterprises is essential for successful reform.

Attempts to counter the danger of economic peripheralisation (vis-a-vis the economic power of the unified Germany and Western Europe) may also mitigate against extensive privatisation and marketisation. Even the most ardent economic reformers in Eastern Europe see the state as the major investor and sponsor of economic development. This may lead to the formation of an economic-political alliance replacing the defunct COMECON. Plans for such an alliance, which would include Poland, Czechoslovakia, and possible Hungary, were floated by President Havel at the beginning of this year.



● The end of an era: On July 12, 1990, Lenin's statue was removed from a central position in Vienybės Square, in the city of Kaunas (Lithuania).
— Photo: Visvaldas Šidlauskas/Baltic News.

Ideologically, the East European revolutions mark the end of Marxism-Leninism both as a legitimisation formula of the regimes and as a principal ingredient of mass outlooks. Terms such as 'communism' and 'Marxism' are so unpopular that even nominally Marxist/socialist groups are avoiding them for fear of losing credibility.

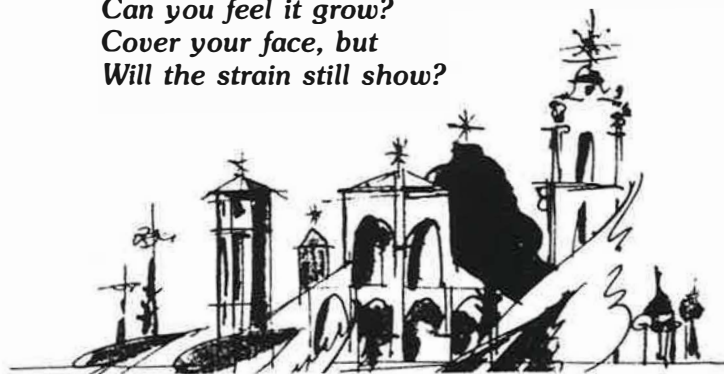
The influence of socialist groups, however, may remain strong in countries where the communists were at the forefront of reforms (e.g. Bulgaria) or where the opposition was weak and/or disorganised (eg Romania). In most of the liberated societies, however, the collapse of the communist rule has created an ideological vacuum which is partly filled by nationalist sentiments and religious ethos. This puts a question mark over the predictions of swift ideological convergence of Eastern Europe with the secularised and liberal West.



Vince TAŠKŪNAS

Wall to Wall

*Dripping tap
Mind leaks.
Information sap —
Wall speaks
To another wall:
Tell me, are we here at all?
Falling over,
Getting up to talk
To the sea of ignorance; don't balk,
Sweet words of your lover
Who just walked out,
And you just pout.
And feel the sting;
Cringe in the shadow
Of your wedding ring,
Or run away; do your own thing
For awhile —
You've lost that smile.
An accusing frown,
Has taken its place,
And your long-sought peace, outgrown,
Has disappeared from your face.
Can you feel it?
Can you feel it grow?
Cover your face, but
Will the strain still show?*



Sonnet

*Her eyes, like glass, stare out beyond the wind,
To where her lover's body lies alone.
His deep blue gems, which haunt her in her mind
Are frozen, staring cold; they seek to own
The heavens high above his war-torn earth:
His gentle Mother, raped and mauled, by those
Who play as pawns the men consigned to death,
And leave this mess of blood and fear as hereos.
But still she waits, her daily vigil kept
For love of man endures beyond the dark
Of death. Yet, he will not return to her.
Pure grief, poor tears, his body will incur.
And leave upon her life a brand, a mark,
O'er which her tears, as streams of life, are wept.*

Lithuania's Lust for Life: Is It Legitimate?

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Introduction

Perhaps not even Mikhail Gorbachev himself quite anticipated the effect his leadership, through the precocious adoption of glasnost and perestroika, would have on the face of Europe. Gorbachev has been in power for less than six years (a shorter period than Bob Hawke has been Prime Minister of Australia), yet within that time East-West relations have evolved in a manner quite unforeseen by even the most astute observers of the European political scene.

The most dramatic events have occurred during the last twelve months or so. In particular, the opening of the Berlin Wall, in November, 1989 (enabling one man to return his library books, only twenty-eight years overdue), highlighted in the most visible way imaginable that the Cold War had thawed to the point where long-held suspicions and hostilities had become irrelevant.

Gorbachev has taken up virtually every challenge the West has thrown at him in the field of human rights and respect for the independence of the peoples of Eastern Europe, people living in countries previously designated by the West, with no small amount of derision, as Soviet satellites.

Or has he? Soviet policy towards the countries of Eastern Europe has been rather different from the attitude displayed towards the peoples of the USSR itself. There are some one hundred nationalities living in the USSR, spread across fifteen republics. By far the biggest of these is the Russian Republic, containing more than half of the USSR's population.

While each of the former satellites has moved off in its own direction, which has been West, Gorbachev has sought to hold the USSR together in the face of increasingly assertive displays and expressions of autonomy from the various republics. The Russian Republic itself has challenged the legitimacy of Soviet rule. However, the first republic openly to assert its independence of Moscow was Lithuania.



● Tanks: a symbol of Soviet supremacy. Although Lithuania was neutral in World War II, it was still overrun and annexed by the USSR in 1940.

Lithuania was one of three republics added to the USSR in 1940, along with Latvia and Estonia. Each of these had been an independent State between the First and Second World Wars. Each was annexed by the USSR in 1940 and has been under Soviet control since. Taking full advantage of the freedoms permitted under Gorbachev, pro-independence movements have become increasingly vocal and sophisticated in these republics. It is this political movement which led to the declaration of independence by Lithuania, and the subsequent failure by the West to acknowledge this status. The aim of this paper is to isolate and assess the legal aspects of the Lithuanian declaration.

On 11 March, 1990, Lithuania unilaterally declared its independence from the USSR, and called upon all other States (in particular those in the West) to recognize its independence — something they failed to do in their droves. Indeed, as yet* no other State has formally recognized Lithuania as a State independent of the USSR.

The issue is: does Lithuania have a right to independence and, if so, may that right be exercised independently of the wishes of the USSR? The current position is that no State is disputing the right of the Lithuanian people to self-determination. The Lithuanians themselves

* EDITOR'S NOTE: This paper was written in September, 1990. Since then, Australia, most Western countries and Russia have formally recognised Lithuania's independence.

demand it, while the USSR is on record as admitting, first, that its annexation of Lithuania in 1940 was in breach of international law; second, that if they want to the Lithuanians may secede from the USSR, i.e. form their own State.

The right to self-determination is therefore not even at issue. The issue is, rather, whether Lithuania could, *lawfully*, unilaterally declare independence with immediate effect, without any regard for the USSR's position. In my view the answer to this vital question is that Lithuania could not lawfully do so.

The Soviet position is that the people of Lithuania are entitled to self-determination. There has always been a provision in the Soviet constitution to the effect that any of its republics could secede from the Union. However, there were two factors which made this right illusory. First, till Gorbachev there was clearly no preparedness on the part of the Soviet leadership to surrender any territory; second, there was no legislative mechanism which would actually provide a framework which republics wishing to secede could use.

Neither of these limitations currently exists. The Soviet leadership is prepared to countenance Lithuanian secession (this assumes that Mr. Gorbachev is acting in good faith); moreover, during his visit to Lithuania in January, 1990, Gorbachev promised to ensure that a legislative framework to allow orderly secession would be set up. This is being done. Actual secession would, under the Soviet scheme of things, require a positive vote in a referendum to be accompanied by an affirmative vote in the Lithuanian Parliament. This is hardly an



unreasonable requirement for what would be a major constitutional and legal development. It remains to be seen whether the mechanism allowing for secession will be operable. As long as the conditions imposed with regard to the mechanism for secession are workable, it is reasonable that the USSR should impose such conditions.

The reason for this is that, despite the fact that the initial annexation of Lithuania was unlawful, international law, through the principle of effectiveness, acknowledges that a situation, while originally unlawful, may through the passage of time acquire a measure of legitimacy. Thus, after fifty years in effective control of Lithuania, during which Lithuania has become an integral part of the Soviet economy as well as being fully integrated into its defences, the USSR is entitled to insist that the process of secession take account of its own legitimate interests. Time will be needed to dismantle links between the Lithuanian economy and that of the rest of the USSR. Account must also be taken of the defence interests of the USSR. The point then is that, while Lithuania may be entitled to self-determination, it is not necessarily entitled to declare independence unilaterally, in disregard of the legitimate interests of the USSR.

In my view this position has been accepted by most States, too. While world opinion has been more or less unanimous in acknowledging the right of the Lithuanians to self-determination, no State has as yet recognized Lithuania's independence.

There are two other factors to be considered in this debate. First, the legitimacy of Soviet sanctions against Lithuania. Second, possible territorial claims by Poland.

Following the declaration of independence, the USSR has instituted economic sanctions against Lithuania. International law is undecided whether economic measures may constitute a use of force, which might be unlawful. Even if so, however, it is arguable that the USSR has a right to impose sanctions against a part of its own territory in order to restore and maintain order. And whether it likes it or not, Lithuania for the time being remains part of the Soviet Union. Few have questioned the right of the UK to use force in Northern Ireland to maintain order in a province where a large proportion of the population is hostile to British rule. The USSR has not gone so far.

Finally, a matter raised by Mr. Gorbachev but largely ignored by the media. When Poland was invaded by the USSR and Germany in 1939 these two countries divided up Poland's territory, part of it however being passed on to Lithuania, which was subsequently



annexed by the USSR. Gorbachev has foreshadowed the possibility that claims could be made, either by Poland or the USSR, to this territory, which includes Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania. Poland will certainly not make such a claim because it has too much to lose itself if territorial issues come up. Indeed, the Polish Foreign Minister, Professor Skubiszewski, is on record as saying that Poland has no claim to any territory outside its current frontiers. So there is no Polish threat. This does not mean, however, that the USSR may not make such a claim.

The conclusion is then that Lithuania has a right to self-determination. But that right cannot be exercised in total disregard for the interests of other countries, in this case the USSR. The Lithuanians have taken a course of action which, a few years ago, could have got the ringleaders shot. Aside from any considerations of political naivete and impatience, Lithuania has failed to appreciate the political interests and legal rights of the USSR in acting as it did. Hitherto, Mr. Gorbachev has delivered on his promises; he should be given more time to deliver on his promise of independence for Lithuania.



Lithuania: An Environment Crisis Area

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This paper is in two parts. Firstly, we shall look at Lithuanians' environmental heritage — the close ties that have existed in Lithuania between man and nature for thousands of years.¹

In the second part we shall see how this environmental balance and harmony has collapsed during the past 50 years of foreign rule.

The Heritage

The Lithuanians have been around for a long time — some 4,000 years.

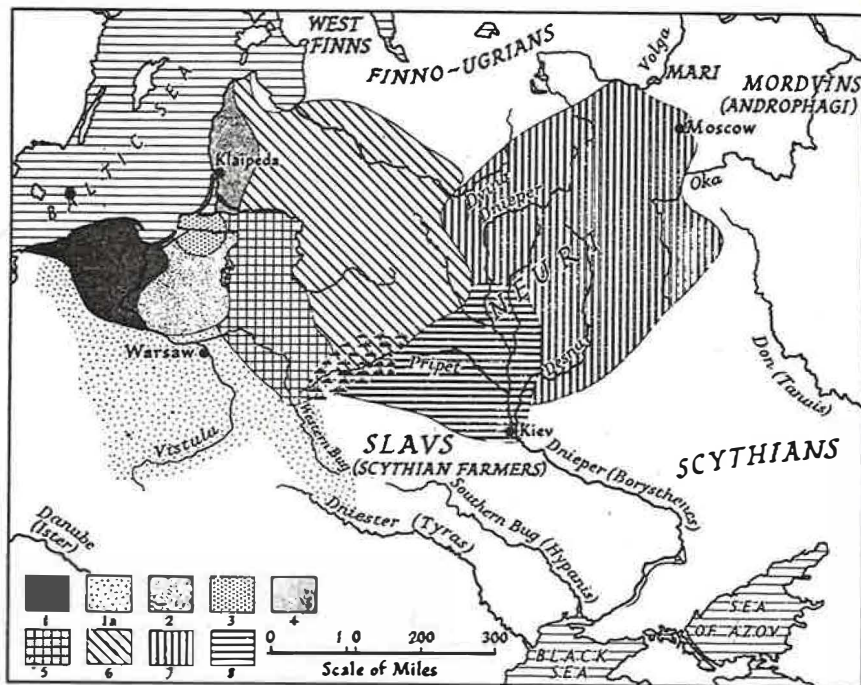
They were the last Europeans to become Christians — 600 years ago (1387). Before that, for some 3,500 years, the Lithuanians had their own religion, based on the worship of Thunder (Perkunas) and other natural forces.

To quote Peter Dusburg, who wrote in 1326: "They worshipped the entire creature-world instead of God; namely: the sun, moon and stars, the thunder, birds, even the four-legged animals including toads. They also had holy groves, sacred fields and waters".²

The death of a farmer had to be immediately announced to his horses and cattle. When a bee-keeper died, the bees had to be told. Otherwise, the animals and bees would die out. The horse was not allowed to carry its master to the cemetery; if it did, the horse would die or fall sick. These beliefs, still held in Lithuanian villages at the beginning of the twentieth century, are the last traces of the great love that existed between man and animal. In prehistoric times, it was believed that the animals went to the other world to live there with their master.

Deceased warriors and farmers, it was said, rode their horses through the sky to the realm of souls, and on horses they returned to earth to visit their families and to attend the feast of the dead in October and on many other anniversaries.

The written records from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries repeatedly mentioned a profound respect for groves, trees and



● Baltic groups during the Early Iron Age (c600-400 BC and later) based on archaeological finds. 1, the 'Face-urn' group of Pomerania and lower Vistula; 1a, the area of expansion of the 'Bell-grave' group, successor of the 'Face-urn' group, in the fourth and third centuries BC; 2, the west Masurian group, probably connected with the later Prussian Galindians; 3, the Sembian-Notangian group; 4, the lower Nemunas-western Latvian group connected with the early Curonians (Kurshians); 5, the east Masurian or Sudovian (Jatvingian) group; 6, the Brushed Pottery group ancestral to Lithuanians, Selians, Lettigallians and Semi-gallians; 7, the Plain Pottery culture to be identified with the easternmost Balts; 8, the 'Milograd' group of the seventh-sixth centuries BC. Location of the Scythian farmers, Neuri and Androphagi based on Herodotus. — From: GIMBUTAS, Marija, *The Balts*. New York: Frederick A. Prager, 2nd printing 1968.

● Below: Girls' and women's head and neck ornaments in central Lithuania, 2nd century A.D.



springs. Oak, linden, birch, maple, pine and spruce were prominent among miraculous trees. Particularly the old, mighty, twin-boled trees were believed to possess strong healing powers. They were untouchable; none dared to cut them down. Historic records since the thirteenth century mention 'sacred oaks' consecrated to the god *Perkūnas*, or 'sacred linden trees' consecrated to *Laima*, the goddess of fate.

Environmental awareness and environmental protection were at the centre of the ancient Lithuanian way of life.

Next after the plants, spirits were most likely to pass into birds — women into a cuckoo or a duck, men into a falcon, a pigeon, a raven, or a rooster. Some would also be reincarnated in wolves, bears, dogs, horses and cats.

Earth was the Great Mother. All life came from her: humans, plants and animals.

The senior god *Dievas* was seen as the guardian and stimulator of crops. Twice a day, at sunrise and at sunset, Lithuanian farmers prayed to *Saulė* (the Sun), because all fieldwork was dependent on the Sun's generosity. (Prayers to the Sun had to be said with one's head uncovered).

The Lithuanians were great venerator of fire. *Lituani sacrum colebant ignem eumque perpetuum appellabant.*³ Fire was sacred and eternal. Chiefdoms had official sanctuaries on high hills and river banks where fire was kept, guarded by priests,⁴ and in each house was the sacred hearth in which fire was never extinguished, except for the annual renewal of fire on the eve of the midsummer festival.

*Dulaitienė*⁵ reports that ancient Lithuanians were not allowed to spit in the water, or otherwise pollute it — be it water in wells, rivers or lakes. An offender would be punished after death — by having to drink all that polluted water in one gulp.

Two more characters — one real and one mythical — should be mentioned.

The non-poisonous green snake, the Lithuanian *Žaltys*, played a prominent part. It was a blessing to have a *Žaltys* in one's home, under the bed in some corner, or even in a place of honour at table. He was thought to bring happiness and prosperity, to ensure fertility of the soil and an increase in the family. Encountering a snake meant either marriage or birth.

An imaginary wealth-bringing creature, known from the early records as well as in the folklore, is *Aitvaras*. He is sometimes described as having the head of a *Žaltys* and a long tail which emits light as he flies through the air. Sometimes he is a gold-plated rooster. *Aitvaras* was believed to bring good luck and material benefits to his hosts.

Even this fleeting survey shows that — in addition to its spiritual function — the original Lithuanian religion underpinned and protected the country's environment.

The sacred groves ensured that the country could not be denuded and the climatic balance was maintained.

Forest-products played an important part in the ancient Lithuanians' life. But tree-cutting was controlled and, in the 14th Century, 60% of the Lithuanian territory remained covered with forests.⁶

The religious rules kept the water clean and this helped to maintain a pollution-free water supply. The popular pet in everyone's home, the green snake *Žaltys*, doubled as an effective pest controller: it kept the mice and other vermin down.

To the present day, Lithuanians have retained some of their ancient customs. However, the animistic attachment to the natural environment has waned gradually.

The twentieth-century independent Lithuania relied once again on nature's products for its agriculturally-based economy.

Lithuania has no minerals. The Country's only natural resources are its soil and its forests of pine, fir and birch. 74.2% of all Lithuanian exports in 1938 were agricultural products. At that stage, Lithuania was the third largest producer of butter in Europe and fifth biggest in the world.

It is important to stress here that, in the days of freedom, from 1918 to 1940, the Soviet Union was **not** a significant trading partner. In 1938, only 5.7% of Lithuania's total exports went to the USSR; while imports from the USSR amounted to 6.7%.

Lithuania's main trading partners then were Great Britain (39.4% exports, 30.9% imports) and Germany (26.8% and 24.5%), followed by other West European countries.⁷

By prior arrangement with Nazi Germany, Soviet armies occupied Lithuania in June 1940. A month later, Lithuania was annexed to the USSR.



● Lithuanian deportee Monica Gaučienė (centre), with her children in Krasnoyarsk district, Siberia. About 600,000 Lithuanians were taken away from their homes and died under similar or worse conditions.

During the subsequent 50 years of foreign rule, Lithuania changed markedly in several respects.

1. Demographic: About 20% of the native population was killed or deported. Their homes and jobs were taken over by Russian-speaking colonists who came streaming into Lithuania.

The natural birth-rate dropped when abortion was introduced officially as the main contraceptive method.

2. Values: The traditional Lithuanian mores and values were gradually suffocated by such Russian practices as informing, *blat* (favours through connections), bribery, stealing from the workplace, and alcoholism.

3. Economy: Private farms were eliminated, and all farmers were either forced into collective farms or sent away to Siberia. Intensive industrialisation was introduced.

Over 90% of the industrial plants in Lithuania were classified as "all-Union enterprises." All such enterprises were controlled from Moscow and they were deemed to belong to the USSR rather than Lithuania.

Reckless industrialisation has certainly cost a lot in environmental terms. Lithuania's 2,000 lakes and a network of rivers were once full of fish; today, freshwater fish are fast becoming a rarity. People are no longer allowed to pick wild berries and mushrooms in Lithuanian forests and public places, because of toxic contamination.

Let us examine a few particular cases, taken from an official Soviet report dated November 1988.* It was compiled by Mr G. Juozapavičius, Assistant to the director of the Institute for Geological Research of Lithuania. The full report is now available in English translation.

Klaipėda Oil Terminal

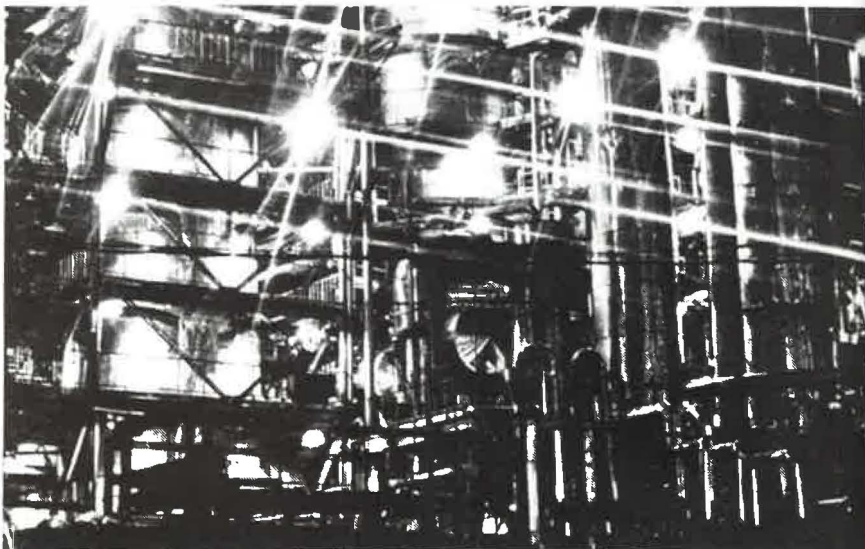
The oil export terminal in Klaipėda, Lithuania's largest port, is obsolete (built in 1959) and is dangerously overcrowded.

Partially treated bilge water — containing 60 to 100 times allowable amount of crude oil — is pumped from tankers to Courland Lagoon, a major European wetland that is home to many plants, birds, animals and fish. It is also the resting ground for millions of migratory birds each year.

All oil export profits go to Moscow. Consequently, no money is left in Lithuania for a major reconstruction of the terminal with safer and ecologically sounder techniques.

Chemical Fertiliser Plants

Two Lithuanian factories — “Kėdainiai Chemicals,” and “Azotas” in Jonava — produce 2.3% of the fertilisers made in USSR. Altogether, the agricultural sector of Lithuania uses only about 50% of fertilisers produced in Lithuania.



● “Azotas” factory in Jonava (Lithuania), photographed before the 1989 explosion. — Photo: Marius Baranauskas/Tarybų Lietuva.

Waste treatment devices at the “Azotas” factory function poorly. No attempt has been made to catch certain pollutants, such as sulphur anhydride, hydrogen sulphide and chlorine. Some substances such as manganese, nickel and vanadium, are emitted in smaller quantities, but have gradually accumulated in the local region.

Storage facilities are unsafe. On March 20, 1989, an outdated storage tank containing 7,000 tonnes of ammonium leaked and exploded. The ensuing fire set off other explosions causing the release of highly toxic gases. Seven people were killed. About 34,000 local residents were evacuated. Several months later, a medical team visited the area. Of 250 children examined, 240 had suffered adverse effects.

Soviet officials played down the incident as “insignificant” and Western media coverage was minimal.

Pollution-related diseases have been found in people living within a 6 km radius of the Jonava plant. 82.4% complain of eye and nasal passage irritation. There is high incidence of bronchitis, pneumonia, tonsillitis and conjunctivitis. Nine times more children in Jonava are suffering from bronchitis than the national average.

The Kėdainiai plant is implementing an anti-pollution plan, 1984-1993 — apparently not very effectively. 23.2% of residents within 6 km of the fertiliser plant suffer from conjunctivitis. Eye, nose and skin complaints are rife.

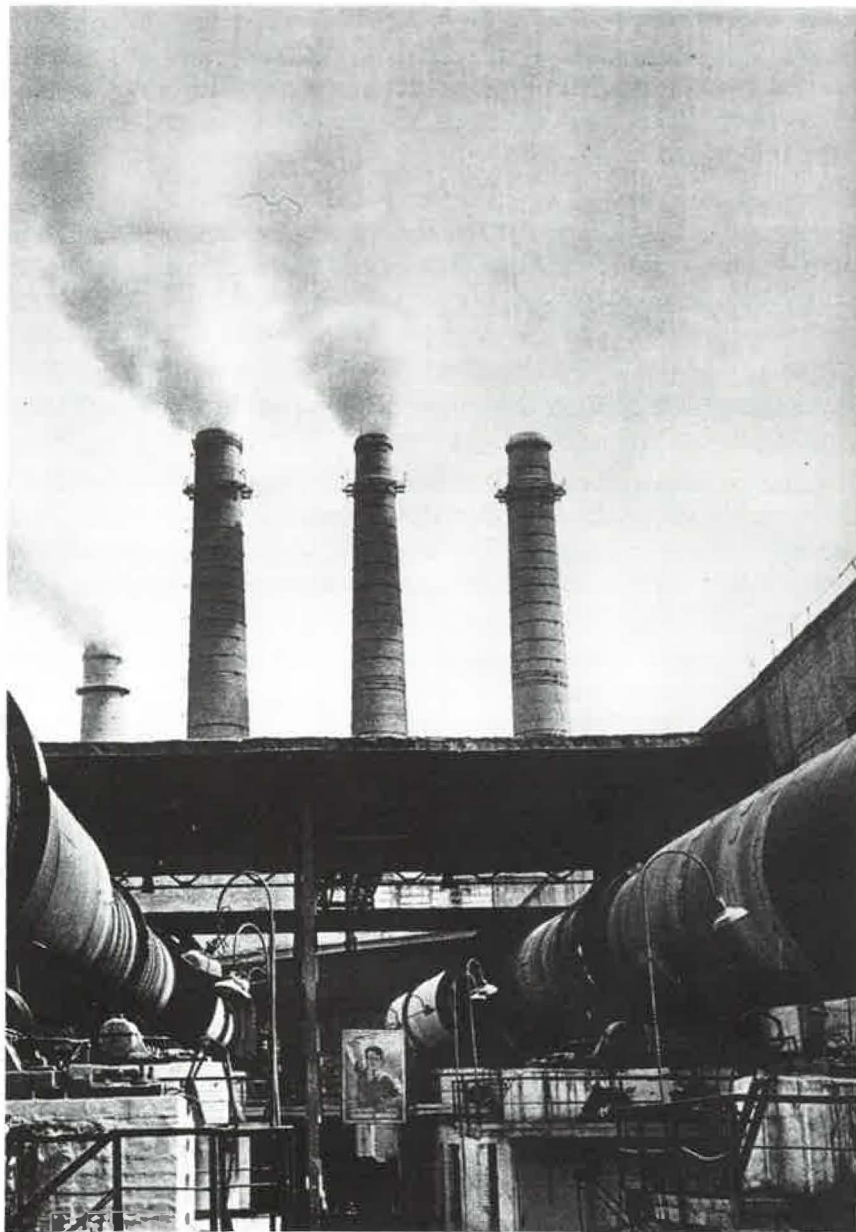
Cement Works at New Akmenė

The “Akmencementas” plant has been too big from the start. In 1987, it produced 3.4 million tons of cement, plus several by-products. This was double the quantity needed for the whole of Lithuania; the surplus was exported.

In spite of this, a Government order was issued on November 13, 1987, to expand further and to build a new 1.5 million ton plant to manufacture cement by an experimental dry method. The construction started in 1988, without any environmental assessment.

Meanwhile, the original plant has not solved its emission problems. Akmencementas has an effective dust removal equipment which traps 99% of the dust particles. However, there are no facilities for the treatment of gaseous wastes and 150 tons of such pollutants are released into the atmosphere each day.

According to Juozapavičius, Lithuania has suffered from a shortage of reliable instruments for monitoring and investigating air quality.



● The "Akmencementas" works at New Akmené, Lithuania. This cement plant is too large for local requirements. It has no facilities for the treatment of gaseous wastes; 150 tons of pollutants are released each day.

— Photo: Marius Baranauskas/Tarybu Lietuva.

Equipment is urgently needed for measuring heavy metal and organic compound concentrations in the atmosphere.

Official Soviet statistical data estimate that the pollutants emitted by "Akmencementas" in 1987 caused 4.8 million roubles of damage (about \$9.6 mil Aust).

Regular pollution has been taking its toll on the local population of Akmené. Medical data show a 25% increase in general illnesses in 2 years (1985-87); and 250% higher incidence of cancer compared to the national average.

Conclusion

Comprehensive data on Lithuania's total environment are not yet available. However, the facts we have gleaned from official sources are sufficient to cause serious concern:

- Foods are contaminated. Just one example: excessive nitrate in a range of Lithuanian vegetables, tested in 1985-87.
- Women are concerned about the obvious rise in the number of babies born with defects.
- Swimming in the Lithuanian section of the Baltic Sea was banned in 1988-89 because of the dangerous level of biological pollutants.
- And along the Baltic beaches, the authorities have warned people not to collect any amber — for fear that pieces of igneous phosphorus might be mistaken for amber. (In 1988, the Soviet army accidentally spilled phosphorous into the Baltic Sea while destroying a chemical warfare stockpile. The discarded chemicals subsequently burned a number of unsuspecting holidaymakers).

★ ★ ★

No country stands alone. Environmental protection is a global challenge.

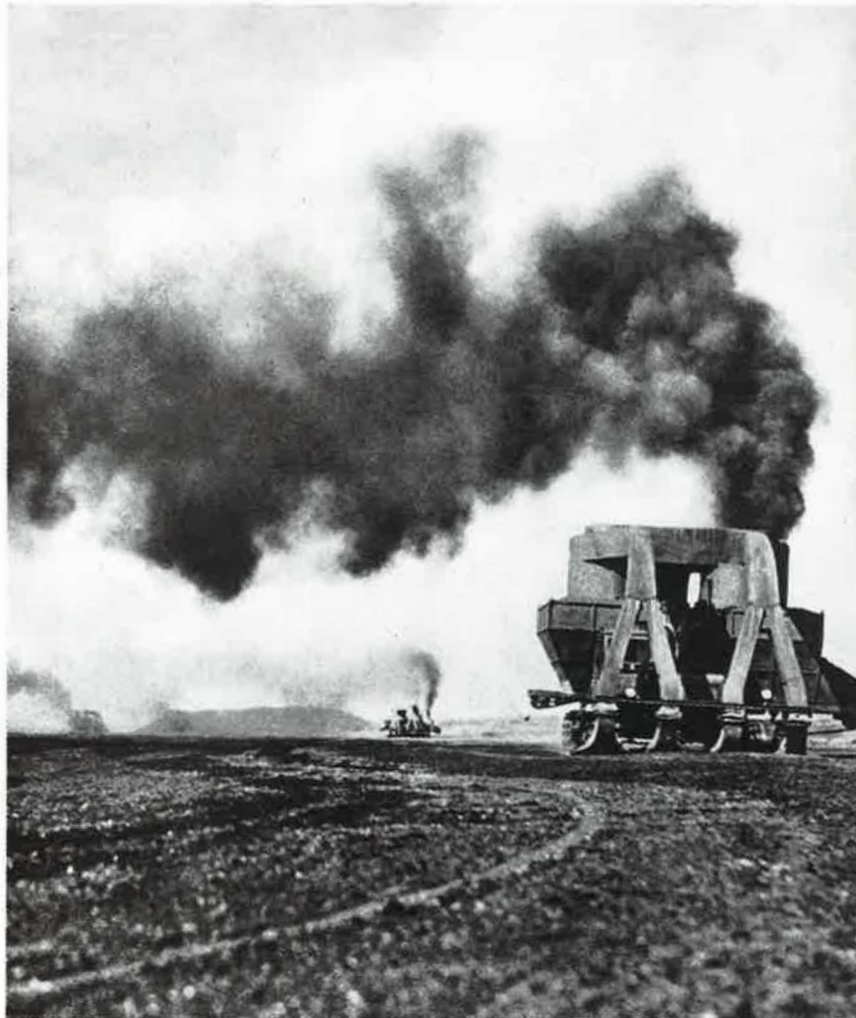
For thousands of years, Lithuanians loved and cared for nature — even worshipped it. Now they see their environment wantonly ravaged by meglomaniac central planners.

Can we do anything to help?

Notes

1. This part is largely based on GIMBUTAS, Marija, *The Balts*, New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963, Second Printing 1968.
2. *Chronicon Prussiae*, by Peter Dusburg, 1326; quoted in GIMBUTAS, Marija, *The Balts*, 1968, p. 179.
3. *Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini*, beginning of the 15th century: Quoted in MANNHARDT, *op.cit.*, p.135.

4. J. DRUGOSZ, 1455-80: Quoted in *ibid.* p. 139.
5. DULAITIENĖ (Glemžaitė), Elvyra, *Kupiškėnų Senovė*. Vilnius: Valstybinė Grožinės Literatūros Leidykla, 1958, p. 366.
6. "Miško prekyba", *Lietuvių Enciklopedija* (The Lithuanian Encyclopedia). South Boston: L.E. Publishing House (J Kapočius), 1953-1966; henceforth referred to as *LE*. Vol. XIX, pp. 56-58.
7. *LE*. Vol XV, pp. 214-215.
8. *Urgent Ecological Problems in Lithuania*. A brief submission to the Council of Ministers of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic, by G. JUOZAPAVIČIUS, of Kaunas Economic Institute, November 1988.



Jūratė REILLY

Young Warrior

*Lithuanian warrior
Face slashed,
Army deserter.
Stealthily glanced
Too terrified to speak.
Has someone discovered him?
Went back to the village,
And his mother bolted the door.*

Reflections

*I
Unfeeling scrawl!
Devoid of emotion,
Aformal, stilted structure,
(Perhaps it's for the best)
But read between the lines...
Dates & the addressing
Betray the eagerness
To communicate once again.*

*II
Rush of excitement
Adrenalin pumping
Fast and furious,
Anticipation mixed with trepidation,
Would just have touching been enough
Way back in '64?*

*III
Coldness numbs the brain
Frozen fingertips explore
The curves and rises.
Winter wine diffuses its fiery warmth
Through entwined limbs & lips,
As poetic lady rides the waves of inspiration.*

Opting out of Empires

Paul WEAVER

University of Tasmania

Within a brief twelve-month period beginning in early 1990 the most startling political changes in over half a century have taken place in the Soviet Union, both at its periphery and at the centre. Not only its satellite states in Eastern Europe have quite decisively asserted their real independence and autonomy, but the continental monolith of the Soviet Union itself has shown visible signs of cracking in almost all directions. Not the least of these cracks has been along the Baltic, involving Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. As often before, the lead was taken by Lithuania, a state smaller in area than Greece, about the size of Tasmania and in population not much larger than New Zealand. One is bound to ask what, realistically, are the chances of Lithuania succeeding, however brave and determined its citizens, in opting out of the empire in which it was forcibly incorporated in 1940. At least some degree of cooperation on the part of the central authority, so long as it continues to function effectively, would seem to be a prerequisite. But empires are rarely dissolved as a matter of deliberate policy except under compulsion.

What light, if any, do the empires of antiquity shed on this question? Notably the Roman Empire, well known for its decline and fall, during which such peripheral but minor provinces as Britain and Dacia successfully detached themselves from the central structure. Do the life cycles of the empires in the past provide any guidance or hope? At least superficially the Roman and the Russian empires offer parallels, especially if, in the latter case, we go back before 1917. Edward Gibbon, in a famous chapter at the beginning of his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, expressed the depressive effect on individuals who might wish to escape from the confines of the emperor's rule. '...The empire of the Romans filled the world, and, when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies'; 'to resist was fatal, and it was impossible to fly...'. Were the prospects for whole tribes any better?

Two other examples of ancient empires deserve attention, each illustrating a different form of polity: one monarchical, the other democratic; the Persian empire of the Achaemenid kings of the 6th to the 4th Century B.C. and the roughly contemporary Aegean-based



● At the height of their prosperity, the ancient Persians ruled an area almost as large as the present-day United States.

naval empire of the Athenian democracy from the mid-5th to mid-4th Century B.C. Together with the elite-run Roman empire from the mid-Republic in the 3rd Century B.C. to the end of the Principate in the 3rd Century A.D., these form a spectrum of political systems of empire. What chance did unwilling subjects or discontented allies have of opting out of any of these?

First, the Persian Empire, an absolute monarchy, typified by the title of its ruler, the Great King, the Basileus. Stretching from the east Balkans and the Aegean Mediterranean coasts of Asia and Egypt all the way to Afghanistan and the Khyber Pass, it could maintain no principle of national unity and, due to the vast overland distances of its communications, despite the Royal Roads to Susa and an anachronistically excellent postal system, it could exercise no rigid control through its central administration. The Achaemenid Empire effectively devolved into a congeries of competing and often hostile satrapies which not even the most savage despotic repression of the Great King could bring into line. Hence the 'Satraps' Revolts' which occurred with increasing frequency as the empire weakened during the 4th Century, and were repressed with increasing ferocity. One peripheral territory, Egypt, taking advantage of its natural wealth, the strength of its defensive position and the availability of Greek mercenary troops, defied the central power and maintained an independent status for virtually the whole 4th Century B.C. down to just before the overthrow of the last Achaemenid, Darius III, by Alexander the Great

of Macedon. Circumstances conspired to encourage military resistance at the periphery against an ineffective central, autocratic power whose authority could not reach that far. Not yet the case of Lithuania and the Soviet Union - there is still a long road to travel - with the obvious lesson that force rather than consent is the real arbiter of despotic regimes.

Herodotus attributed the unexpected success of the Greek states against the invading Persians in the early 5th Century to the superior moral qualities of free men fighting for themselves against subject slaves fighting for their masters. What, then, was the record of the most ideologically democratic of the Greek states, Athens, when it seized the opportunity given by the defeat of Persia to acquire leadership and then control over many of their fellow Greek states? The ideals of the Greek city-state (polis) were freedom, autonomy and a self-sufficiency (autarky). These guaranteed that political entities remained small, especially with the extreme exclusiveness of the Greeks towards granting citizenship in their own cities. Allies were necessary to provide mutual defence against common enemies. But wholesale admittance to political rights on a basis of equality even in the most democratic of states was out of the question.

Successful Athenian leadership, whether under Pericles or any other, resulted in empire. This took the particular Athenian form whereby originally consenting allies became unwilling subjects, ready to revolt at the first opportunity. As the Athenian empire was based on naval power over states who had traded in, for the most part, their own naval defences for the doubtful benefit of Athenian protection, the subject-allies were in a particularly vulnerable position. When the inevitable revolts broke out, as they did within a decade of the Delian League being formed, they were ruthlessly crushed by Athenian naval power, with severe punishment of the subject populations including wholesale slavery and death. In the ensuing half-century of the Athenian empire, variations of such punishment fell upon any states that wished to opt out, large and small, including most of the larger island states: Naxos (470), Thasos (465), Samos (441) and Mytilene on Lesbos (427). The punishment of little Melos in 415 was particularly brutal - presented by the contemporary historian Thucydides in stark terms as expediency versus the claims of justice. Little comfort for those who put faith in the moral superiority of democratic ideals. The military history of the Athenian empire was a series of so-called 'social' wars with 'allies' who fought, and had to fight, to get out.

It comes as something of a relief to turn to aristocratic republican Rome where the only notable 'social' war involved allies who were fighting to get into the political system - as full citizens. The Roman Empire, in its territorial sense, began at least two centuries before the first 'Emperor', Augustus, 'restored the republic' in 27 B.C. In the form of the so-called 'Principate', it lasted another two and a half centuries thereafter. It was physically a huge empire of roughly 3000 x 1500 miles, surrounding the Mediterranean and giving the whole region a unified political structure unknown to it before and ever since. The social dimension of this achievement is just as remarkable - it embraced a population of over 50 million - gigantic by ancient standards - that was non-national in character, predominantly Graeco-Roman in culture, constructively multi-cultural in the best sense of the term.

The early Roman Empire has often been compared with its modern 19th and 20th century counterparts, the British Empire and the French Empires - more convincingly with the latter than the former, but in neither case compellingly. To my mind a more interesting parallel is with the geographically coherent but racially mixed and nonnational continental empire of Imperial and Soviet Russia. It is not the aim of the present exercise to make definitive predictions as to the duration and future coherence of the Soviet system, except that stubborn resistance to change is bound to be part of it. At least that much is in common with Rome. But the Roman Empire was a monument of endurance when other comparable empires from antiquity (except the Chinese) were so ephemeral. What secrets of empire, *arcana imperii* in the words of the historian Tacitus - glued it together, seemingly for ever?



● The Roman Empire was a monument of endurance.

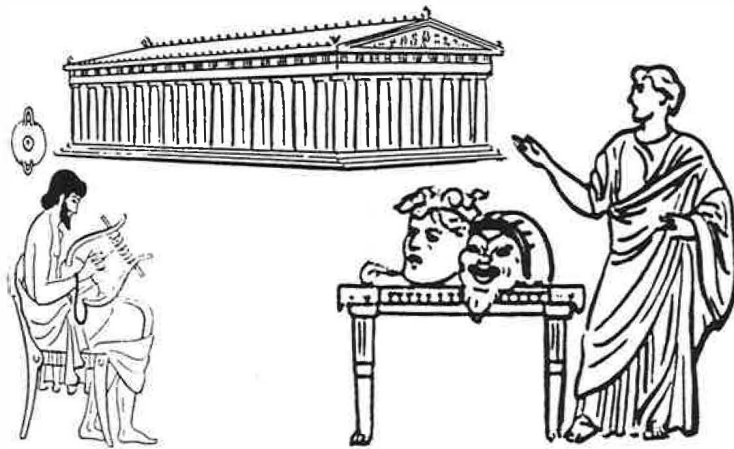
To begin with, it was not military repression. A standing army of less than half a million troops was insufficient for that purpose. Most troops were recruited from what one could regard as the subject peoples themselves or at best non-citizen provincials. Their units were stationed on the periphery of the empire, particularly the river frontiers of the Rhine, Danube and Euphrates, for the purpose of keeping the barbarians out rather than the subjects of the empire in. There were few internal wars or even serious revolts, apart from the civil wars of the late Republic fought out among the contenders for power among the Roman aristocracy themselves. Despite the fact that Roman society, at least in the central regions of the empire, was a slave society, with some 3,000,000 slaves in Italy alone by the beginning of the Principate, predominantly rural, employed in agriculture and none too gently treated, there were astonishingly no slave wars or serious slave revolts, apart from one comparatively brief period between 135 and 70 B.C. Even the slaves, who had little communal feeling among themselves, seem not to have tried to opt out; it meant an outward journey across the frontiers of the empire. Though slaves were the main source of the income of the wealthy elite, and though productivity through technological advance was virtually unknown, the economy persisted in flourishing and resolutely refused to collapse for centuries. The slave 'mode of production' provides no short or long-term answers, not even now to Marxist historians.

More surprising, even astonishing when compared with the Soviet bureaucracy, was the very small size of the central administration of the empire, only some 2,500 officials in total including all the clerical grades and above, and most of those, at least in the top echelons, part-time, untrained amateurs, while all below were the Emperor's slaves and ex-slaves. This made for an extremely economical civil service, with less than one official from the central administration for every 20,000 of population. With the exception of Roman Egypt, oppressive central bureaucracy is unlikely to have been a major cause of discontent or resistance, much less of flight. Indeed the term 'bureaucracy' has little place in the vocabulary of the Roman Empire till the early 4th Century A.D. 'reforms' of Diocletian and the 'Christian' empire of Constantine and his successors. The internal government of the early empire is best described as 'patrimonial', or 'administration without bureaucracy'. And its sheer inefficiency may well have contributed to the lack of interest in change, let alone in more violent methods of opting out. It was at a level the people could live with.

But there must be more to it than that - more levels of government, more officials. After all, someone had to be responsible for the collecting of taxes on which, in the last resort, the emperor, the army and the empire, indeed any empire, depended for survival. Here we stumble upon what is one of the best kept 'secrets of empire' - local government. The fabric of the empire was in fact a great patchwork of municipal government, over 2000 cities, each with its own brand of local autonomy, its own charter, its own laws, governing council, and municipal magistrates. The latter maintained law and order, collected taxes and, when required, recruited soldiers. For the privilege, they became public benefactors, contributing their wealth to local liturgies, charities and building projects in a competitive system of philanthropy known as 'euergetism'. The world of the cities of the Roman Empire looked inward to local issues, and expended their political energy looking no further afield than their neighbouring cities. Provincial loyalties, let alone feelings of national unity, were negligible by comparison. Thus the impulse to opt out of the system as a whole had no effective popular base. The real impulse was in the other direction: the attraction of Roman citizenship and the privileges attaching to that status, which was particularly strong in the provincial cities. Non-citizens, including ex-slaves in large numbers, had a vested interest in opting in, rather than out. The pace of extending citizenship increased throughout the first two centuries of the empire, till eventually in 212 A.D., almost by administrative accident, the whole free population of the empire was granted Roman citizenship status, at a single blow. The controlled extension of citizenship is another of the secrets of empire - in marked contrast to the restrictive practices engaged in by Greek cities such as classical Athens.

Other political, social and economic factors could be called upon to explain the long duration of this cosmopolitan, multi-cultural Roman Empire. For example, the beneficent, non-interfering, responsive, arbitrational role of emperors, especially those of Gibbon's golden age of the Antonines, during which 'the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous', or the extraordinary liberality with which slaves were set free.

We don't have to agree at all with Gibbon's analysis to see that the underlying political, social and economic conditions in the early Roman Empire were vastly different from those obtaining in 19th or 20th Century Russia. But what conclusions can be drawn from this brief excursion into antiquity? For small countries such as Lithuania in



its present position the Persian and Athenian models are not encouraging; it does not seem to make a fundamental difference what the political system of empires is. In the treatment of populations regarded as subjects by the imperial power, democratic Athens was, if anything, harsher than despotic Persia. The political interest and relative strength of the imperial power is what counted.

The Roman model, on the other hand, points to some interesting pre-conditions for opting into an empire: benign imperial rule, minimal central administration and internal security forces, advanced forms of local autonomy coupled with beneficent local elitism. None of these conditions, to my knowledge, apply in Soviet Russia today or are likely to apply for some time to come. In any case, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Georgia, Armenia, Moldavia wish to opt out. They are unlikely to be offered that alternative. Even given the remarkable turns of the wheel of fortune during the last two years, it would be unrealistic to expect the Russian bear to move fast in any direction and over-optimistic to hope that it will move in the right direction. On the other hand, no one expects Lithuanians to opt in.

The best chance for a tolerable relationship between Lithuania and the Soviets in the near and even foreseeable future is for some variation of the Roman model whereby the issues of central administration, external and internal security, and local autonomy are settled by mutual agreement. That will be a slow and frustrating but necessary process. The initiative will need to come from the centre - from the Soviet government. That in itself would be more remarkable than anything that has happened so far.

Sovereign State or Hostile Captive?

Vytautas LANDSBERGIS
President of Lithuania

There's no shortage of advice for solving the Lithuanian question these days. But to solve the problem, one has to understand it. The latest trend, in both Soviet and Western circles, is to urge "a fair and objective" way out of the stalemate for all parties concerned — the Soviet Union, Lithuania and the Western governments, who are under public pressure to support our drive for independence. However, some of the offered solutions are neither fair nor objective.

Soviet spokesmen argue that the unruly Lithuanians should respect and follow orderly Soviet constitutional procedures. After all, they concede, the Lithuanians are entitled to independence, if they want it. But as a "constituent part of the Soviet Union", they must abide by the procedures of Soviet law that will make their independence possible.

Herein lies the basic flaw in this argument. Lithuania is not seeking to establish independence, it is working to restore an independent state that has been illegally suppressed by a foreign power and its army. It is not calling for secession from the Soviet Union because it never legally joined the Soviet Union. This is not just a legal nicety but the basic and non-negotiable premise of our March 11, 1990, declaration of independence.

When Soviet spokesmen speak of the right to secession, this right does not apply to Lithuania. It is not legally tenable. The Baltic countries, Lithuania included, have always maintained, and the world recognises, that they were illegally incorporated into the Soviet Union. The Congress of People's Deputies of the Soviet Union last December itself declared illegal the document that gave birth to the Soviet occupation, namely, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

Under Soviet law, President Gorbachev says that Lithuania's right to self-determination can be realised only through the mechanism that he approves and provides. After all, we are told, he is not denying our right to self rule, he is merely contesting the pace of secession. But we don't believe he has any intention of letting Lithuania or the Baltic states go through any secession law. The law gives the Congress of People's Deputies — to which, it must be recalled, Gorbachev



Vytautas Landsbergis

Photo: A. Žižiūnas.

appointed himself and 98 of his Communist colleagues — the right to veto secession by any Soviet republic, even if two-thirds of its registered voters express their desire for independence.

Though we are not bound by any Soviet constitution, our actions of March 11, 1990, were fully consistent with a constitutional provision that provides each Soviet republic's legislature with the right to secede. Moreover, the Soviet constitution states that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a voluntary union of states.

If the Soviet Union enjoyed a system of checks and balances similar to the US system, along with an independent Supreme Court that could rule on the legality of decisions by the Soviet legislature and executive, then a "Soviet Supreme Court" would approve the restoration of independence in the Baltic States because their forcible incorporation contradicts the "voluntary union" clause of the Soviet Constitution and does not permit the retroactive application of a punitive law.

But that is precisely what the Congress of People's Deputies has tried to do by declaring our March 11 vote invalid because it contradicted a secession law that did not even exist at the time.

The April 5 secession legislation adopted by the Supreme Soviet specifies that, to secede, a republic must conduct a referendum. If no referendum was held in 1940 to determine whether we wished to

nullify our independence and to join the Soviet Union, why is a referendum needed now to determine whether this forcible incorporation should be ended?

We have no illusions about our economic dependence on Moscow, but we find it hard to understand why in this day and age a master-slave relationship should continue or even be encouraged — surprisingly enough, even by some Western friends — as the solution to the problem?

Our elections of February 24 were democratic and legitimate. Pro-independence candidates proposed by Sajūdis swept the elections under the campaign slogan of democracy and independence for Lithuania. Sajūdis' political platform differed from that of its main opponent, the breakaway Lithuanian Communist Party, in that it advocated complete political independence as soon as possible and normal, diplomatic relations with Moscow on equal footing, whereas the party leadership still spoke in indeterminate terms of Lithuanian sovereignty "within the U.S.S.R."

In addition to elections, the will of the Lithuanian people has been expressed many times at mass demonstrations and in at least two major petition drives. In 1988, 1.8 million out of a population of 3.5 million rejected Soviet constitutional amendments that restricted the republic's sovereign rights. Last year, 1.8 million called for the renunciation of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Lithuania. In light of these political realities, how can we possibly plan and decide our destiny by Moscow's rules and on Moscow's terms? We cannot just brush off our mandate.

Moscow has expressed its displeasure in recent weeks with a barrage of verbal and physical threats, blockades and other acts of force against our people. If the Soviet Union continues to use force, to crush and smother Lithuanian independence, if the military takes over the parliament and imposes martial law, if Gorbachev attempts to keep Lithuania in the Soviet fold as a hostile captive, we will all lose. He will prove that *perestroika* is a collection of failed policies and not a genuine transition to democracy.

But if Gorbachev extends democracy to his own back yard and recognises the democratically elected government of neighbouring Lithuania, if he presides over the peaceful dissolution of the last living empire on this Earth, if he deals with us as equal, friendly partners, we will all benefit. And he would go down as a great man in history.

The real problem is not Lithuanian independence but how Moscow views itself. Our vote for freedom is forcing Moscow to take a stand — for democracy or for preservation of the holy Soviet empire. Instead of facing the issue head on, the Soviet Union is focusing on a little antagonist to begin with. In this pitifully unequal battle, Moscow is its own worst enemy.

*Translated by Gintė Damušis — Lithuanian Information Center (USA).
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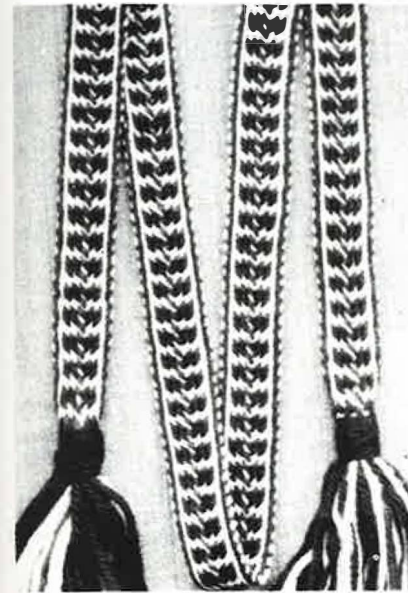
● A Lithuanian country scene.

Juosta: More than just a Sash

Aldona Veselkienė

The ornaments of folk art are a profound record of a nation's culture. Through many centuries, Lithuanians have conserved the ancient cultural elements of folk art, folk songs, legends, and tales. Today, the Lithuanian Folk Art Institute of Canada, which was founded in 1977 by artists Antanas and Anastazija Tamošaitis, has chapters throughout North America. It was established to collect, research, and preserve ancient Lithuanian folk art as well as to recreate, develop, and foster the expressions of that heritage.

Courses and workshops as well as lectures and exhibits, enhance our knowledge of the folk arts. Nowadays, when factory-made material things surround us, it is refreshing to see a revival of artistry and craftsmanship stem from our ancient traditions, and nowhere is it more beautifully revealed than in a *juosta* — a handwoven, delicately coloured sash of natural fibres and intricate patterns.



Weaving on an ancient rigid reed utilizing the pick-up technique from Lithuania Minor.



Sash in pick-up technique, Aukštaityja, woven by Aldona Veselkienė.

Since fragments of sashes and weaving tools dating back to the 8th century have been found in archaeological excavations, we know that sashes have long been woven of natural fibres like linen, hemp, wool in a variety of patterns and colours.

Lately, there have been many excavations of ancient burial sites in Lithuania. Not long ago, a fragment of a sash dating back to the 10th century was unearthed in a burial ground containing the remains of a woman and a tiny infant. The infant was wrapped with a pick-up sash. This discovery is of great scientific value, for it had not been known that sashes in pick-up technique had existed that long ago.

It is a narrow sash, approx. 1.5 cm wide. The edges are reddish, suggesting that the whole sash had once been red. In the centre is a pattern of light grey and brown, a stylised "S" motif known as "ožkanagutės" or "goat hooves." The ends are woven in diagonal stripes. The "ožkanagutės" pattern still exists in the sashes of the 20th century.

Excavations of cemeteries from the 11th and 12th centuries have revealed that warriors not only adorned themselves with sashes, but also their horses. More information appears in written sources from the 16th and 17th centuries.

Theodor Lepner, a Lutheran minister, whose ethnographic work "The Prussian Lithuanian" was published in 1744 and describes the way of life, work and customs of Lithuanians in that region. He wrote that Lithuanian girls had to distribute sashes and other handwoven articles as part of their wedding celebrations.

Sashes are often mentioned in Lithuanian folksongs:

*Weave, dear mother, weave the web
And I, as a young girl, will weave the sashes,
For my sweetheart is calling me
To depart to a faraway land.*

The best sources for studying sashes are the dowry chests that have been passed from mother to daughter for many generations. Girls learned in early childhood how to prepare the thread for sashes. They learned to spin, to twist the threads, to dye with vegetable dyestuff, and to weave and create new patterns. Sashes were woven on long winter evenings and in the summer-time.

A young girl might weave her first sashes while tending a herd of sheep or cattle. She would tie one end of the warp around her wrist and sling the other end over her big toe or tie it to a tree branch.

Grandmothers, mothers and older sisters would teach her the first steps. Diligent fingers would pick up the warp threads and create new patterns — like a poet searching for rhythm and rhyme — often accompanying her work with verses of folk songs.

She would weave the narrow simple sashes, and later the wide and long ones, composed of the most beautiful patterns and colours and using many different techniques. The finished sashes were rolled up and put away into small painted boxes or dowry chests for future use.

Before weaving sashes, there was the long process of preparing the yarn. The planting of flax was always done by men, but the harvesting was done by women;

*"I sowed the flax on the hill,
For my young girl, my beloved one.
I harvested the flax on the hill,
For my young man, my beloved one."*

After the flax was harvested, it was rippled, broken, scutched and hackled. A long and tiresome process. But the most demanding task was the spinning — to turn a roving of flax into silk-like yarn.

The ornamental designs of the Lithuanian sashes are among the most ancient, often composed of geometric square and rhombus forms. The dominating star, sun, and plant motifs in sashes and other woven articles, reflect the ancient worship of nature.

The Lithuanian weaver created beautifully stylised tulips, leaves, fir-trees, flower-buds and many other natural objects. The patterns of the pick-up sashes were woven of one, two, or three rhythmically repeated motifs and framed with stripes and ribs along the edges. The tranquil and moderate patterns, the straight lines and their combinations, fascinate the onlooker with their simplicity and perfection. The graphic designs of diverse forms and shapes such as rakes, horse-heads, ears, squares, and clusters, were enlivened with beautiful colours.

The yarn was dyed with vegetable dye-stuff made of roots, branches, seeds, flowers and berries. After receiving a logical yet subtle and sensitive solution of colours on its natural grayish linen background, a sash, was always finished off with colourful fringes.

Sashes were abundantly used all over Lithuania and it was believed that they had magical powers to sway one's destiny. When a young man handcrafted a distaff, a towel rack, or some other beautiful object as a gift for his beloved, she in turn would interweave all her love and yearning into a sash with signs understood only by themselves.

Young girls also donated sashes to churches. These were sewn together into wallhangings which could be laid on the floor for the bride and groom as a good omen during a wedding ceremony.

At the beginning of wedding festivities, a sash was laid across a loaf of bread to bring the newlyweds plentiful nourishment all their lives. A bride had to present sashes and other handwoven articles not only to her new husband's family members, but also to the matchmaker, the neighbours, the children, the musicians, and the carriers of the dowry. Sometimes the children would beg sashes of her by singing:

*The bride did not distribute sashes,
We won't tend the herd of cows.
There are no sashes, no little sashes,
Not fit for a pig's butt-end or a goat's tie.
Nor even fit for my own neck-tie.*

The bride might sing a song:

*For the relatives — the finest linen cloth,
For the neighbours — handwoven towels,
For little children — newly woven sashes.*

On the way to her new home, the bride would throw a sash on the boundary-ridge dividing the fields and tie them around the trees and wayside crosses. In some regions the women would gather from surrounding areas to greet the newly arriving bride with a so called "sash song" — singing about the future of her good life in the new husband's home.

She in turn would generously reward them with her own woven sashes. The morning of the first married day meant distributing many more sashes. While fetching water for the first time she would tie a sash around the draw-beam of the well and lay one across the manger in the stable. When the husband's mother took her daughter-in-law to acquaint her with the new home, the bride would tie a sash around the rake, the flail, the broom, and other household objects.

During rye or wheat harvest, she would tie the first heap with a sash. During christenings, the godmother would swaddle the infant with one of the most beautiful sashes. In burials, a sash would accompany the dead to eternity.

In Lithuania, a sash was a companion all through one's life.

The Lithuanian sashes are divided into 7 different basic groups according to the weaving technique: the flat plaited sashes, round



● Aldona Veselkienė at her loom.

plaited sashes, cardweaving, sashes woven on a four harness loom, the overlay, the pick-up, and the patternless. There are many more groups of sashes, like the knitted and netted, braided, crocheted, and inlaid, just to name a few.

Types of Sashes

More widespread European interest in folk art began in the early 19th century. In Lithuania, initially little attention was paid to holiday dress. Individual collectors began accumulating the handsomest part of the peasant costumes, sashes and aprons, only toward the end of the century.

By collecting and examining genuine holiday or festive attire from all over Lithuania, it was possible to group them according to weaving technique, pattern, colour accessory ornamentation, style of dressmaking, and manner in which they were worn. Furthermore, they have been classified according to specific geographical regions: Aukštaitija (Highlands), Vilniaus Kraštas-Vilnija (Vilnius Region), Žemaitija (Samogitia), and the Sūduva region consisting of Dzūkija, Kapsai, Znavykija, and Mažoji Lietuva (Lithuania Minor).

Sashes, besides being used functionally to gird a garment, were also an object of symbolic value. They were a special gift at weddings, christenings, and other occasions and are often mentioned in Lithuanian folklore.

The women of the Dzūkija region wove more sashes than women of any other region. In fact, the largest collections of sashes either in museums or private collections, come from Dzūkija. These sashes, woven in pick-up, overlay, overshot, and other techniques, are very diverse in pattern and colour.

Sashes in overlay technique were more common in Dzūkija. The background was woven in tabby or rep with linen or cotton thread and a design overlaid in coloured wool. The background was usually of natural colour with multi-coloured stripes and ribs alongside the edges, which framed the main pattern. The design could be simple or very complex; repeated or changed at intervals and some of the details overlaid in different colours. The weaver had great artistic freedom and the rhythm of colours could be very playful. The dominating patterns were various stylised stars, sun, plants and blooming flower motifs.



● Sash in pick-up technique, Dzūkija, late 19th century.

Flat plaited sashes were mostly found in the "Aukštaitija" region. Multicoloured wool yarn was chosen for the warp. The weft was achieved by plaiting the warp-yarn from the centre to the edges and back again in tabby or twill. The warp was secured to a fixed object and plaited by hand in various widths, sometimes up to 10 inches wide and worn as a shawl. Narrower plaited sashes, using linen yarn, were used to gird garments by men and women alike.

Round plaited sashes were made by plaiting wool yarn of several colours around a string or cord and multicolored tassels tied to it at the ends.

Fragments of sashes using the cardweaving technique have been discovered dating back to the 8th and 9th centuries. These sashes were woven with small square cards that had tiny perforations in the corners and served as heddles. The woollen or linen warp yarn, four warp ends to each card, were threaded through these tiny holes. The warp was secured to a fixed object and the other end to the waist and woven as backstrap. Various patterns could be accomplished by turning the cards and weaving across with a strong linen weft yarn.

These sashes were very resilient and men liked to gird their fur coats and other outer garments with them. These narrow sashes were very often used as reins.

Sashes woven on a four harness loom in float-overshot, the catpaw design and other small patterns, were of various widths. Natural linen yarn was preferred for warp and background weft, while the overshot patterns were woven with homespun wool. Young mothers swaddled their infants with these sashes and men liked to wind the long and wide sashes around their waist as a distinct ornamentation.

The pick-up technique sashes were the most widespread throughout Lithuania. These were woven with a double warp. The first warp was for the background and the second warp was for the pattern. Two-ply twisted linen thread was used for the background warp and weft. The warp of the pattern was homespun wool from which a designated pattern was picked-up. The designs consisted of geometric lines and rhombus forms and visible on both sides of the sash — a positive and a negative pattern.

Sometimes, in Lithuania Minor, these sashes were woven onesided. The pattern warp threads were picked-up on one side, while only



● Sash woven in overlay technique, Dzūkija, woven by Aldona Veselkienė.



interwoven dots and lines showed on the reverse side. Hundred patterned sashes were also woven. This means that a different pattern was created throughout the entire length of a sash.

The pick-up sashes may be woven in many ways. One technique is to tie one end around the waist and secure the other end to a fixed object — the backstrap way. Another technique is to weave them on a loom, on a sliding frame or with a rigid reed.

There are also the patternless sashes. These were woven in the same technique as the pick-up sashes, but in plain weave without any patterns. Instead, the warp was made up of various stripes and ribs. These sashes were narrow, tightly packed and strong. They were most often worn as kneebands and were also used as handles to carry lunch to family members working in the fields.

The Lithuanian Folk Art Institute of Canada has published a book, *Lithuanian Sashes* by Anastazija and Antanas Tamošaitis. It has 316 pages and contains 144 coloured illustrations. The price is \$45.00. For orders and further information, contact The Lithuanian Folk Art Institute of Canada, 1573 Bloor Street, West, Toronto, Ontario M6P 1A6 CANADA.





Lithuania is the land of silent martyrs and saints. Even though Christianity is over 600 years old in Lithuania, and during those centuries past, to this very day, countless thousands of martyrs have died for the sake of the Gospel, Lithuania has only one person who has been officially recognized by the Roman Catholic Church as a Saint. He is St. Casimir, whose feast day is March 4th.

St. Casimir was born on October 3, 1458 in the royal palace of Krakow. It should be noted that Casimir did not have one drop of Polish blood flowing within him. He is descended of the lineage of Jogaila. His grandfather and grandmother were Jogaila and Sofija Alsėniškė, Jogaila's fourth wife. His father was Grand Duke Casimir I. His mother was Elizabeth, the daughter of the Austrian Habsburg Emperor Albrecht II.

At 13, Casimir was given the command of a 12,000-man army and was dispatched to occupy the throne of Hungary, since his mother, Elizabeth, claimed the right of succession to the Hungarian throne.

Although, as St. Casimir progressed in age, gaining the respect of everyone that came in contact with him, Casimir never did find fulfillment in the life of the Court. He continued to draw himself closer to God.

St. Casimir died, not having reached his 26th birthday.



BOOK REVIEW by George F. WARD

Treachery and Deceit in the Baltic, 1944-55

Tom Bower, *Red Web: MI6 and the KGB Master Coup* (Aurum Press, London, 1988). Recommended Australian retail price, \$34.95.

It is self-evident that 1989 will go down in history as a watershed year in international politics. Some four years after the installation of Mikhail Sergeevich Gorbachev as leader, the Soviet Union has watched and is generally believed to have initiated and encouraged reforms and apparent democratisation across the countries of Eastern Europe. Having accepted the plaudits of the Western World's leaders and press, Mr Gorbachev seems to believe that the processes of change sweeping across the states dominated by the USSR since the end of World War II can be checked at the borders of his country.

There is no reason to believe that the political and moral authority of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) is any greater or more soundly-based in the USSR than in Eastern Europe where the debased, discredited system has crumbled in a way and with such speed that no-one could have predicted at the start of 1989. The decay of the authority of the CPSU accelerated markedly during last year. The Soviet people watched glasnost in action as their allegedly omnipotent government admitted to the murder and mass deportations of citizens since 1917; acquiesced in the repeal of constitutional guarantees of communist power and predominance in Eastern Europe; repudiated the crime of intervening in Afghanistan, and signed a Warsaw Pact condemnation of the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 which crushed the Dubcek regime's "socialism with a human face".

At present the CPSU which, under Lenin and Stalin, eliminated over 40 million of its own citizens, according to the prominent Soviet historian Roy Medvedev, retains a monopoly of power. It is backed by over 450,000 troops of the KGB's 9th Chief Directorate and the same Red Army which installed the grim, repressive Stalinist regimes in the post World War II period. Since 1945, its other achievements include the crushing of dissent in the Baltic States and other territories acquired by force of arms. This process extended to intervention in

East Germany, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia and the provision of logistical support for any tyrant and despot who has claimed to be a Marxist-Leninist in Africa, Asia and Central America. Until last year, it propped up the communist regime in Afghanistan with combat troops and since their withdrawal has continued to provide the communist regime with arms and equipment.

It is incontrovertible that there have been improvements in relations between the superpowers, and 1990 will undoubtedly see the consolidation of changes in Eastern Europe following elections in most states, although the outcome in each state is far from clear. There are also prospects for the reduction of military forces across the continent. Despite President Gorbachev's personal popularity abroad, resulting from these changes, glasnost has revealed that he is not as popular at home. Apart from the simmering discontent of the *nomenklatura* who are seeing their life-long privileges and power under challenge, the average citizen, according to Soviet publications, feels that the economic reforms of perestroika have brought no material advantage. The Soviet government is now faced with unrest in most of the republics of the USSR, and a civil war in all but name in Nagorno-Karabakh. It is clear that Gorbachev is searching for a formula which will accommodate secessionists, control the pace of political events and maintain the place of the CPSU in the Soviet system, even at the price of allowing the monopoly of the Party to be challenged through allowing the establishment of other parties. However, one factor is certain — Gorbachev was not chosen to head the CPSU and the Soviet state to preside over its dissolution.

However, because of its ramifications, the most important revelation of 1989 was the admission in July by Valentin Falin, Head of the International Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU, that there were secret protocols to the 1939 German/USSR non-aggression pact. Hitherto, the USSR has denied the existence of the protocols, which, in return for agreement to German annexation of Western Poland, ceded Eastern Poland to the Soviet Union and then paved the way for the seizure of the Baltic States of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia in 1940.

In August, a commission set up by the Soviet parliament determined that West German microfilm archives of German/Soviet pact were genuine. In that month, copies bearing the signatures of German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop and Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov were published in the weekly *Argumenty i Fakty*.

Despite apparent acceptance of the illegality of the pact, the Soviet government is persisting with the fiction that the Baltic States were not coerced into joining the USSR and that it was a voluntary act of union.

The revelations about the Nazi/Soviet pact could scarcely be described as new to Western historians or to the citizens of the occupied Baltic States who know that the incorporation of their countries into the USSR was illegal. The Soviet admission of the existence of the secret protocols serves only to highlight the way in which the Baltic States have been pawns in the political struggle between the West and the Soviet state from the revolution of 1917.

Further evidence of the dismissive way that these states have been treated by greater powers is revealed in Robert Nisbet's book, *The Failed Courtship*, which is based on the memoirs of US President Franklin Roosevelt's personal interpreter. In this work, it is revealed that Roosevelt and Josef Stalin engaged in secret diplomacy in Tehran in 1943 and the President ceded Soviet sovereignty over the territories seized after the Nazi/Soviet pact.

In many respects, Tom Bower's *Red Web* is another work which adds to the history of the Baltic States. Sub-titled *MI6 and the KGB Master Coup**, *Red Web* covers post-World War II operations conducted by the British and US intelligence services against the



● World War II was started by Nazi Germany, in collusion with the Soviet Union. This partnership was sealed by the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact which the Foreign Ministers of the two countries signed on August 23, 1939 (pictured).

* Although Bower refers to MI6 in the title of his book, the British Secret Intelligence Service is more usually known in the intelligence world as UKSIS or SIS: Bower used the acronym SIS. He also uses KGB throughout to describe the convoluted names applied to that body's predecessor organisations. The Soviet Committee for State Security — the Kometet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti — came into existence on March 13, 1953. To simplify matters for the reader, I have followed Bower's use of terminology.

USSR through Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. It is a work dark with deceit, deception and treachery.

Bower, a law graduate from the London School of Economics, claims that his book is an extraordinary and untold story of how, from 1944 to 1955, the KGB first compromised and then controlled SIS's entire intelligence network in the Baltic States, completely deceiving the British and later, the Americans. He has drawn on recently declassified information from American, German and Swedish sources.

Bower also gained access in the USSR to KGB files and officers. The latter gave him detailed personal accounts of their operations in the Baltic States. However, it is important to note that he has not had access to key British records which remain covered by the Official Secrets Act.

Bower's account of British and later American intelligence operations conducted against the Soviets is set within the framework of Western, especially British, intelligence operations against the Soviet Union from the Russian Revolution of 1917. He points out that the British government was concerned about the consequences of the Bolshevik/German peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk, signed in 1918, which contained clauses in which the new rulers of Russia renounced historical claims to Finland, Poland, the Ukraine and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

By taking Russia out of World War I, the treaty effectively brought about a cessation of hostilities on the Eastern Front and led to the conclusion that German armies could be concentrated in the West and if the Bolshevik government fell, Germany would be best placed to fill the vacuum. The first SIS operations were intended to evaluate both German and Soviet intentions and capabilities.

However, after the armistice German forces withdrew from the Baltic States and Britain became guarantor of their independence. The proximity of the Scandinavian and Baltic States to the newly-formed USSR facilitated intelligence operations which were part of a more general offensive, including the use of military forces, which commenced in 1919 and was designed to destabilise the Bolshevik regime. As history shows, the latter prevailed in the face of a lack of coordination and resolution by the interventionist powers (which included Britain, the United States, Czechoslovakia and Japan), the collapse of White Russian forces and a strengthened Red Army.

Although the military campaign petered out, intelligence operations continued and intensified, now predicated on the perception that a Bolshevik government, espousing its militant philosophy and exporting a revolutionary cause, could be a bigger menace to British imperial interests than a Czarist restoration. Accordingly, the SIS was directed to assist counter-revolutionaries in the interventionist struggles against the Soviet regime and, following the failure of that action to obtain intelligence on Soviet foreign policy objectives and the military strength of its armed forces.

Bower clearly describes the nature of British operations of the 1920s conducted through Finland, Sweden and the Baltic States whose proximity to the newly-formed USSR facilitated infiltration by intelligence agents. The SIS controllers were predominantly "old hands" — British citizens who had been largely domiciled in Russia and whose families had lost most of their wealth and livelihood during and after the Revolution.

On the Soviet side, the functions of the Czarist secret service the Okrana, had been taken over after the revolution, expanded and re-named the Cheka — the All Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-revolution and Sabotage — headed by a Pole, Feliks Dzerzhinsky. The Cheka was soon to distinguish itself in an orgy of terror against enemies of the new regime, real and imagined. However, it also proved to be a sophisticated intelligence organisation when dealing with external enemies of the Bolsheviks, predominantly the large emigre communities in Europe.

From the 1920s to the outbreak of World War II, intelligence operations inside the Soviet Union conducted from Finland and the Baltic States failed to meet the requirements of the British government and more importantly, those operations were compromised by Cheka counter-intelligence.

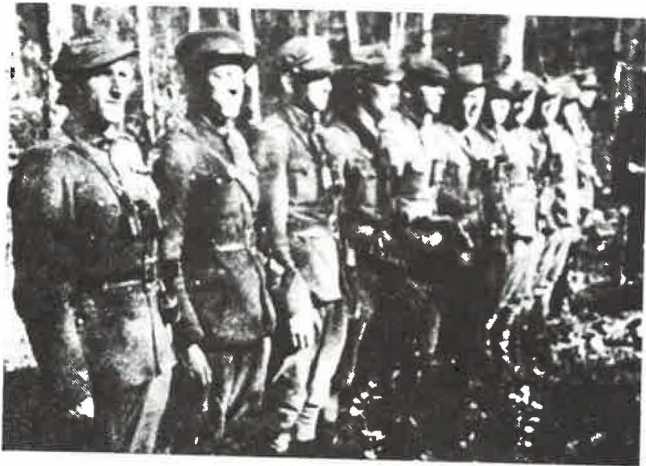
Following the German invasion of the USSR in 1941 and the forging of the alliance against the Axis powers, British intelligence operations against the Soviets slipped virtually into limbo. Germany was regarded as the major enemy although, as Bower notes there was a body of opinion within the British government which looked beyond the likely defeat of Germany to the resumption of hostilities against the USSR. This minority view within the Foreign Office and SIS was offset, as has been documented elsewhere, by the influence of communists and their sympathisers who had been recruited into government service, and the regard for the "heroic" allied forces of the Soviet Union repelling the Nazi invaders.

The United States' war-time intelligence organisation, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was expressly forbidden by President Roosevelt to conduct operations against the Soviets. At one stage, the OSS was directed to pass an intelligence dossier on the resistance in Latvia to the Soviet NKVD and according to Bower, a high-level agreement had been reached to exchange information and representatives. Although Bower does not refer to it, there is considerable publicly available information to the effect that the US government was well aware at the time that the Soviets were carrying out offensive intelligence operations against the United States in that country and from Canada.

Notwithstanding the US attitude, British intelligence recommenced operations against the USSR in 1944 as the government looked to the post-war period and the probability of Soviet dominance in Europe. Once again, operations were conducted through the Baltic States, operating in conjunction with Swedish military intelligence, whose government feared a Soviet invasion of Norway and Denmark in the guise of liberation. Bower claims that these operations, using predominantly Baltic citizens who had collaborated with the Germans, yielded little, and with the impending re-occupation of the Baltic States by the Red Army, SIS lost their contacts who retreated to Sweden.

The history of the Baltic States indicates that the first Soviet occupation in 1940 produced little active military resistance despite sovietisation, collectivisation of farms, purges, deportations and executions. When the Germans ejected the Soviets the following year, many Balts felt that their independence would be restored, while others came to realise that they had exchanged one occupier for another. Nevertheless, as Bower asserts, numbers fought alongside or with German military forces, SS and police detachments.

In the face of the prospect of ruthless suppression by the Soviet forces and a continuation of the policies of the previous period of occupation of the Baltic States, many people opted to migrate westwards, including civilians and those who had fought alongside the Germans. However in 1945, sizeable partisan groups remained to actively engage the Red Army and security forces. Bower assesses that the latter comprised some 30,000 active partisans in the forests of Lithuania, 10,000 in Latvia and the same number in Estonia. These groups were assessed by SIS as being sufficiently effective to carry out the hazardous task of collecting intelligence on the Soviets in occupied territory.



● A group of Lithuanian partisans, around 1946: Their hopes were shattered.

In order to meet their intelligence objectives, it was necessary for SIS to recruit agents to enter the occupied Baltic States, make contact with the partisan groups and establish networks upon which penetration of the USSR rested. The number of displaced Baltic citizens in the West offered a ready pool of potential agents.

Bower considers that those who opted to resist the Soviets had been misled by the Western Allies into believing that under the Atlantic Charter, signed by Roosevelt and Churchill in August 1941, freedom and independence would be restored to their countries. However, elements of the British Foreign Office held the view that the allegiance of the Baltic States to the German cause invalidated the declarations of the Charter.

Accordingly, they commenced work to devise a formula to cede the Baltic States to the Soviets at the end of the war. Bower asserts that the progress of the war and the secret diplomacy between Roosevelt and Stalin, referred to previously in the work in Nisbet, ensured that any peace settlement would recognise Soviet borders as of June 1941.

Thus, recommenced British intelligence operations against the Soviets through the Baltic States were assumed by the partisans and others assisting them to be directed at the expulsion of the Soviets and the restoration of national sovereignty. Further, there was continuing currency for the widely-believed scenario proffered in the closing

months of World War II, namely that the Germans would join the Western Allies in a crusade against communism. Bower notes that this scenario also had some credibility among the SIS officers who were actively recruiting agents among displaced Balts claiming to have links with partisans in their home countries. These British intelligence officers were predominantly the "old hands" who had worked against the Soviets between the two World Wars.

Not surprisingly, the SIS officers used many of their old and trusted contacts from the pre-War period to recruit newcomers who were trained in espionage and insurgency and then inserted into the Baltic States by parachute drop or by a specially-tuned and silenced ex-German E-boat.

Bower's thesis, in the light of the evidence presented and the outcome of events, is that this strategy was fatally flawed in a number of respects. From the moment of arrival of the first team in Latvia, British operations were compromised as the agents were located by Soviet patrols, arrested and broken under interrogation by the KGB, directed by the fifth-ranked counter-intelligence officer in that country, Major Janis Lukasevics, a Latvian national who convinced his superiors that the British were continuing their pre-war anti-Soviet activities. Collateral for this view was provided to Moscow, unbeknown to Lukasevics, by the KGB's principal agent in SIS, Kim Philby.

With the assent of Lukasevics' superiors and approval from Moscow, the Baltic units of the KGB mounted a classic counter-operation from 1945 for the next 10 years. Once the SIS agents' radio sets had been seized and agents coerced into broadcasting to their controllers, the KGB was able to deceive the SIS into sending arms, money, radios, more agents and to specify their objectives and landing points. The scale of this KGB ploy was considerable, covering the three Baltic States and ultimately drawing US intelligence operations into the net. The KGB was able to absorb and deceive agents by placing their own officers or agents alongside those of the SIS. Baltic citizens, including priests, were deceived or suborned into working for the KGB in their operations.

According to Bower, in an ingenious scheme, the KGB established its own "partisan" groups to meet and assist incoming agents, house them and provide them with spurious information to pass back to their controllers. In due course, British agents located genuine partisan groups in the three Baltic States and unwittingly betrayed them to the

KGB. As a result, over the 10-year period an unknown number of partisans and patriots disappeared without trace, were executed or imprisoned. Such was the cunning and control of the KGB, that it was able to send its own officers and agents to the West to be "de-briefed", re-trained, armed, financed and returned by the unsuspecting British. Furthermore, KGB agents among émigrés in the West were infiltrated into the British networks, and agents in place in London were able to monitor progress for their masters in Moscow.

Bower points to a slow comprehension by the British that their operations were providing little in the way of real intelligence on Soviet intentions and capabilities. However, he makes a telling point that SIS objectives differed from those of the agents and some of their controllers who were expecting to fight a guerilla war against the occupiers. Finally, he notes, the conclusion was drawn that the operations were compromised and agents in the Baltic States under KGB control. Some attempts were made by SIS to run the operations back against the KGB but no more agents were sent despite KGB-inspired requests. After a few terminal twists and turns in the plot the British ended their operations, and their agents, including those who were genuine but under KGB control, were left to their fate.

However, this was not before the credibility of all Baltic networks was the cause of immense distrust and argument between the US Central Intelligence Agency and the SIS. The Americans had modelled their operations on those of the British but suspected compromise earlier than the SIS, who jealously maintained that their operations were secure. With the defections to the USSR in 1953 of British Foreign Office officials Burgess and MacLean, and the emerging suspicions of Philby as a Soviet mole, relations between British and US intelligence slumped to a nadir that endured for many years and has its echoes today.

In assessing this book, one is struck by Bower's presentation of his arguments, and the targets of his attack are principally the SIS, the Baltic States and their citizens. In the first instance, Bower attributes the debacle of British operations to the failure of SIS to learn from past errors. In particular, he cites the fact that the officers used for running post-World War II operations were those who had been duped by the KGB in highly successful pre-war operations directed against hostile anti-Soviet émigrés, most notably "The Trust", to which he devotes some detail.

Secondly, the Baltic émigré sources used in post-war operations were also used pre-war and were likely to have been compromised. Thirdly, he argues cogently that the British, like the KGB, had used captured German agents to transmit disinformation back to their controllers, and therefore the risk of compromise should have been recognised early in the piece. As a corollary, he implies that operational control and counter-intelligence within SIS was deficient, and it was only when the "old hands" had been replaced that the degree of KGB deception was revealed.

Lastly, he asserts that for years afterwards the SIS covered the incompetence of its operations by claiming that Philby betrayed them. He claims that Philby was not in a position to be able to divulge names and operational details to Moscow.

On the basis of the information in *Red Web*, these charges appear credible, with the caveat that as yet no British documentation is available, nor has a knowledgeable SIS officer surfaced to either confirm or refute his argument. On the basis of known information on Philby's career, there appears to be some validity to Bower's proposition that Philby did not compromise the Baltic operations.

Another major criticism of SIS which is continually emphasised is the type of agent recruited from among the Baltic refugee population at the end of World War II. If Bower is to be believed, and the lack of British documentation is evident in this respect, SIS appears to have recruited mostly Balts who served with the German forces, and there is an implication that they were chiefly those who had volunteered for the SS and special police detachments. An impression is created that many were war criminals who should have been handed back to the Soviets for punishment. (Bower is also the author of two books on war criminals.) He concedes that the Cossacks returned to the Soviets faced certain death, and as a result the Western allies were unwilling to return other East Europeans and Balts to face a similar fate.



● British traitor Kim Philby, photographed in his heyday, in 1949. Did this double agent compromise the Baltic operations, too?

Bower's antipathy towards Balts who fought with the Germans manifests itself also in his attitude to those resisting the Soviet occupiers. He concludes that to "describe them as partisans or members of the resistance so equating them with the French underground was convenient for them and their sponsors . . . but was wildly inaccurate." One wonders why this is so, as both were resisting totalitarian invasion of a sovereign state. Although it is possible to construct an argument for the Baltic States allying themselves with the Germans to remove the Soviet yoke — "my enemy's enemy is my friend" — there can be no serious questioning of the description of those citizens of occupied countries who fought with the Germans, knowing of their racial policies, as collaborators or Quislings and war criminals if they participated in war crimes as defined at law. However, nowhere does Bower use that description of Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian officers and agents of the KGB, even when they were engaged in the suppression of the civilian population of their homelands, including torture and execution, nor where he describes the brutal interrogation and killing of SIS agents.

The theory of moral equivalence, in which Soviet revolutionary doctrine and ambition is ignored, played-down or defined in terms of a response to alleged Western, usually US, aggression, is a common and rather lamentable feature of modern political writings. Bower lays down the threat posed by the massive Soviet military presence in the heart of Europe at the end of World War II and quotes several assessments that the Red Army was exhausted by the push through Germany. However, he fails to mention that this presence remained and was instrumental in establishing communist rule in Eastern Europe while the US and British armed forces were being demobilised at an alarming rate, and he ignores the obvious, namely that this factor was the *raison d'être* for intelligence operations against the Soviets.

However, Bower finds the fear of counter-revolutionaries and the concomitant demand for the Western allies to hand over Balts to be justified in view of the Soviet experience since 1917. The magnitude of threat posed to USSR by the Baltic States in 1945 is barely considered. He (correctly) decries Britain's guarantees of their independence in the inter-World War period as cynical and motivated by self-interest — he perhaps should have added that it was also meaningless. More seriously, he confirms the previously mentioned and equally cynical actions of Roosevelt in recognising Soviet hegemony over the Baltic States and evinces little support for their independence.

Bower is certainly not an expert in intelligence matters. He seems to admire the professionalism of the KGB's Baltic operations, and it is true that from a purely professional viewpoint they were cleverly devised and carried out. However, he has lost sight of the fact that the KGB was and is a ruthless, blood-stained and generally odious organisation with powers that defy any reasonable concept of the rule of law. At the time of the Baltic operations, its internal counter-intelligence arm was involved in a series of bloody post-war purges while its external arm was engaged in extensive and aggressive espionage operations in the West, some of which included assassination of émigré leaders.

Advantages in the Baltic operations lay with the KGB, as indeed they would until, arguably, very recent times. Counter-intelligence operations in totalitarian states are facilitated by a regimented populace; the necessity of considerable personal documentation, which can be checked and changed frequently; a secret police force with a network of informers and the capacity to coerce citizens and punish resisters, backed up by a strong militia and army presence. Western intelligence organisations are, therefore, hampered by operating in such a hostile environment. Despite the existence of anti-regime activists, the element of trust is fraught with danger and the risk of failure is high. Failures are always the subject of ridicule and publicity; successes by and large remain secret.

Red Web falls into the category of exposés of intelligence work which are fairly common these days. It is of little comfort to Baltic readers, while those with a background in intelligence work might seriously consider the objectives of the KGB in supplying information and granting interviews to a Western writer, even in these days of glasnost. Neither type of reader is likely to sleep any easier as a consequence.

★ ★ ★

A shorter version of this review was published in BALTIC NEWS, Vol XVI, No 1 (65), March, 1990.

About the Publishers

This book has been published in Australia by a students' association known as the *Lithuanian Studies Society* of Tasmania University Union.

The Society's central aim is to make Australians more aware of Lithuania and its heritage. Films and lectures on Lithuanian topics are presented at the University of Tasmania regularly during term. Workshops are arranged to demonstrate traditional Lithuanian crafts. Academic papers emanating from these activities are published annually in the Society's journal, *Lithuanian Papers*. Four volumes have been compiled in book form so far; the fifth volume will appear in 1992.

The Lithuanian Studies Society encourages and helps with research on all topics connected with Lithuania. Amanda Banks has recently completed a most successful Honours thesis on Lithuania's environmental problems and has been awarded First Class Honours for this work. Mrs Genovaitė Kazokas is now writing a Ph.D. thesis on Lithuanian artists in Australia, and several projects are in progress in the Faculty of Law.

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Established in 1987, the Tasmania University Union Lithuanian Studies Society now has 35 student members and 3 associate members. All financial members receive the quarterly English-language journal *Lituanus* (published in the U.S.) as well as the Society's own publications.

Iron Wolf

The black iron wolf is the Society's logo. Its origins go back to the foundation of Vilnius, Lithuania's capital city, in the 14th century.

According to legend, Gediminas, the Grand Duke of Lithuania, dreamt of an iron wolf howling from a hilltop. This dream was interpreted as a message from the god of Thunder, Perkūnas, that a new city, large and famous, was to be built around that hill.

Grand Duke Gediminas went ahead with the project, then moved his headquarters from Kernavė to Vilnius. Today, Vilnius has a population of half a million.

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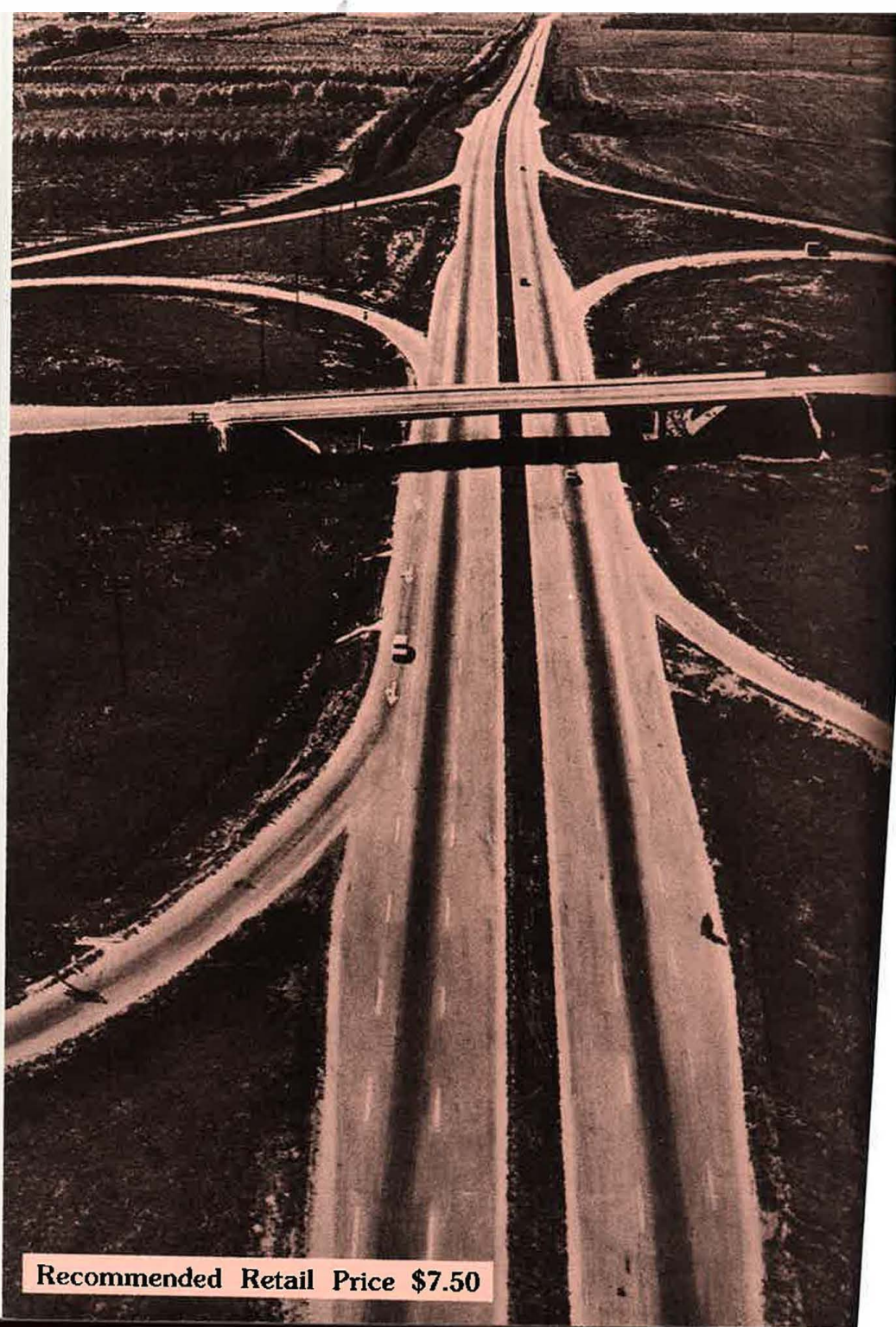
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