U.S. Support for Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania

Washington, D.C., June 23

The U.S. Administration is committed to the full implementation of all Europe’s new democracies, including Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, with the Transatlantic community. The U.S. seeks to eliminate the Cold War division – without creating arbitrary lines. This Administration has and will continue to support the Baltic states’ security, sovereignty and democratic, free market transformations.

U.S. relations with the Baltic states over these countries are becoming good economic partners and reliable Strategic partners. The U.S. has provided troops to the NATO-led forces in the Baltic states, standing with us in one of the toughest periods in Europe's history.

For decades, successive U.S. Administrations maintained a strong U.S.-Russian partnership and defended the occupation and insecure sovereignty of the Baltic states. Following the restoration of independence in 1991 by Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the United States has been the first supporter for both the democratic and the security of these countries as well as upholding their security and sovereignty.

President Clinton visited Riga, Latvia in July 1994, the first U.S. President to visit a Baltic state, and later in the same month Gore visited Tallinn, Estonia in March 1995. As a statement of American support for the Baltic states, Mrs. Clinton visits Riga today, June 23, 1996.

Since 1990, the Support for East European Democracy program (SEED) has provided $100 million in assistance to the Baltic nations. Programs include privatization, energy efficiency, public administration training and entrepreneurial support.

In 1994, the U.S. established the Baltic American Enterprise Fund, capitalized at $50 million out of SEED funds, to support free enterprise in these nations by promoting the growth of small and medium-sized businesses.

Military training exercises are now being held under the President’s Partnership for Peace (PPF) initiative, with which the Baltic states are active participants. “Baltic Challenge”, the next exercise, conducted by a Balt of Baltic forces, will begin July 8 in Latvia, involving forces from the U.S. and the Baltic states.

In 1994, the U.S. launched the Law of Democracy Program to help emerging democracies of Central and Eastern Europe combat organized and white-collar crime. The U.S. has provided experts to help the Baltic states cope with bank fraud and other financial systems. The FBI is stationed in Tallinn in the next year.

The United States provided $25 million for the demolition of the ex-Russian large phased array radar at Saldus, Latvia.

The Peace Corps is active in the Baltic, with about 150 volunteers, mainly concentrated in English language and small business training.

Twenty grants to Baltic NGOs already have been made through the President’s Democracy Network program. The second round of awards will be made over the summer.

The U.S. provided $2 million for the clean up of the former Soviet nuclear reactor facility in Paldiski, Estonia.

The U.S. has greatly expanded its security and military programs with the Baltic states since 1993.

Russian violence in Chechnya dangerous for Baltic countries

Vilnius, June 21, 1996

BNS – Donas MP Konstantinas Barzov, deputy from the Economic Freedom Party, said that a country without cooperation with Chechnya, the Russian republic sees itself as not free from Russia's pressure. The MP's statement comes after the Chechnya's government, under President Aslan Maskhadov, has signed an ceasefire agreement with Chechen rebels, that includes guarantees for the Russian army, and the withdrawal of the Russian forces from the region. The MP's statement comes after the Chechnya's government, under President Aslan Maskhadov, has signed an ceasefire agreement with Chechen rebels, that includes guarantees for the Russian army, and the withdrawal of the Russian forces from the region.

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On June 18, Russian citizens in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia voted in favor of Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov in the presidential elections. In Estonia, with an estimate of 100,000 Russian citizens, over 23,000 voters in the elections and Zyuganov received 61.7% of the vote. In Latvia, where 50,000 people have been given Russian citizenship, over 9,000 people voted and Zyuganov received 41.6% of the vote. In Lithuania, 4,500 Russian citizens voted in the elections and Zyuganov received more than half the vote.

Bob Dale supports Baltic states on NATO

New York, June 24 (Reuters) – Three presidents from the Baltic States mingled on Monday with Bob Dale, who wants to be one.

The Republican with eyes on the White House met with the president’s saying, among the subjects discussed, the changes in the conventional forces in Europe treaty (CFE), and some of the rhetoric coming from the nationalist quarters in Moscow.

“I assured the presidents that Baltic security is on the agenda of Washington as we discuss the enlargement of NATO and build our relationship with Russia,” Dale said.

“The enlargement of NATO to include Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic should be the beginning of the expansion process, and not the end,” Dale stated.

“The Baltic nations rightly aspire to the stability and security NATO provides,” said Dale.

Dole also hailed President Bush at the G-7 meeting of leading industrial nations this week in London, France, “to issue a strong statement of support for the sovereignty and independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.”

The three presidents, who are in this country to receive awards from an organization involved in East-West studies, are expected to meet on Tuesday with Clinton, Dole’s Democratic opponent.

Clinton’s schedule had him in New York on Monday and in Washington on Tuesday, before the Baltic leaders’ meeting about the same time. According to Dale’s schedule, “This is a big city,” Dale quipped. “I don’t think we’ll get lost.”

“Very disappointing to see the United Nations itself missing from the alliance,” in his view, by joining Poland’s “team”, both of those politicians could definitely influence Chechnya. In the MP’s resignation, over the past two years the Russian president has been surrounded by people with a pro-Poland, pro-western thinking.

During his stay in Lithuania, Estonia, the Baltic states and唉 Lithuanian national poet Algirdas Brunckus.

Polish parliamentarians support Lithuania’s efforts for NATO membership

Vilnius, June 19, 1996

Jerzy Smogaczewski, chairman of the Polish parliament’s national security committee, is confident that the country will sign up to the Western countries.

“The Baltic region is very important from a political and military aspect, and we will support Lithuania both politically and militarily,” said the Polish parliamentarian in a press conference Wednesday.

The Polish parliamentary national security committee decided Monday to provide a return visit to Vilnius by the analogous Lithuanian committee, arrived June 17. During the three-day visit, the committee met with the parliamentary chairman, the inter-party group of the Polish and Lithuanian MPs and with representatives of the defense ministry and army.

While the Polish parliamentary national security committee already has prepared a treaty on protection for the Baltic states in the event of war, this document has not been ratified by the Lithuanian parliament. The Lithuanian parliament is still waiting to be notified by the Lithuanian parliament on the Polish proposal.

Nordic investment bank loan to visit Baltic

Vilnius, June 21, 1996

The Nordic Investment Bank will provide a loan of 6.5 million dollars for preliminary work for the planned Baltic interconnex, to be used to bring energy to Latvian power stations in the Baltic states.
LITHUANIA AT THE ATLANTA OLYMPICS

By KEN BURGE

Lithuanian National Olympic Committee's Attaché to the Atlanta Games

Lithuania, Bseek, Lithuanian Airlines, Utena Germai, Karolinskas. Each participating athlete in Athens had to earn the right to be there, which meant qualifying, either by reaching certain international performance standards or by being one of the top 4 teams designated for Europe. For example, Lithuania's basketball team consisted of 12 teams participating in Athens. A 4,000-mile trek to the world, looking for gold in men's discus and a bronze medal in men's basketball. For the first time in history we heard the Lithuanian National Anthem being played at the medal award ceremonies.

Lithuania's live for sports, and particularly basketball, will be reflected in the makeup of the delegation. Even though Lithuania is a small country by world standards, it will be sending a very sizable team to the U.S. The Lithuanian athletes will be facing great challenges not because of the unexpected weather in Athens, just as before, but because of lack of adequate financing and proper training facilities, when compared to countries such as Germany, Canada. For their dedication and desire to win the games, the Lithuanian team is to be commended. The Lithuanian National Olympic Committee had to work tirelessly to raise the necessary funds. The main source of funding for the teams came from a variety of sponsors, better known to us as being Upittim-

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**BALTIC FEDERATION: REALITY OR FANTASY?**

Dr. Algirdas V. Kazas

Executive Consultant Strategic Development Center,
Vilnius, Lithuania

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On the surface, the idea of a Baltic Federation (Confederation) seems to promise a greater unity and common voice for those nations sharing similar cultural, historical, and political roots. However, in reality, the idea of a Baltic Federation remains widely debated and is far from being realized.

The concept of a Baltic Federation has been discussed by various politicians and thinkers, but its implementation faces numerous challenges. Each country in the region has its own priorities, interests, and historical baggage that complicate the idea of a unified regional body.

Despite these challenges, there are certain initiatives and agreements that have the potential to bring the Baltic States closer together. For example, the Baltic States have signed the Baltic Agreement, which aims to enhance cooperation in various fields.

However, the idea of a Baltic Federation is unlikely to be realized in its current form. The complex geopolitical landscape of the region, coupled with the diverse interests of the Baltic States, makes a comprehensive federation unlikely in the near future.

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**DAY OF MOURNING AND HOPES**

Washington, D.C., June 30, Ambassador to Lithuania, In accordance with the law of the United States, the Lithuanian Embassy in Washington, D.C., is closed today in observance of the Day of Mourning and Hope.

The law was enacted by the Congress of the United States in 1944 to commemorate the liberation of Lithuania from Nazi occupation. The day is observed by the Lithuanian community in the United States to remember the sacrifices made during World War II and to honor the memory of those who lost their lives in the struggle for freedom.

The Embassy of Lithuania in Washington, D.C., will remain closed on June 30 in observance of the Day of Mourning and Hope. The staff will return to work on July 1.

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**BALTIC HAVEN’S NO CHANCE TO ENTER ENGLAND**

Moscow, June 19, 19**R**S. The Baltic States have no chance to enter Lithuania because of the embargo imposed by the Soviet Union. The embargo was declared by Moscow on June 19, 1989, following the demonstrations in the Baltic States.

The Baltic States, which include Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, have been independent since 1991 and have sought to establish close ties with other European countries. However, the embargo has prevented them from entering this important market.

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**WELCOME**

Welcome to the first English edition of Draga\'s (The Friend) magazine. This issue is our new venture to give a new perspective to the readers of the Western military alliance which has had enough for money to this.

SWEDEN'S GIFT TO LITHUANIA

Klajpėda, June 25 (ELTA) - The Swedish Coast Guard Left Stormet handed over the documents of their warship "Lilja" to Chief Commissioner of the Lithuanian border police department Stanislavas Stanulis.

The handover ceremony was attended by Swedish and Lithuanian officials. The "Lilja" is a 2,000-ton patrol vessel and has been transferred to Lithuania as a gift. The swedish vessel will be used to patrol the waters near the port of Klajpėda.

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**More Reading**

On July 25th the Lithuanian women in joint with their counterparts in 19 other countries in the world will celebrate their 87th Birthday. As they say, Draga was born a long time ago, the time of their birth in 1999 on this side of the Atlantic Ocean, far away from Lithuania where most readers of Draga originated.

Draga was their faithful Friend (that is what the world Dragas means in Lithuanian - friend) and companion throughout World War II the weaknesses of collective Lithuanian ethnic consciousness; the unconsciousness of efforts to help their homeland achieve its ultimate goal independence.

When this miracle finally occurred on February 18, 1918, Lithuanian women, especially in the United States, knew that their work wasn't over - Lithua

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**Thank you for reading.**
THE HISTORY OF THE LITHUANIAN EMBASSY BUILDING IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

BY ALFONSOAS EIDINIS

The ornate Italian-style building that is now the Embassy of Lithuania is one of the few properties owned by Senator Tom Harkin. It was purchased by Mary Post Henderson, and built especially for the use of the embassy in the 1920s. The street around the turn of the century was lined with similar embassies, and the specific building was finished in 1909, and over the next 15 years was used by consul offices and embassies of various countries. Lithuanian nationals and their consulates in various cities around the United States, including New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, were also interested in the building. In 1926, the building was sold to the Lithuanian government, and became the Lithuanian Embassy in Washington, D.C.

On July 27, 1922, the United States Government recognized the government of Lithuania, which has been in existence since 1918. The Lithuanian Consulate in Washington was established in 1921, and in 1922 it was upgraded to an Embassy. The Consul General, Voldemar Carneckis, oversaw the transition of the Consulate to an Embassy, and became chief justice of the office of the supervising director in the Treasury Department. Over the course of his tenure, Carneckis was responsible for overseeing the design and construction of the new Embassy building. He was also responsible for the design and construction of the neighboring Meridian Hill Park, which was completed in 1924.

The Lithuanian Embassy Building was constructed in the early 1920s to accommodate the growing number of Lithuanian diplomats and consular officials. The building was designed by local architect George Oakley Totten, Jr., and was built by the contractor George Totten, Jr., attended Newark Technical School. He moved to Washington in 1892, and became chief designer of the office of the supervising architect in the Treasury Department. Over the course of his tenure, Totten was responsible for overseeing the design and construction of the new Embassy building. He was also responsible for the design and construction of the neighboring Meridian Hill Park, which was completed in 1924.

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LITHUANIAN MERCY LIFT — A HELPING HAND ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

Six years ago, during a peace-keeping demonstration in Neutral nation's independence which was based upon the principle of non-intervention and mutual respect for the rights of others. In many cases, these countries have faced major emergency medical care. A cry for help went out from Vilnius, Lithuania, and a group of doctors responded to this cry, including a letter from Dr. and the American from the Chicago area. Realizing the need to coordinate medical and financial aid which was soon to be poured in, Dr. and his team of doctors began to accomplish this task.

The crisis ended, but this work continues. The success in providing a model of aid organization, seeing the dire need for continued medical aid in Lithuania, did not diminish. On the contrary, it has grown and multiplied. In 1978, the concept of Lithuanian Mercy Lift, as it is now named, was born. Over 100,000 containers of needed medical supplies and equipment valued at more than $50 million dollars. Since then, this organization has continued its work, setting up a closer and closer relationship with Lithuania, including the Lithuanian culture.

In 1978 the teachers' conference elected a new executive committee: Dr. Galina Gobienė — president, Napoleon Papienė — vice-president, Frank Zapolski — professor, Almazavičius — vice-secretary, and Stasė Basėvičienė — treasurer. This committee had to make up the dance program for the Sixth Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival. In 1982 the teachers' conference elected a new executive committee: Galina Gobienė — president, Frank Zapolski and Algimantas Vitkūnas — vice-secretaries, Asta Basiūnienė — secretary, and Stasė Basėvičienė — treasurer. This committee had to make up the dance program for the Seventh Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival. Meanwhile filming of the dances had been started. The organizing committee was waiting for the photographs to be developed. It took a few days until the photos were ready to see andiar. So newsletter — the first on record — was published.
The Lithuanian-American Daily “Draugas” has been published successfully for 87 years. In recent years subscriptions are declining mostly due to death of aged patrons. Printing and mailing expenses are rapidly increasing with inadequate income from subscriptions, advertising, and donations. In order to raise additional revenue for “Draugas” in the fall of 1993 the Draugas Foundation was organized to provide funds for the continued operation of this publication. The Board of Directors is authorized to handle investments and provide capital gain to the best interest of the Draugas Foundation.

During two and a half years the Draugas Foundation accumulated a half-million dollars. From the capital gain, the Draugas Foundation gave four grants to “Draugas” in the amount of $102,000.

Everybody is invited to join and support the Draugas Foundation because it supports the only Lithuanian newspaper “Draugas”.

Government of the U.S.:

“SLUNIGHT BRIGHTS LIVES”

Being centered, having roots is an important element in our lives. Our interests may be widely varied, but the activities with which we are mainly associated usually stem from our roots. They may be ethnic roots or the values in which we are rooted. A combination of both gives us stability and goals.

Early in the 1990’s my great grandmother brought her clan from Lithuania to Chicago. My mother was born here and baptised at St. George’s Church in Bridgeport, the famous Chicago suburb area so aptly portrayed in Upton Sinclair’s novel “The Jungle”. An enterprising company woman, my grandmother, ran a boarding house for workers in the area of 120 and South Van Nest. Despite their new lives in the United States, they always made sure they preserved their roots.

When Lithuania was engulfed by the Soviet Union, our clan was to help reestablish Lithuania’s independence. However, with independence emerged a number of problems previously hidden from the world. Fifty years of communist occupation had affected not only the economy, but also the family unit. After imprisonment and forced labor in the gulags, many political prisoners were not allowed to return to their families. Alcoholism also took its toll on the family unit.

Three years ago the “Saulute” Committee of Aid Orphans in Lithuania (“Saulute”) was established under the auspices of the Lithuanian World Community. There are about 20,000 “orphans” in Lithuania. That is a general term, we came to discover, that many are not orphans at all. They are children whose both parents are deceased, children whose parents’ rights were terminated, children of dysfunctional families, abandoned handicapped children. The population of Lithuania is declining and the need for the children’s homes is rising. In 1977, when there were 100,000 children orphans, this number was reduced to 30,000 to 40,000.

Our hearts went out to these children of Lithuania, because Lithuanian countrymen, often receive media and world attention, there is little focus on the plight of the needy Lithuanian children. By sending packages containing, shoes, books, toys, blankets, not only children’s products, aids for the handicapped and multivitamins, the “Saulute” Committee is working to improve the lives of children in the orphanages.

One of the main priorities of the “Saulute” Committee is to establish “Saulute” branches in areas where the child’s Hope, to provide them with proper care.

The work of the “Saulute” Committee is administered not only with compassion, but also with accountability. There is a network to check that the needy children actually are the recipients of the donations. Members make frequent visits to Lithuania to monitor donations and affiliations with organizations like “Caritas”, are a great help.

The “Saulute Committee” has received endorsements from the Governor of Illinois, Lithuania’s President and Lithuanian Americans.

The Lithuanian Orphan Care Committee was formed in July of 1993 under the umbrella of the Lithuanian Human Services Council of the USA Inc., Lithuanian American Community, 2111 W. 71st Pl., Chicago, IL 60629, Phone (312) 476-2450, Fax (312) 476-6699.

Based on the “foster-a-child” model, Lithuanian American Community provides direct support – through established and direct charitable channels to Lithuanian orphanages in Lithuania – to the Lithuanian American’s orphans living with foster families as well as orphans. Scholarships are also provided to orphan students.

The Lithuanian Orphan Care Committee (LOC) also gives vitamins, clothing and educa-

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