

DRAUGAS

THE FRIEND

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Striding Forward To the Freedom Of Speech

The "Lithuanian Free Speech Center" (LFSC) in Lithuania is an umbrella organization for leading Lithuanian media associations, logistically supported by the U.S. — Baltic Foundation. The LFSC is also funded by the "National Endowment for Democracy," "Martin Gruss Foundation" and "USBF donors." From its inception in October 1995, the LFSC has been involved in the creation of new, more democratic mass media in Lithuania. The center's efforts have been rewarded: on July 2, 1996, the Seimas (Lithuanian Parliament) passed the Law on Public Information, Lithuania's most comprehensive media legislation yet, and on July 10th, the Seimas passed another bill that guaranteed the proper implementation of this new media law. Members of the Seimas described the law as "the basic step to democracy." These bills still await the final approval of Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas, but media organizations are satisfied with this major breakthrough and have high hopes for the final outcome. "This law is the most progressive Law in Eastern Europe," commented Rimantas Šukys, chief of the media law working group.

The Lithuanian Free Speech Center has been a leader in the negotiation process for the drafting of free press legislation, conducting conferences to address the complicated issues that arise in the restructuring of media law. Most recently, with the assistance of the US — Baltic Foundation and the America Center, the LFSC held a conference in Vilnius from May 24-25, entitled "Self Regulation in the Mass Media and Advertising." The concept of self regulation was approved by every participant in the conference, including the members of the Seimas who normally espouse divergent political views.

Earlier in October of 1995, through generous aid provided

by the US — Baltic Foundation and the Friedrich-Nauman Fund, and in conjunction with the Lithuanian Radio and Television Association, the LFSC held another conference entitled "Legal and Economic Conditions for Development of Mass Media in the Baltic States." At this conference, the first drafts of the new media law were the primary topic of discussion by participants, who included representatives of the mass media and politicians.

One of the leaders of this conference was American professor Steven Pasternack, who is the head of the Department of Journalism and Mass Communications at New Mexico State University. Dr. Pasternack was present to offer his expertise in media and governments is involved as evolutionary. "Freedom of expression has to be a joint effort between a responsible press and a government that is trusted as a peer institution."

This conference greatly helped politicians and mass media seek a common point of view on some issues vital to media development in this country. As a result, the Seimas, adopted a more democratic version of the Law on Public Information that was submitted by the joint working group of journalists and politicians. Consequently, the first six articles were approved by the Seimas in just one session.

Today, the two principle tasks of the LFSC are to closely monitor governmental influence in the development of the recently passed media legislation and to act swiftly whenever restrictive measures against the Lithuanian media are enacted. For instance, the Lithuanian government strongly advocated measures which allowed the private lives of state officials and politicians to remain secret. Discussion of this issue culminated on February 1, 1996 when article 8 of the draft law was debated. Only the collective effort of practically every mass media organization prevented the enactment of the government's position into law.

In the future, the LFSC is determined to grant all journalists access to and use of the data collected by the center. Presently the center's archives already contain many laws and government resolutions, associated with mass media development in Lithuania. Collection and translation into Lithuanian of various documents from foreign countries and international organizations is also planned. This will enable the LFSC to become the primary consulting organization for everyone interested in mass media. Furthermore, the LFSC will collect and analyze information pertaining to the implementation of the Law on Public Information and other laws affecting mass media.

Aside from such organizational work, on May 8, 1996 the Lithuanian Free Speech Center initiated a seminar series entitled "Seimas Elections and the Media." The discussion series is scheduled to take place through the Lithuanian parliamentary elections in October of this year.



A meeting in Vilnius with Lithuania Christian Democratic Party leaders and Parliamentary Election committee. Some of the participants are from abroad visiting Lithuania and helping with the election to the Parliament process.

No Secure Lithuania Without Secure Poland

Gdynia, Sept 20 (ELTA) — There is no secure Lithuania without secure Poland, and there is no secure Poland without secure Lithuania — this was the basic idea at the joint news conference of Lithuanian and Polish Presidents — Algirdas Brazauskas and Aleksandr Kwasniewski — held on Thursday night in Gdynia after signing a Joint Declaration.

This document confirms the determination of both countries to cooperate in striving to join European Union and NATO.

The Joint Declaration was signed at the World Trade Cen-

tre. Afterwards Presidents Brazauskas and Kwasniewski attended the exhibition titled "Partnership of the Baltic Sea Countries".

However, there were numerous other agreements which were not included into the declaration. Presidents agreed to arrange a conference "Reconciliation of Nations and Relations of Good Neighbourhood — as the Safeguard of Security and Stability in Europe" in Vilnius at the start of next year. Representatives of Latvia, Estonia, Russia, Ukraine, Central European states, as well as Germany

and France, are to be invited.

Brazauskas and Kwasniewski agreed to finish the prolonged construction works of Punkskas Culture House in South East Poland, as well as on publishing Lithuanian textbooks for Lithuanian schools in Poland.

Also, an agreement by the defence ministers of both countries on formation of joint battalion of peacekeepers is to be signed this year. It would be one more evidence of successful Lithuanian-Polish cooperation in a military sphere.

At the end of his visit President Brazauskas put a wreath of flowers at the monument to Polish sailors in Gdynia. After the official farewell ceremony Brazauskas with accompanying persons embarked on the Aukštaitis frigate bound for Lithuanian port of Klaipėda.

Interruptions at Ignalina Power Plant to Cause Huge Losses

Vilnius, September 11 (ELTA). Due to a stoppage in Lithuanian Ignalina power plant, the country's power consumers did not feel a lack of energy supply.

Currently Lithuania receives its energy supply from Latvia and Russia. The energy system also uses all the capacities of other power stations.

The use of all possible reserves enables to meet the country's energy demand, however, no export is possible at the moment.

Due to a stoppage in the Ignalina power plant, the supply of energy to Belarus and Latvia was interrupted. Lietuvos Energija Co. also incurred losses, as additional reserves of black oil and gas were consumed.

An earlier stoppage at the Ignalina plant from August 27 to September 1 cost the company 9.4 million litas.

Deputy director of Lietuvos Energija Co. Vladas Paškevičius told ELTA that the first turbine of the power plant was to be put into operation on Wednesday evening and the whole first energy unit — on Thursday.

The second energy block is currently undergoing a planned repair to last until October 1.

The Resolution 51 (HCR 51) was Passed

Washington, DC Sept 26 — The Concurrent Resolution 51 (CR 51) urging Russians to withdraw their estimated 200,000 troops from the Baltic port region of Karaliaučius (Koenigsberg-Kaliningrad) was voted upon the September 26th in US Congress and passed with unanimous consent. On September 17, 1996 the House International Relations Committee

gave unanimous approval to this same Resolution. House Concurrent Resolution 51 was introduced by Congressman Christopher Cox (R-CA) and very strongly supported by the Baltic American Freedom League, Inc. Although the text was redrafted and modified many times, the final version was successful.

Perhaps Justice Will Finally Be Served

According to ELTA, October 9 of this year Vilnius district court will witness the start of the trial against former Lithuanian Communist Party leaders, who took part in tragic events of January 13th 1991.

On that fateful day, Soviet troops attacked TV tower and Press Building in Vilnius, of already independent Lithuania. Eleven peaceful demonstrators were killed or crushed by Soviet tanks. Later the culprits of this crime were sued.

Širvydis showed about 33 case volumes which constitute merely one third of the whole investigation material. However, the start of this process should in no way be related to the election campaign, Justice Minister Albertas Valys emphasized.

Charges are to be brought against 48 persons, however, the questioning process was finished only with 7 persons. Of this group one, namely Ivan Kucherov, died this summer, therefore, the trial is to include six defendants.

The rest 42 cases were started against foreign citizens whose extradition was refused. Accused persons are the former Soviet Union leaders, army commanders and KGB agents. Therefore, investigation of these cases was interrupted.

The court is to hear cases of the then Communist Party central committee (LKP CK) first secretary Mykolas Burokevičius, head of CK Juozas Jarma-

vičius, LKP CK secretary Juozas Kuolelis, former chief editor of radio Tarybų Lietuva (Soviet Lithuania), former editor of "Tarybų Lietuva" Stanislas Mickevičius, and superintendent of Interior Ministry Jaroslava Prokopovičius.

The key defendants, Burokevičius and Jarmalavičius, may be accused of murder, as well as creation of antigovernmental organizations, participation in their activity, and sabotage. The accused might be sentenced to capital punishment.

The court trial is to include four prosecutors. About 1,000 victims and 3,000 witnesses are to be cross-examined.

Lithuanian Border Control To Receive Equipment

Vilnius, September 11, (ELTA). Lithuania's Klaipėda seaport is to receive radars functioning in the sea surveillance posts to be equipped under Swedish and Danish border control project on Thursday.

The Lithuanian Defence Ministry's international relations department informed ELTA, that Thursday only one third of the provided radiolocation equipment will be forwarded. The package is to include about 2,000,000 litas worth of radars to be installed by Danish specialists in the Nida, Palanga and Klaipėda posts.

Lithuanian Ships Join International Exercises

Gdynia, Sept 24 (ELTA) — Two Lithuanian navy ships Aukštaitis and Vėtra with about 100 crew on board joined international "Cooperative Venture" exercises starting last Wednesday in Polish Gdynia seaport.

The "Cooperative Venture" is to encompass about two thousand sailors and twenty ships from nine NATO countries, including Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Sweden.

On finishing preparatory training in Gdynia, the exercises are to move to the territorial waters of Denmark, Norway and Sweden, where the participants are scheduled to learn how to establish a radio contact, carry out embargo operations and locate submarines.

The Lithuanian ships made preparations for "Cooperative Venture" by joining the Baltic "Amber Sea" exercises held in July.

Concern for Security of the Baltics

Washington, DC, Sept. 6 — the central and East European Coalition expresses deep concern for the security of the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the face of constant vocal threats from Russia. These threats run from demands to draw them into the Russian sphere of influence and prevent them from being considered for NATO membership, to outright absorption into the Russian state.

The Central and East European Coalition is an umbrella organization of 18 national ethnic groups, representing some 22 million Americans with roots in Central and Eastern Europe.

The aggressive Russian rhetoric has originated from President Yeltsin, the Foreign and Defense Minister and many other officials, diplomats and the military. In some cases, threats have included renewed

Furthermore, the center has plans to institute future educational programs. For this reason, the center sent Sigita Žilionis, a consultant to the Lithuanian Radio and Television Association, to participate in the Baltic Professionals' Association for Independent Media Development program which was organized by Ohio University in Athens, Ohio.

By Gintaras Songaila and
Sigita Žilionis
"USBF News"



One of the most beautiful churches in Europe — Sventos Onos (St. Ann's) church in Vilnius.

Photo by Viktoras Kučas

Lithuanians in Sports

GODFATHER OF LITHUANIA'S BASKETBALL

More than sixty years have trickled by but Frank Lubin remembers it all as if it happened 60 years ago.

Even now, at age 86, he recalls details, names, circumstances.

Then again, what athlete could forget taking part in the Olympic Games?

For Lubin, who has lived in Glendale for nearly four decades, that opportunity came in 1936 in Berlin, site of the first Olympic basketball tournament.

"I had never been out of California and traveling to Berlin was an exciting time," Lubin said. "It was one of the most interesting sporting times I've ever had."

Lubin was a 6-foot-7 center on the American squad that won the gold medal and that started a string of seven consecutive Olympic championships for the United States.

That winning streak extended to 62 games until the Soviet Union snapped it with a controversial 51-50 upset in the final game of the Munich Olympics in 1972.

It was the most-devastating defeat for the US in Olympic competition until the 1988 team in Seoul lost to the Soviets in the semifinals and has to settle for a bronze medal.

In the two Olympics since Seoul, the US has been represented by NBA superstars, the so-called Dream Team that swept in Barcelona four years ago. This year's version in Atlanta also can finish unscathed with a victory tonight against Yugoslavia.

But it was Lubin and 13 other

men who, almost a lifetime ago, set the table for American domination in Olympic basketball.

The US group that made history in Berlin was, in reality, two separate units made up primarily of players from the Universal Pictures and the McPherson Globe Oilers teams, both amateur Athletic Union powerhouses.

Lubin, who was born in East Los Angeles and became an All-Pacific Coast Conference selection at UCLA in his senior season in 1931, was one of several former Bruins playing for Universal. He had become a grip in the movies after college and helped catapult Universal's basketball team to national prominence.

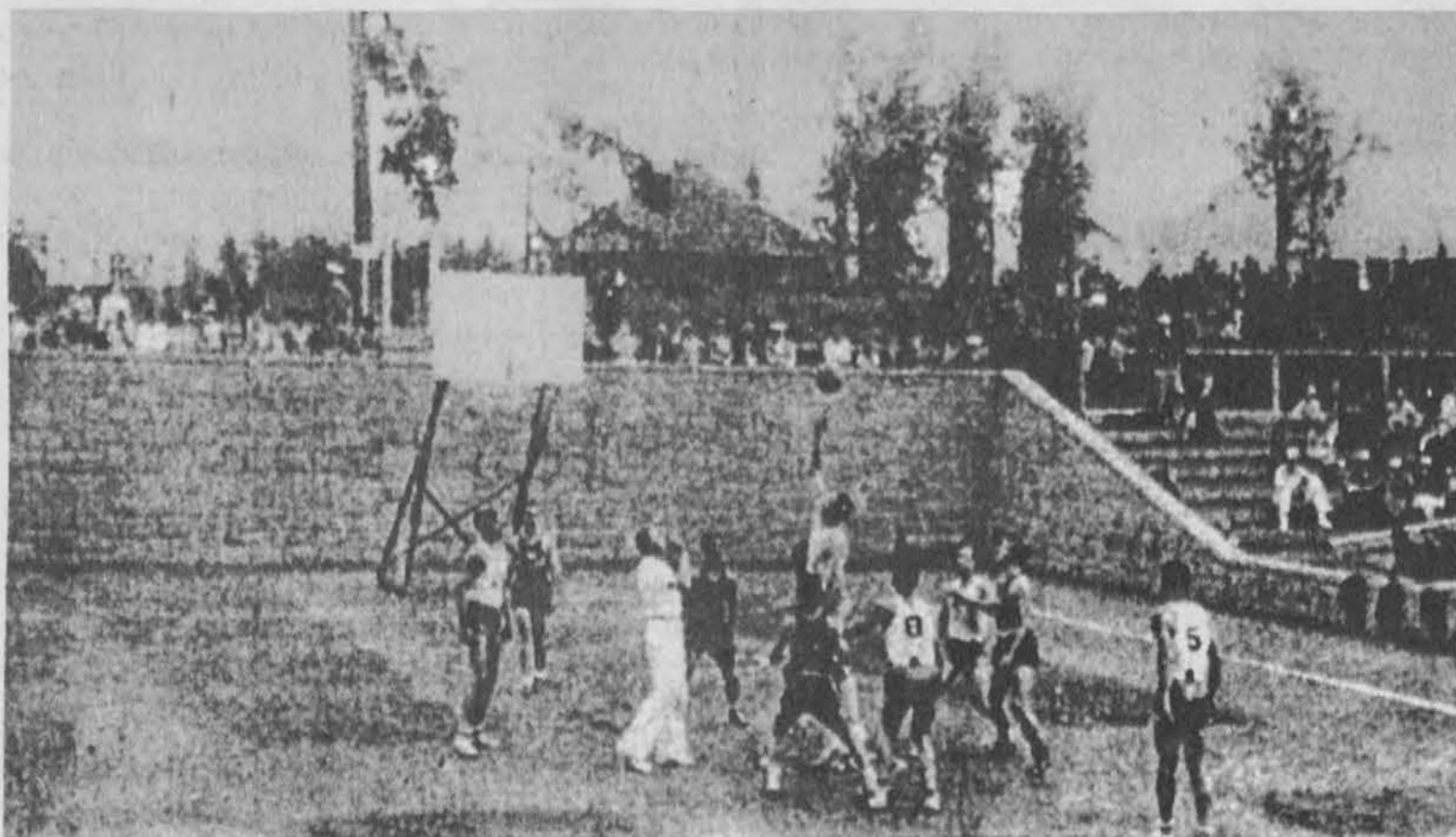
"We would lose a game here and there, but we were a pretty potent team," Lubin said.

With Lubin and former UCLA standout Carl Knowles leading the way, Universal plowed through qualifying tournaments in 1936 to reach an eight-team final in April at New York's Madison Square Garden. The champion would earn the right to fill half of the 14-man Olympic roster.

The two AAU teams in the competition, Universal and McPherson, had to pay their way to New York because the companies refused to sponsor players who were willing to play in Nazi Germany.

"We played games around the country to raise the money to get there," Lubin said.

They got there, all right, and defeated McPherson in the championship game, 44-43, to avenge a 47-35 low two weeks



A muddy basketball court did not stop Lithuanians on the road to victory. Berlin 1936.

earlier in the AAU national finals in Denver. Lubin scored 11 points and was one of three Universal players in double figures in the New York game.

With the victory, Universal placed seven men on the Olympic team and McPherson had six. The only outsider was James Bishop, the center from the University of Washington, one of five colleges at the final tournament.

In July, the Olympic team sailed from New York to Germany, but Lubin said the players were unhappy with the selection process.

"We went over there with bad feelings," Lubin said. "We weren't friendly with each other."

Once in Germany, the Americans encountered a few surprises.

When the tournament started, the International Basketball Federation tried to ban athletes who were 6-3 or taller. The US, which would have lost several players, protested and the rule was withdrawn. But the Americans were hit with another salvo.

The IBF then ruled that teams could not suit up more than seven players for the games. The US hopped over that land mine by alternating units, with Universal playing one game and the Oilers and Bishop playing the next — in the clay outdoor arena built for the occasion.

Apparently, the Germans didn't realize the sport was played indoors.

"It was kind of a shock," Lubin said. "It was just like going out and playing in a playground. The first day we were there, we got our uniforms on and said to an official, 'We'd like to go into the gym and practice.' He pointed to the court and said, 'Right over there.'"

After a forfeit victory over Spain in the opener, Lubin and his Universal teammates trounced Estonia, 52-28, and the McPherson outfit followed with a 56-23 shellacking of the Philippines. The Universal group then beat Mexico, 25-10, in the semifinals, creating a quandary for the coaching staff.

Who would play in the gold medal game?

The coaches decided to go with four Oilers, two from Universal and Bishop. Lubin was excluded.

"I was very angry, but what could I do?" Lubin said.

So Lubin watched from the bleachers, with his wife Mary Agnes and two other relatives, as the US defeated Canada, 19-8, in a downpour that transformed the converted tennis court into mud.

"There must have been two inches of water on the court," said Lubin, who still received a gold medal. "Nobody wanted to catch the ball because the water would splash on their faces."

After the Olympics, Lubin re-

turned briefly to Los Angeles and then spent three years in Lithuania, his father's homeland, helping develop that country's sports program.

He was known there as Pranas Lubinas — Lithuanian for Frank and his father's family name — and was regarded as the godfather of Lithuania basketball.

At the European championships in 1939 in Kaunas, Lithuania, Lubin was the home team's player coach and scored the winning basket in the final seconds of a 36-35 win over Latvia in the title game.

"It was a layup under the basket," Lubin said. "I was always playing close to the basket. I hollered to the one player who had the ball to give it to me. ... That basket made me quite famous in Lithuania."

To this day, Lubin said, Lithuanians talk about his feat. He refers to current players from that country as "students of my students."

Lubin played on AAU teams until he was 54, including one sponsored by 20th Century-Fox, for which he worked after returning from Lithuania. A few years ago, he was inducted into the Helms Hall of Fame as the best amateur player in Southern California for the first half of the century.

Lubin is one of four players from the 1936 Olympic team still alive.

By **Fernando Dominguez** "Los Angeles Times", August 3, 1996

A WELCOME SIGN

Maryte Abbott — Editor of "Vytis — The Knight" (Knights of Lithuania magazine) writes about the English-language edition of "Draugas":

"Congratulations on your new English edition. While at the Brockton convention, my suggestion for Draugas was passed, so four complimentary 1/4 page advertisements will be placed in

DRAUGAS

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"Vytis" during this next year. I'm sure this will help new subscribers to the weekly, Draugas. As a matter of fact, my own mother, Mirga Babin, was the one who first told me of this new edition. She was very excited and is a subscriber already."

The Editors and administration of "Draugas-The Friend" are very grateful to the Knights of Lithuania, especially Maryte Abbott, the Editor-in-chief of their monthly magazine "Vytis" for the decision to advertise our publication.

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RESOLUTION 11-96
APPRECIATION OF DRAUGAS

WHEREAS the Lithuanian Catholic Daily "DRAUGAS" has consistently and generously printed news of the Knights of Lithuania in the "Vytis Veikla" column and other parts of their publication; and,

WHEREAS Draugas is now considering the publication of a weekly English-language edition,

BE IT RESOLVED that the 83rd National Convention of the Knights of Lithuania express its sincerest gratitude to "Draugas" and its staff for their generosity and cooperation in publicizing Knights of Lithuania activity and congratulate the managers and editors of Draugas for moving in the direction of serving the broader spectrum of Americans of Lithuanian heritage who no longer have a sufficient command of the Lithuanian language but remain interested in news of Lithuania and on the activity of Lithuanians living in this country,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in consideration of their efforts a one-quarter page notice advertising their English-language edition will be placed in four subsequent issues of VYTIS.

Passed: August 10, 1996

Submitted by: Resolution Committee and amended by Vytis Editor.

Vincent B. Boris
Vincent B. Boris, Chairman,
Resolutions Committee

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Before and after. Pranas Lubinas in Lithuania 1939 and in his home — California — 1996.

SECRET GERMAN-SOVIET AGREEMENTS OF 1939 CONCERNING LITHUANIA

On August 23, 1939, eight days before the attack on Poland by Hitler's armies, the U.S.S.R. and Germany concluded a Treaty of Non-Aggression. On August 23 and September 28 of the same year secret protocols were added to this treaty and to the Boundary and Friendship Treaty of September 28, 1939. Through these agreements Soviet diplomacy achieved at a single stroke two objects: (a) the creation of a political and strategical situation promoting and precipitating an armed conflict among the "capitalist States," while itself remaining aloof; and (b) the Consent of the German Government to assign Lithuania to the Soviet sphere of interest with the right conceded to the U.S.S.R. to adopt special measures for the protection of its interests.

In its turn German diplomacy obtained: (a) the assurance of Soviet neutrality in case of a war with Poland and the western countries; strategy of a single front; (b) the acquisition of a part of Lithuania in virtue of rectification of frontiers, in the event of a territorial and political rearrangement in the areas belonging to the Baltic States.

There had been some question, even in 1939, of the existence of these protocols and of their contents, in spheres relating to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Berlin, as well as in the entourage of Dr. Zechlin, German Envoy in Lithuania. Certain measures adopted by the German Government in regard to the repatriation of the German minority of the Baltic countries also predicated the existence of the protocols. The German minority dwelling in Estonia and Latvia was repatriated in the winter of 1939-1940. The German minority of Lithuania was left on the spot because by the Protocol of August 23, 1939, Lithuania did not enter the sphere of Soviet interests. It was only later, when Lithuania passed from the German to the Soviet sphere, that the German Government negotiated with the Soviet Government an agreement on the repatriation of the German minority of Lithuania. This repatriation took place in 1941.

The first official admission of the existence of the secret protocols was made on October 14, 1946, in the House of Commons. On that occasion, the British Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. C. P. May-

By DR. DOMAS KRIVICKAS

hew, declared that Great Britain was in possession of the German copy of their texts, which had fallen into Allied hands with the archives of the German Foreign Office.

The full light of publicity was turned on the protocols during the discussions at the Nuremberg trial.

On May 21 and 22, 1946, Herr Ernst von Weizsaecker, former Ambassador of the Reich to the Vatican and German Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was summoned to give evidence before the Nuremberg Military Tribunal. Among the various questions put to him by the prosecutors and counsel, the barrister Alfred Seidl, defending counsel of Hans Frank, former Governor-General of Poland, at the moment when the discussion was developing on the subject of Soviet-German relations and the agreement concluded between the two countries, submitted the following question to him, "Were other agreements established on August 23, 1939, between the German and Soviet Governments that are not contained in the pact of non-aggression?"

In spite of the protest of General Rudenko, the Soviet Prosecutor to the Court, alleging that the tribunal's task was to examine the case of the war criminals and not that of the treaties of allied countries, the President of the Court, Sir Geoffrey Lawrence, authorized the counsel Seidl to continue. Thus, Herr von Weizsaecker had an opportunity to reply that there existed two secret agreements, the texts of which were brought to his knowledge in his capacity of Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

As soon as Herr von Weizsaecker had mentioned the secret Soviet-German agreements, the counsel Seidl rose and showing several sheets of paper observed, "I have here a text which, without any doubt, faithfully and authentically reproduces those agreements. I am going to submit them to you."

To the question of the President of the Court requesting Herr Seidl to indicate the source from which he had obtained these texts, the barrister replied that he had received them from an Allied personality worthy of American Prosecutor. When the members of the Court took possession of the text, the second

American Prosecutor, Mr. Thomas J. Dodd, asked the President of the Court to authorize Herr von Weizsaecker to relate from memory the contents of these agreements. The Court gave its consent and the former Under-Secretary of State confirmed the purpose of the agreement in question. At the trial these agreements figured under the designation of "affidavit Gauss," from the name of Wilhelm Gauss, former Legal Adviser to the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs, who was the editor-in-chief of the Soviet-German treaty.

The texts of these agreements were published in 1948, by the Department of State of the United States of America. Here is the text of the secret protocol concluded on August 23, 1939:

"On the occasion of the signature of the Nonaggression Pact between the German Reich and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics the undersigned plenipotentiaries of each of the two parties discussed in strictly confidential conversations the question of the boundary of their respective spheres of influence in Eastern Europe. These conversations led to the following conclusions:

1. In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement in the areas belonging to the Baltic States (Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), the northern boundary of Lithuania shall represent the boundary of the spheres of influence of Germany and the U.S.S.R. In this connection the interest of Lithuania in the Vilnius area is recognized by each party.

2. In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement of the areas belonging to the Polish state the spheres of influence of Germany and the U.S.S.R. shall be bounded approximately by the line of the rivers Narew, Vistula, and San.

The question of whether the interests of both parties make desirable the maintenance of an independent Polish state and how such a state should be bounded can only be definitely determined in the course of further political developments.

In any event both Governments will resolve this question by means of a friendly agreement.

3. With regard to Southeastern Europe attention is called by the Soviet side to its interest in Bessarabia. The German side declares its complete political disinterestedness in these areas.

4. This protocol shall be treated by both parties as strictly secret.

Moscow, August 23, 1939.

For the Government of the German Reich: V. Ribbentrop

Plenipotentiary of the Government of the U.S.S.R.: V. Molotov

After the defeat of Poland, fresh Soviet-German negotiations took place, which resulted in the conclusion on September 28, 1939, of a series of agreements of which the principal ones known are the following:

1. Boundary and Friendship Treaty;
2. Declaration concerning common efforts to bring the war to an end;
3. Exchange of letters concerning economic cooperation on the basis of a pre-established programme.

On the same day the second secret agreement was signed amending certain provisions of the first. Here is the text of the second agreement:

Secret Supplementary Protocol

"The undersigned Plenipotentiaries declare the agreement of the Government of the German Reich and the Government of the U.S.S.R. upon the following:

The Secret Supplementary Protocol signed on August 23, 1939, shall be amended in item 1 to the effect that the territory of the Lithuanian state falls to the sphere of influence of the U.S.S.R., while, on the other hand the province of Lublin and parts of the province of Warsaw fall to the sphere of influence of Germany (cf. the map attached to the Boundary and Friendship Treaty signed today). As soon as the Government of the U.S.S.R. shall take special measures on Lithuanian territory to protect its interests, the present German Lithuanian border, for the purpose of a natural and simple boundary delineation, shall be rectified in such a way that the Lithuanian territory situated to the southwest of the line marked on the attached map should fall to Germany.

Further it is declared that the economic agreements now in force between Germany and Lithuania shall not be affected by the measures of the Soviet Union referred to above.

Moscow, September 28, 1939.

For the Government of the German Reich: J. Ribbentrop

By authority of the Government of the U.S.S.R.: V. Molotov

To be continued

US Baltic Action Plan to Be Presented in Vilnius

Vilnius, Sept 13 (ELTA) — US officials will present the "Baltic Action Plan", outlining US strategy to assist the Baltic countries for the integration into the Western structures. This presentation to the Lithuanian diplomats and MPs will be in Vilnius on Saturday, Sept. 21.

The document is to be presented by US State Department Deputy Secretary Marshall Adair and a special US president's advisor on Central and East European issues Daniel Fried.

Subsequent to visits in Estonia and Latvia, US officials are scheduled to meet Lithuanian Foreign Minister Povilas Gylys, Foreign Ministry Secretary Albinas Januška, Director of Policy Division Vygaudas Usakas, and members of the parliament.

The ambassadors of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to US were already informed about the possibility of "Baltic Action Plan" in August. The plan covers three parts, analysing the Baltic States integration into the Western institutions, relations with the neighbouring countries and bilateral US and Baltic States relations. The document emphasizes termination of the United States to support the efforts of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia in order to meet NATO requirements.

• On September 5, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia signed a trade agreement. The trade agreement will go into effect after January 1, if it is ratified by the parliaments. It brings Lithuania one step closer to joining the Central European Free Trade Association (CEFTA). CEFTA members include: Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Slovenia. (JBANC)

LITHUANIA AND BELARUS TO NEGOTIATE ENERGY ISSUES

Vilnius, September 11, (ELTA). A Belarussian delegation is to arrive in Lithuania visit to the ministry of industry and trade on Thursday.

The delegation is scheduled to discuss Belarussian debt to Lithuania for supplies of electric power and its repayment terms. The specialists are to consider cooperation possibilities under the European transport highway Helsinki-Plovdiv and its branch Klaipėda-Minsk-Kiev construction programme.

Members of the bilateral com-

Danutė Bindokienė

Advantages and Obligations

Some might say that Lithuanians, living in the United States, lead a double life: that of an American and also of Lithuanian. Contrary to some opinions, it is not as hard as it seems at first glance. Knowing where one comes from where the very deepest roots belong, enriches one's life, helps to understand oneself better as every nation has its own characteristics, ingrained into the very souls of its natives, passed from generation to generation across the bridge of time.

However, it has certain rules and adds extra obligations to everyday life. Yes, being Lithuanian and admitting these origins not only to yourself, but to others, is not easy. But it also has many rewards because we can be proud of our heritage and freely use its riches to our personal advantage.

Many young people of Lithuanian descent, born, raised, and educated in the United States have visited Lithuania since 1990 when it again became independent, freeing itself from long decades of oppression by the Soviet Union. If they chose to see the country not only with their eyes, but an open mind and forgiving heart, they came back with many wonderful memories of beautiful countryside, warmhearted friendly, though mostly poor, people struggling valiantly to overcome hardships and stride toward democracy. Many young professionals, seeing the need for their Western expertise, decided to share their knowledge and energy by spending some time in Lithuania and helping out where help is needed.

What is the current main concern of Lithuanians in their own country and abroad? Basically, there are two: one long range, one more immediate. The long range concern centers on the safety — indeed the very future — of their small country which has the unfortunate destiny and geopolitical position — standing between the East and the West. Its dangerous neighbor to the East — Russia — since time immemorial had designs on the free access to the Baltic Sea ports and therefore an year-round exit to the world. Even

Russian czars using all their might and resources tried to convert Lithuania to just one more province of the mighty Russian empire. But no power on Earth could induce Lithuanians to give up their freedom, faith, language and land. At the first opportunity (February 16, 1918) they declared their independence.

Beginning with 1940, the same Russian tactics of oppression were tried again — this time by the Soviets. Not only Lithuania but the other Baltic States and many more captive nations were enclosed within an Iron Curtain, but again, persistence and longing for freedom chipped at the wall until it was but a heap of rubble, forshadowing the demise of Soviet empire as well.

Russia now calls itself a democracy, but still has imperialistic dreams and eyes the Baltics as a very desirable piece of property. Lithuanians have but one hope of remaining free: become a member of NATO. The main road-block against full membership is again Russia. But as we witnessed on March 11, 1990 (The Declaration of Independence) everything is possible.

The other concern — parliamentary elections in Lithuania on October 20 of this year. Strange as it seems, after 50 years of communist rule, many free nations in the first democratic elections voted for the same people — communists, though calling themselves by more democratic names — who were in power through the occupation years. Lithuania was no exception. The people paid dearly for their mistake and are not likely to repeat it again. It is essential that this time the Parliament should be made up of elected members who serve the people and their country not their own selfish and greedy interests.

There is a new tomorrow dawning in the land of our ancestors, of our roots. It is fitting that we try to be a part of it by becoming more familiar with Lithuania and its issues. A good source of this information is the weekly English edition of *Draugas* — The Friend. Please give it a try.

mission intend to analyse proposals to issue more permissions to go freely via territories of both countries.

The commission meeting agenda also includes the issues

of establishing a Belarussian commission for cooperation in transport movement via border area and organization of a Lithuanian businessmen's mission in Belarus.

AN EXPATRIATE'S JOURNEY

The Life and Legacy of Marija Aukštaitė

2

Following the declaration of independence in 1918, Lithuania saw a period of rapid socio-economic and cultural transformation. In spite of financial difficulty and family obligations, Aukštaitė devoted a great deal of time to the national campaign launched to rebuild the newly independent country. When the Lithuanian government began to carry out universal land reform, she volunteered as a mediator who spoke out on behalf of poverty stricken peasants in the Prienai district. Whenever disputes over land division arose, she was always on the side of the destitute. She wrote letters of appeal to the government, approached government officials in person, and intervened in other ways to ensure that needy peasant families secured their lawful share of land.

Aukštaitė's passion for social work, her willingness to be of help to others, without seeking any favours or privileges, was soon noticed and highly appreciated by many. She was elected to the Prienai City Council where she served as the only woman among twelve men for over ten years. It was unusual for a woman to hold an administrative position in the patriarchal Lithuanian

society of the 1920s. For a number of years, she also served as a deputy mayor of the town of Prienai and was nominated to the mayor's post. However, due to her growing family and partly because of her modesty, she declined the nomination.

Despite a heavy workload at the City Council, she travelled extensively across the country. In her speeches and lectures she urged women to join the Lithuanian Catholic Women's Society (LCWS). The results of her efforts soon bore fruit, as the Prienai chapter of the LCWS expanded and its membership grew considerably, becoming an exemplary women's organization. It was especially active in organizing the celebrations of February the 16th — the day of Lithuanian independence.

Although immersed in social work, Aukštaitė managed to find energy and time for writing. It was then that her first poem, *Bless You, Land of Heroes (Būk laiminga, didvyrių žeme)*, was written. Not surprisingly, during that period her poetry is dominated by recurrent references to Lithuania's heroic past, often presented in a somewhat idealized and romantic light. Most of her poems, then signed with the pseudonym *Nemuno Vilnis* — literally, *Wave of the River Nemunas* — resonate with patriotic fervour and nationalist sentiment. In addition to swearing her unconditional devotion to Lithuania, she extols the natural beauty of her native land, and lauds the stoicism of the Lithuanian people in the face of adversity. The metaphorical use of the mother image, as well as frequently recurring religious symbols are among the

most prominent poetic techniques in Aukštaitė's early verse.

Even though Aukštaitė had earned a great deal of respect and admiration over the years, her financial situation left much to be desired. Also, in 1927, her young son Vytautas died. Having lost all hope for a better life in Lithuania, the Navikevičius family decided to emigrate to the West. The first to leave was Aukštaitė's husband Antanas who moved to Canada in 1928. Without sufficient means to provide for her three small children, she turned for help to her relatives who agreed to take care of two of her sons. Meanwhile, Aukštaitė with her third son moved into a small room adjacent to the school bookstore of which she was in charge at the time.

In 1930, she bid farewell to Lithuania and her son Jonas who, then thirteen years of age, stayed behind with his grandparents in Prienai. Although Aukštaitė managed to scrape together enough money for Antanas's and Algirdas's boat tickets (*šipkartės*) across the Atlantic, she could not afford to pay for Jonas's trip. They did not know then that Jonas would never join them in Canada, that it was the last time they would see him.

It is known that Jonas completed high school in Prienai, went on to pursue a military career, and subsequently served in the Lithuanian Army. In 1939, his regiment, named after Grand Duke Gediminas, was stationed in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius which had been recently reclaimed from the Polish occupiers.

After the Soviet invasion of the Baltic states in 1940, the Lithuanian armed forces were integrated into the

Red Army. As a result, the Gediminas regiment under Jonas Navikevičius's command was moved to Pabradė, a small town northeast of Vilnius. Following the outbreak of the Second World War, the troops stationed in the Pabradė garrison were ordered by Soviet commanders to retreat eastward. Yet the Lithuanian regiments, including Navikevičius's soldiers, refused to leave Lithuanian territory because they had sworn an oath of loyalty to their country. The Lithuanian soldiers broke away from the Red Army and went into hiding in the surrounding forests, but were soon discovered by the Soviets. According to recently found archival material, Jonas Navikevičius was killed in the summer of 1941, in an exchange of fire with Red Army soldiers in the vicinity of the town of Švenčioniai.

In 1987, Aukštaitė chanced upon some information about Jonas's burial place in *Karys (Warrior)*, a periodical published by Lithuanian emigrés in the United States. However, as recently as 1995, the exact location of his grave was still unknown. One of the last poems written by Aukštaitė was dedicated to her son Jonas — a hero who fell for his native land. In commemoration of Jonas Navikevičius, a Lithuanian-style roofed pole (*stogastulpis*) has been recently erected in the Prienai region.

While preparing for her trip to Canada, Aukštaitė was tormented by a harrowing feeling of imminent loss. Leaving her son Jonas, her elderly parents, her homeland — everything that was so dear to her heart — was one of the most sorrowful moments in Aukštaitė's life.

To be continued

BIRŠTONAS — AN OUTSTANDING HEALTH RESORT

By A. ZENKEVIČIUS
Mayor of Birštonas

Birštonas is a small, picturesque health-resort, situated in the south of Lithuania, in the center of the Regional Park of the Big Bends of the Nemunas river. It is surrounded by green pinewoods and winding river. The town covers the area of 13 km² and has 4,300 full-time residents. Birštonas is within easy reach from Vilnius — 90 km, Kaunas — 40 km, Marijampolė — 45 km, Alytus — 35 km and Druskininkai — 90 km. The health-resort is on the two main Kaunas-Alytus and Vilnius-Marijampolė Highways. It is in the zone of international highway Via Baltica that provides convenient communication with the resort and attracts people for relaxation, rehabilitation and tourism.

Some years ago a lot of bus tours from Birštonas were guided through the southern part of Lithuania: one day journey to Vilnius (including Trakai), to Kaunas, Druskininkai, Alytus (including the Reservation of Zuvintas), a boat trip to the ethnographic open sky museum in Rumsiškes and many others.

In favorable situations these tourist routes could be renewed and enjoyed by the local and foreign visitors, touring the region that is rich in valuable historical, natural, architectural and art monuments, the peaceful surroundings and lovely scenery — has much to offer for the people of all ages.

The favorable geographical position of Birštonas and the short one or two day tours makes it possible to acquaint guests with the places of interest of Vilnius, Kaunas, Druskininkai, etc. The tourists also have a wonderful chance to see Trakai National Park and Trakai Castle (the cultural monuments of the international significance). They can admire the Nemunas valley and Dūkija National Park.

The combined tourist routes had been arranged and guided thanks to the contracts with more remote tourist centers. Our guests had an opportunity to visit the unique Lithuanian seaside with sandy beaches and huge dunes. They could relax and enjoy the beauty of our popular resort Palanga, Klaipėda port, Neringa National Park, Šiauliai city and the Hill of Crosses, the sacred ground for Lithuanians. The biggest number of tourists at that time was

from the neighboring countries — Russia, Byelorussia, Ukraine, Caucasus republics and Middle Asia. But the economical and political situation had changed and, unfortunately, the number of the tourists from these countries had decreased. Nowadays we have more visitors from Poland who come for sanatorium treatment.

After the restoration and modernization of the available tourism complex, facilities, and the essential services, Birštonas again could accept many guests from the wider regions and big cities close to Lithuania. We could also offer the tourists from Poland, Germany, Scandinavia and other Baltic States an active and recreational holiday, fresh air, a clean environment and cultural entertainment.

Birštonas could also serve as a perfect place for arranging joint meetings, tours of discovery, conferences, cultural festivals and seminars. The town and its surrounding area can be enjoyed throughout the year. It has already become a tradition to hold the jazz festivals, the international conferences (of the scientists, physicians, engineers, etc.), the sports competitions (rowing, ballooning, walking races, the bridge), and other activities.

Besides medical rehabilitation and tourism there are a lot of other activities and discoveries awaiting guests and holiday-makers to suit every taste and purse. You can enjoy your shopping at low prices while visiting any larger Lithuanian city.

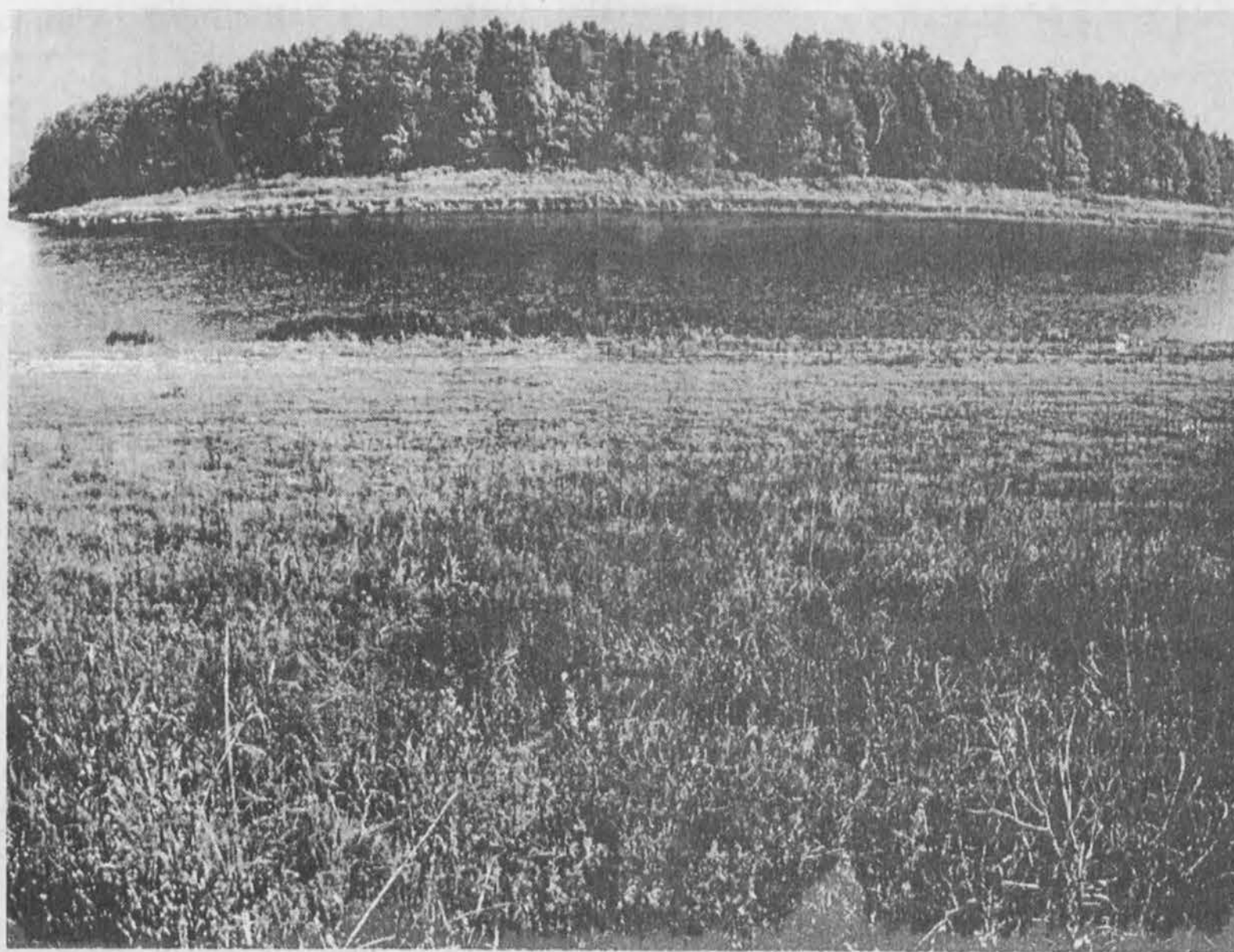
Investigation of the landscape has proved that the valley of the river Nemunas within the zone of the Big River Bends is a unique site and has a great scientific, cultural and recreative value. Birštonas is in the center of this regional park.

The function and operation of the health-resort recreation is dependent on these factors:

1. Watering-place of mineral water including several artesian wells that are located within the town's territory.

There are 4 types of mineral water:

- a) chloride calcium-sodium, water of low mineralization (M 3,0 - 3,5 g/l);
- b) chloride calcium-sodium, water of medium mineralization (M 6,0 - 9,5 g/l);
- c) chloride magnesium-calcium-sodium, water of high



River Nemunas at Birštonas Resort.



A wayside cross in Birštonas

mineralization (M 22 - 30 g/l); d) chloride-sodium brine (M 101 - 103 g/l).

There are also about 20 borewells of prospecting operation and prospecting observation in the area of Birštonas.

Mineral water, its baths and mud applications are used in the treatment of patients suffering from digestive troubles, disturbances of the peripheral nervous system, blood circulation and gynecological diseases.

2. Tourists and holidaymakers can enjoy wonderful nature, clean surroundings, woodlands, and a spectacular river. Peace and quiet prevail in Birštonas; and this feature is much wanted today not only in towns but in health-resorts as well. Visitors can bathe in the swimming ponds next to the small river Druskupis. These are the factors that can offer exciting activities, attractions and good rest, to satisfy both the sporting and culturally minded.

3. The recreation complex and its facilities are greatly influenced and dependent on the foundation of the Nemunas Regional Park. It could serve all kinds of tourism, relaxation, and offer a great variety of tours and entertainments. The Regional Park can be enjoyed on foot, by boat and ship, by car and bicycle or even by horseback. There is something for everyone who wants to cast a line and catch a fish in the river Nemunas and its tributaries. Those who are interested in gliding can make use of Pociūnai airport and the Glider Enterprise and can have a look

at Birštonas and its surroundings from a bird's-eye view.

Country farms located side-by-side with the river could be used as resting houses. They could provide accommodation and help to develop the agrotourism.

When establishing a tourist complex (for nearly 2000 people) with all needed infrastructure, the existing and previously used facilities should be taken into account and utilized. Capital investments wouldn't be very high, having in mind that Birštonas is not a big city and is rather compact. At present the two sanatoriums, rest houses, private cottages, and campings can accommodate 3,000 visitors at one time. In accordance with the city's general plan of development, the number of visitors should increase up to 4,600.

The buildings that are not fully utilized, or used only partly for recreation needs, in the future could be converted for tourism, relaxation and the medical rehabilitation. They are capable of providing rooms for 2,080 visitors.

At the moment there are some other buildings that are not used for their proper purpose. After the reconstruction and renovation, some of them could be converted for the needs of tourists and holiday-seekers (A restaurant "Druskupis" for 130 customers, an old restaurant "Birštonas" for 50 customers in winter, and 100 in summer, a pub "Nida" for 30 customers and the Cinema with the seating capacity of 3,207). The capital investments for the

reconstruction of the existing rest establishments, the completing of the unfinished constructions, the improvement, and arrangement of essential services, should approximately amount to 10 million US dollars. Birštonas Municipality, of course, hasn't got such funds of its own. We would like to receive credit investments or to establish a joint enterprise.

In the city's general project of development up to the year 2010 it had been planned to

build some new sanatoriums for 1500 patients on the plot of land next to the new medical centers. The patients could be served by mud-cure and mineral water establishments that are under construction at present. All the necessary engineering communications have been established, the mineral water prospecting and tests have been made, and borewells have been bored.

Here is the presentation of general reasons, and proposals for the use and better employment of the existing buildings and the establishments. At this point a thorough business project is being made and it could be presented later. The Lithuanian health and rest resorts could present corresponding proposals on tourism infrastructure for reconstruction and developing local and foreign tourism in Lithuania. Later it would be possible to make a general plan for further development and expansion of this branch. The realization of this project should start first in the health-resorts which had lost their visitors from the East and which have enough buildings and the other needed equipment that are not in use at the moment, but they could suit tourists for their accommodation and service. By no means do most of these buildings require urgent repairs and better equipment, comfortable apartments and other leisure facilities.

Other cities are welcome to this program as well.

MARK ANTONITIS — VICE PRESIDENT NEWS NBC 5 CHICAGO



Mark Antonitis

Mark Antonitis was named to the position of vice president, news, NBC 5 Chicago, in March, 1996 by President and General Manager Lyle Banks.

According to Banks, "Mark is very highly regarded in this business and I believe he is definitely one of the news industry's best kept secrets. He's a take charge, hands-on professional who has the total package — intelligence, strategic instincts and a keen news sense. He's also a wonderful mentor who has a wide breadth of knowledge and is great with people".

Since 1988 Antonitis has been an executive for Frank N. Magid Associates/Marion, Iowa where he was responsible for developing news and marketing strategies, and for coaching and training news directors, producers and reporters for TV stations of all market sizes and affiliations.

From 1981-88, Antonitis held various positions in news management including news manager at KXAN-TV the LIB-owned NBC station in Austin, Texas, and manager of news operations for WNBC-TV in New York. Prior to that Antonitis was a news photographer in various markets including St. Louis and Denver.

A native of Philadelphia, PA, Mark and his wife Susan have two boys.

LITHUANIAN TEXTS IN THE BONAPARTE COLLECTION AT THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY

The Lithuanian holdings in the Bonaparte Collection are pre-1889 imprints chosen as evidence of the evolution of the Lithuanian language by the early linguist, Prince Louis-Lucien Bonaparte (1813-1891), a nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte. Prince Bonaparte devoted his energies to philology and to gather what he hoped would be the world's finest collection of linguistic works — close to 14,000 books. One of his special interests was the Finnish and Estonian languages, and as a result he collected extensively for the whole Baltic region. The Lithuanian portion of Bonaparte's collection contains early texts printed in Lithuanian, early Lithuanian grammars, and studies of individual dialects. Among the treasures of the collection is the 1653 "Grammatica lituanica" printed at Königs-

berg, and six New Testaments in Lithuanian published between 1727 and 1858. Like all rarities in the Bonaparte Collection these books have been well-kept since the entire collection was purchased by the Newberry Library from a London bookseller in 1894. Today the collection is housed in a state-of-the-art bookstack building, among the other great collections of the Library, where ideal preservation conditions are maintained throughout the year.

Paul F. Gehl, Custodian of the Newberry Library's John M. Wing Foundation on the History of Printing, is available to answer questions regarding the Bonaparte Collection at 312/255-3645. Address: The Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton St., Chicago, IL 60610-3380, Main telephone number: 312/943-9090.

By Arnold Voketaitis

Art News

PERFECTION IN EXILE

A very special exhibit of international artists opened in the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture on September 13 and will close November 11. Featured are artists: Adriana Carvalho, Rimas Ciurlionis, Eduardo De Soigne, Maria Teresa Flores, Tadeusz Hipner, Gosia Koscielak, Krzysztof Madzinski, Audrius Pliplys.

Danas Lapkus, The Curator of Balzekas' Museum writes about the exhibit:

"The goal of the exhibit is to show artistic development under the influence of physical and spiritual displacement. How does the change in surroundings compete/coexist with the native country's artistic tradition? Can one describe cosmopolitan or national features of certain art pieces? Is "foreign" mindset comprehensible by the American public? These issues drove an exhibit selection process and formation of the display.

"Participating artists came to Chicago from Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Lithuania, Peru, and Poland. The artists' search for a new home, a new self, a new audience manifests in a variety of different forms. But all the artists share the same will to break through "predestined" marginal cultural space and enter the mainstage of the Chicago art performance."

IN THE EYES OF AUDRIUS PLIPLYS

"Visions of the Mind: the Darker Side" — an exhibit of photographic art by Audrius Pliplys will open Oct. 10 at Danforth Gallery, Portland, Maine, and will run through Oct. 31. Exhibit was selected by Ms. Rosamund Purcell.

Audrius Pliplys was born in Toronto, Canada, in 1951. He graduated from medical school at the University of Chicago. Audrius Pliplys had one man shows in Artemisia Gallery, Chicago (1996), Contemporary Art Center of Vilnius, Lithuania (1995), Dolly Fiterman Gal-



Lulu City, Colorado

Audrius V. Pliplys 1996



Waiting for summer... Boats on the River Nemunas near Birštonas.

BELARUS IN CENTRAL EUROPE: IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL SECURITY

NERIJUS UDRĖNAS

Zyanon Paznyak, a leader of the Belarussian Popular front, fled Belarus in March 1996. On March 24, 1996 peaceful demonstration of 40,000 people who protested closer integration with Moscow was beaten by OMON special forces. Lukashenka, Belarussian president, issued an arrest warrant for Zyanon Paznyak and Syarhei Naumchyk. Opposition leaders fled to Ukraine, and then to Czech Republic. National Endowment for Democracy provided an opportunity for Zyanon Paznyak and Syarhei Naumchyk to visit the United States with a tour of lectures. July 9, 1996 Zyanon Paznyak delivered a presentation and answered questions in the Library of Congress. A summary of the lecture follows.

Alyaksandr Lukashenka, Belarus president, is a tool in Moscow hand — Moscow through Lukashenka informs the West what are its true intentions in regard to expansion of NATO, recreation of Russian empire and other policy issues. This is the main and most important idea for regional security presented by Zyanon Paznyak. He further analyzed the performance of Lukashenka is suggesting that the pattern of Russo-Belarussian relations will continue. Politically Lukashenka is too arrogant in relations with Moscow, and likes to be courted. He did not fully support Yeltsin in his election campaign. But Zyanon Paznyak believes, Lukashenka will remain in power. Lukashenka is needed as a bad guy who can present Moscow's views in a direct form and do their dirty work, while Moscow can pretend to be clean.

Moscow will not change its policy towards Belarus after Yeltsin's reelection because of other reasons. Yeltsin is a member of nomenclature same as Lukashenka, former collective farm chairman. Zyanon Paznyak pointed out that the West wrongfully perceives Yeltsin reelection as a democratic victory. The difference between Yeltsin and Zyuganov is, however, in their present status. Yeltsin's group represent the high echelon of party elites: first secretaries of raykoms, gorkoms, obkoms and central party institutions who early enough embraced democratic and market rhetoric. Under this cover they privatized huge amounts of state property and remain in control of the remain-

ing state property. Zyuganov group represents losers among nomenclature. They occupied lower levels of the party structure, and did not benefit as much as their bosses. They want to restore what they lost — control over the state property.

Zyanon Paznyak rightfully pointed out that democratic forces were mostly eradicated in Russia. Democrats in recent elections supported "democratic" nomenclature. They amalgamated with Yeltsin group and are lost as a democratic opposition to authoritarian and exploitative state. A very good, though indirect, indicator is an approach to Lukashenka and his dictatorial style. Zyanon Paznyak confessed that only such democrats as Sergei Kovaliov and Valerija Novodvorskaya protested against Lukashenka. No other so called democratic forces of Russia protested against Lukashenka or Russian imperial plans.

Yeltsin doctrine, a secret document composed in 1995, printed in Belarus and Ukraine, indicates Russia's intentions to restore its imperial boundaries. Zyanon Paznyak did not discuss the fate of Baltic countries, but asserted that imperial thinking permeated all parties in Russia. Yavlinski, according to Zyanon Paznyak, when asked about the future of Belarus, expressed his indifference to her fate. Why are these problems with Black Sea fleet and Ukraine? Why Yeltsin is so eager on Kaliningrad and Belarus connection? Russia does not want to solve problems but to delay negotiations.

Concluding, Zyanon Paznyak observed that he sees a correlation between growing Russian imperial nostalgia and a revival of communist parties in East Central European countries. He warned even Czech not to be overconfident for a successful future. Zyanon Paznyak was not explicit about the source of the danger, whether it is a Russian threat or whether it is a threat coming from within a society. Soviet rule, he regretted, created many *homo sovieticus* type people in Belarus. They are used to be led and fed by the state. They do not take initiative to regain their dignity, to be free, responsible and thinking individuals. Zyanon Paznyak urged to be aware of dangers to those who have freedom, and he was optimistic that Belarus will eventually become democratic country.



St. Michael the Archangel Cathedral in Kaunas.

LITHUANIA AND THE BANK CRISIS

Lithuania will long remember the cold 20th of December 1995, when a moratorium was announced to the activities of Lithuania's biggest and oldest private bank, the Joint-Stock Innovation Bank (LAIB). A marvellous Christmas present for Lithuanians, who kept 300 m Lt in LAIB, 16% of all individual deposits. The bank's assets comprised 13% of the entire assets of Lithuanian banks. The next day, another large private bank, Litimpeks, also shut down for insolvency.

The crisis resulted in the dismissal of Ratkevičius, chairman of the Bank of Lithuania, on 23 January, and of Prime Minister Adolfas Šleževičius on 8 February, mainly because he withdrew his personal savings from LAIB two days before it shut. The ex-Minister for Public Administration Reform, Mindaugas Stankevičius, was appointed Prime Minister, and the

In a country where an average wage is \$40 a month, where government created a financial crisis, and where president is controlling state budget as his own, it is hard to predict a bright future. Population already lost most of its patience and will be reluctant to pay social costs if reforms are implemented. But at present there is no one who can implement reforms. Parliament is dominated by "apparatchiki" and only 1% of population, according to Zyanon Paznyak, trust the institution. Nevertheless, Belarus National Front has formed a shadow cabinet and is devoted to non-violent opposition. Its goal is to organize impeachment process against President Alyaksandr Lukashenka.

ex-Minister of Finance, Reinoldijus Šarkinas, was made chairman of the Bank of Lithuania.

The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are assisting with banks' rehabilitation. A mission visited Vilnius from 11-26 January to define the reasons that caused the banking problems, which were largely the overall economic weakness and poor loan assessment policies. With specialists from the Bank of Lithuania, they prepared a programme to overcome the difficulties in the banking system. LAIB, Litimpeks and Vakary bank could be merged into one United Bank, or, if new investors are prepared to invest in individual banks, they could remain independent. The joint-stock company Aura-bank could be reorganized into a subsidiary of a bad loans enterprise.

In all, 1.3 bn Lt is needed to implement the programme, of which 1 bn Lt would come from government securities. The rest would come from the state budget, at a cost of about 350-400 m Lt in 1996, to be paid for through tax rises and expenditure cuts.

Šarkinas says that the plan will be adapted as events emerge, and the emphasis should be on private capital. In any case, economic reforms will continue, and IMF Representative, Domenico Fanizza, thinks the banking system will emerge healthier in the long run. As he points out, the crisis was much smaller than in Latvia.

Meanwhile, an ad hoc committee to defend the rights of depositors and clients of LAIB and Litimpeks urged the government to reopen the two banks immediately. The committee demanded the full return of all individual savings. On 16 February, Independence Day, hundreds of angry deposit-holders gathered in front of government buildings demanding the return of their savings, with interest.

In fact, partial compensation started on 19 February, paying each deposit holder up to 1,000 Lt. The 60 million Lt to finance this was borrowed from the national budget and will be repaid as the two banks collect their bad loans. The remaining deposits should be returned either by the new United Bank, or by individual banks, depending on how the problem is solved.

According to the World Bank, the banking situation has now perked up. The Bank of Lithuania has decided to allow Litimpeks Bank to renew full activity on 10 June, if it meets all the standard requirements for commercial banks. Litimpeks, which has been allowed to carry

Photo by Viktoras Kučas

out limited activities since April, posted a \$12,000 first quarter profit this year. Litimpeks plans to pay depositors back on a percentage basis, which will take six to seven months. The bank is currently trying to get clients and depositors to agree with the bank's business plan.

A decision concerning LAIB was put off until June because it will need a \$7.5m credit from the state, which the Government and Seimas must approve. According to an audit by KPMG — Lithuania audit, last year LAIB had 264 Lt in losses. Despite this, the newly-appointed acting administrator Romualdas Visokavičius says negotiations are taking place with UK and US banks about a possible \$35m investment. The bank was also allowed to partially renew its activities on 14 March, and now its daily turnover is 2-7m Lt. LAIB plans to accumulate new statutory capital of 174m Lt, 80m Lt which it could receive from capitalizing part of individual deposits.

The WB mission is now looking into the possibility of a loan to Lithuania in future to develop the banking system.

NB: After this article was written, on May 21, the Lithuanian Government adopted a decree that LAIB would be nationalised, at a cost to the nation of 0.5 bn Lt. Seimas has still to approve this decree.

The U.N. Bulletin in Lithuania
June, 1996

28 PARTIES IN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION

Vilnius, Sept 16 (ELTA) — 28 political parties will run in forthcoming parliamentary election in Lithuania, Chief Election Commission (VRK) informed ELTA.

Though initially VRK registered 33 parties, four of them, namely Humanists, Greens, Ancestors Rebirth and Political Prisoners party, withdrew from the election campaign.

The applications for running in parliamentary election were submitted by the Democrats, Democratic Labour, Nationalists, Farmers, Independence, Republicans, Liberals, Social Democrats, Christian Democrats, Homeland's Union (Lithuanian Conservatives), Centre, National Progress, Jaunoji Lietuva ("Young Lithuania"), Freedom, Political Prisoners and Deportees, Polish Election Action, Women, Socialists, Freedom League, Russian, Ukio ("Economy"), Social Justice, People's, Rinkimai '96 ("Election '96"), Christian Democrats Union, National Minorities Alliance, Life Logic and Reform parties.

Draugas, Saturday, September 28, 1996

5

NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED FALLS IN AUGUST

Vilnius, Sept 3 (ELTA) — Number of unemployed registered by Lithuanian Labour Exchange up to September 1 totalled to 115,644. The amount of unemployed during August lowered by 2,911 as compared to that of July.

About 55 percent of unemployed persons registered in Lithuania were women and almost 73.6 percent of them were unskilled workers; 35,163 persons received unemployment benefits in August. In August Lithuanian Labour Exchange registered 5,899 free jobs, i.e. 307 less jobs as compared to the previous month.

During August, 13,099 unemployed addressed territorial

Labour Exchange offices. The number of unemployed addressing Labour Exchange in August lowered by 1,612 as compared to July.

Unemployment stood at 6.6 percent of total Lithuanian work force on September 1. It reduced by 0.2 percent as compared to July, Janina Gaizutytė, acting director of Labour Exchange, told ELTA.

The highest unemployment rate registered during August was in Tauragė (15.9 %), Druskininkai (15.6%), Šalčininkai (13.4%) and Švenčionys (13%). Lowest unemployment (about 1.7%) was registered in Prienai, Anykščiai (2.9%), Plungė and Kaišiadorys (3 percent each).

Since the start of this year, Lithuanian Labour Exchange found jobs for 39,000 unemployed. Almost 29,000 of them were included into active job programmes. They found new jobs, established their own businesses, were employed at public works and attended professional training courses.

A SPECIAL AWARD FOR LITHUANIAN DIPLOMATAM



Stasys Antanas Bačkis

Vilnius, September 12 (ELTA) — The former head of Lithuanian diplomacy Stasys Antanas Bačkis was awarded an order of French Honorary legion officer established by Napoleon in 1802.

The order was presented to Bačkis by French ambassador to Lithuania Michel Touraine in Vilnius. "This award shows that you are highly respected in France," Touraine spoke.

Bačkis in turn thanked French president and urged all Lithuanian diplomats to be loyal to their duties.

The order of Honorary legion officer may be awarded to civil citizens as well. It was also awarded to Stasys A. Bačkis, whose son archbishop of Vilnius Audrys Juozas Bačkis, together with his brother, Lithuanian ambassador to France, Ričardas Bačkis participated in the award ceremony.

Present at the ceremony was also Lithuania's Foreign Minister Povilas Gylys, Chairman of Parliament Česlovas Juršėnas, MPs and clergy representatives.



Lithuania's Parliamentary Election Committee member A. Sapięga explains the voting process to a meeting of Lithuanians. The voting will take place on October 20.



Prof. Vytautas Landsbergis, called the first President of free Lithuania after March 11, 1990, with Lithuanian Saturday school children in Chicago.

REFLECTION ON LITHUANIA

By JENIFER PATTERSON
Christian Relief Services

"Every man's story is important, eternal, sacred; that is why every man... is wondrous, and worthy of every consideration." (From the novel "Damien" by Herman Hesse)

Having recently returned from visiting 15 hospitals in Lithuania, I am left to ponder what I saw there and what Christian Relief Services' part, and my own, will be in the future of the relief effort there.

This country's health care system is a classic case of whether the glass is half empty or half full. The physical infrastructure of the hospitals is falling apart. Walls with structural cracks, marble stairs with large sections missing, roofs leaking, darkened corridors to save on electricity, long faded paint on the walls. The only true highlights in the dim picture of the Lithuanian health care system is the people. The brightness in the eyes of the doctors and nurses is a mix of hope and sadness. However, large the future looms for them they haven't lost sight of the fact that their real concern is the health of their patients.

Although this was my first trip to Lithuania, it was obvious that the health care professionals are doing everything possible to make good things happen. Despite the structural problems of the buildings, lack of equipment, supplies, reagents and medications, the facilities were clean, almost spotless, and we were never met with anything less than a smile.

Visiting Lithuania was like going back in time. The years under communism were devastating to the land, economy and the environment, but in many ways it served to strengthen the language, culture and pride of the people. It also helped to preserve a time and a belief that being one with the community, helping your neighbor and peace are, and always will be, more important than money, power or fame.

Our visits to the children's tuberculosis hospital, the Kaunas and Vilnius general hospitals, the Klaipėda maternity

hospital, the Ariogala's long term care hospital and, especially our visit to the criminally insane ward at the Švėkšna psychiatric hospital, were experiences beyond anything I ever imagined. The people were holding onto life with the slightest grasp, but were reaching out to us, not with cries for help, but reaching out in human fellowship and kindness.

However positive, hard working, generous and dedicated the Lithuanians may be today, they cannot go on like this forever without encouragement. I believe the partnership between Christian Relief Services and Lithuanian Mercy Lift is a strong start. Our partnership will provide sixty containers of medical relief this year and will provide for the purchase of vitaly needed diagnostic reagents for hospitals across Lithuania. If you've never heard of Lithuania, or don't know much about it I would say you are missing something. Lithuania is a beautiful country and culture, who needs all of our help today.

I think Dr. Genovaitė Lebednikienė of the Children's Tuberculosis hospital in Vilnius said it best, "once we were young and beautiful, now we are just beautiful." With everyone's help perhaps it will stay this way. I sveikata Lithuania!

WITH A GRATEFUL HEART

I want to thank all of you for your hospitality and generosity in hosting me, my wife Addy, and Jenny Patterson of our staff, on our recent trip to Lithuania.

My feelings about what we saw on this trip, the fellowship we shared with the doctors, nurses and patients, and the camaraderie and brotherhood we felt with George and Viligailė Lendraitis are beyond my ability to express. This trip was a touching and truly inspirational experience which none of us will soon forget.

It was indeed an impressive sight to see doctors and nurses



Christian Relief Service and Lithuanian Mercy Lift people visiting the Hospital of Trakai. Front — center: Eugene Krizek, President of CRS.

painting and repairing their dilapidated hospitals on their time off. More impressive was their caring and dedication to their patients. How they scrounge and stretch for medications and supplies to meet as many needs as possible. More overwhelming was their indomitable spirit of optimism that things will get better even though there is little to be positive about. I have never seen such determination and courage as I saw in the Lithuanian people.

In response to our trip we have decided to increase our support of Lithuania. First, the number of containers shipped to Lithuania during our new fiscal year, July 1, 1996 to June 30, 1997 will increase from 50 to 60. Also, we have started a re-agent fund which will enable Lithuanian hospitals to order critically needed reagents. CRS will purchase the reagents from a Lithuanian company in Kaunas. Finally, we have committed to continuing our partnership with LML to ship donated materials to Lithuania over the next five years.

We realize that there is much to be done in order for Lithuania to succeed as a democratic, economically viable and healthy nation. We are proud of the support CRS has provided in the past and the incalculable impact our partnership has made on Lithuania's health care system and its people. The value of our partnership is not only the success of the past, but the belief that our continued, steadfast support will enable these strong, independent and caring people to reach self sufficiency in as short a time as possible.

We value our partnership with LML and look forward to the future when Lithuania can, once again, stand on its own. Thank you again for making this positive experience possible.

Eugene L. Krizek
President of Christian Relief Services

CHRISTIAN RELIEF SERVICES AND LML VISIT LITHUANIA

June of 1996, Lithuanian Mercy Lift Organization members, together with Christian Relief Services president Eugene Krizek, secretary/treasurer Adeline Krizek, and director of fulfillment Jennifer Patterson spent 5 days in Lithuania. Each day's itinerary was planned from early morning to late in the evening. During that short time 14 hospitals were visited throughout Lithuania: Vilnius, Kaunas, Trakai, Ariogala, Švėkšna, Klaipėda, and Palanga. In between hospital visits CRS members met with Dr. Antanas Vinkus, Health Minister of Lithuania, visited the Ministry's warehouse where LML donations are stored; and attended a ceremony at the Lithuanian Medical Library to commemorate the installation of Internet and computer access to the US Medical Library.

Christian Relief Services had the opportunity to visit university hospitals, small town/country hospitals, a psychiatric hospital, a maternity home, a children's TB hospital, and a home for children with special needs. Hospitals varied in size and needs, but they all had one thing in common — they had received medical aid from LML. Mr. & Mrs. Krizek and Mrs. Patterson witnessed the impact that their sent containers had on these hospitals. LML's aid is highly regarded. Some physicians noted that 70% of the medicine or supplies they receive come from humanitarian aid, and most of that comes from LML.

Most hospitals are in debt, owing hundreds of thousands of litai, some even millions, for electricity, heat, medicine, etc. Funds for purchasing medicine and suppliers are virtually nonexistent. CRS members realized that Lithuania's hospitals

will need medical assistance for some time. Before the trip to Lithuania, CRS agreed to send another 50 LML containers this year. While on the trip, an extra 10 were promised. A new program to help hospitals laboratories was proposed by CRS and has been initiated. Mr. & Mrs. Krizek and Mrs. Patterson were pleased with the effort, organization, and initiative put forth by Lithuania's physicians and hospital staff personnel. The trip to Lithuania strengthened Christian Relief Service's and Lithuanian Mercy Lift's partnership.

By Viligailė Lendraitis

LITHUANIAN MERCY LIFT PRESIDENT VISITS THE WHITE HOUSE



Jurgis Lendraitis.

Upon the invitation of First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, LML President George Lendraitis journeyed to Washington, DC on August 22nd. During his visit to the White House, LML's President attended Mrs. Clinton's briefing on her July visit to Central and Eastern Europe. Afterwards, he had an opportunity to speak privately with the First Lady. He invited her to visit Lithuania in the near future, and asked for her help in sponsoring US — Lithuania hospital partnerships. Over the last two years, Mrs. Clinton has been instrumental in starting hospital partnership between the US and both Latvia and Estonia. LML has acted as an intermediary on several occasions in persuading US hospitals, doctors, and university medical schools to become involved in educational workshops, seminars, and medical staff exchanges with Lithuanian hospitals. LML hopes to now get the US government involved as an active participant.

LONG WHITE NIGHTS OF ST. JOHN IN LITHUANIA

The longest white night in Lithuania falls on June 24, the St. John's feast day. Many traditional events do take place, especially if you know a person named John or Joanna. Leading to St. John's feast day or after, are many a long white night. Darkness arrives around 11 PM.

On July 28th, at the Vilnius State Opera Theatre, a standing room only audience was treated to a premier of a beautiful two act ballet, "Medėja". The composer and sometime criticized modern music composer was Antanas Rekašius.

Medėja, tormented between conflict of passion and duty, was Eglė Špokaitė who was awarded a gold medal in ballet competition in Japan last year. Her partner, also her husband, Edvardas Smalakys, performed the role of Jason, who seeks power and wealth. Needless to say there is greed, destruction, murder, sacrifice, and betrayal to this old story. All other dancers performed very well. The most intriguing scene was in the first act. The 30 to 40 shirt-sleeved, the argonauts, evolved into a massive waving garment. As this shirt expanded on the stage, it engulfed the corps the ballet and the singers. The costume designer, Juozas Statkevicius, used black, white and grey colors which blended with the music. The conductor was Vytautas Viržonis.

From June 29th to July 28th the Vilnius Summer Festival took place at various locations: at the National Philharmonic, St. Casimir's Church, at the Art Gallery "Vartai", Valdovų Rooms, the Vilnius Picture Gallery and few other outdoor courtyards. The idea for the festival came from prof. Donatas Katkus who is also a member of the Vilnius Chamber Quartet. With the Vilnius City officials sponsorship the St. Christopher's Chamber Orchestra was started in 1995. St. Christopher is the patron saint of Vilnius.

D. Katkus felt a void in Vilnius since the season for both opera and the philharmonic are closed. After an absence of 56 years Vilnius has its own orchestra.

On July 4th, at the National Philharmonic, the evening concert was dedicated to the USA. It was called "America's Day". Throughout the newly decorated, yellow and white walls echoed compositions of Samuel Barber (1910-1981) and Aaron Copeland (1900-1990). Asta Kriščiūnaitė interpreted S. Barber's compositions well, in spite of the fact that it was difficult to understand the words. They performed 11 short works. A. Kriščiūnaitė and her accompanist Audronė Kisieliūtė spent some time in the US a few years ago. A. Copeland's compositions were performed by the Vilnius Capitol violin trio with pianist J. Bialobžeski.

Meanwhile, at Sereikiškių Park the folklore festival "Baltica" had begun. It lasts several evenings. There was plenty of folk dancing and singing. Baltica is self explanatory, all participants were representatives of the countries surrounding the Baltic Sea except Iceland. At the festival you can purchase all kinds of hand-crafted items and other souvenirs. The announcers were: Veronika Pavilionienė, a folklorist and Valdimaras Šadauskas, a former Chicagoan who is living in Vilnius for the past three years. Val can be heard on short-wave radio every evening in English. These summer festivals are going to be annual affairs. "Baltica" is sponsored by the Lithuanian Folk Cultural Center. It is very well attended, it is a good meeting place to meet old friends and acquaintances have some good tasting Lithuanian food and try the famous Biržiečių beer. If that doesn't satisfy your palate, Biržai make a very delicious yogurt.

By Fran Šlutas

SECOND CONFERENCE ON BALTIC STUDIES IN EUROPE

August 20-23, 1997 - Vilnius

Since the independence of the Baltic countries, the biennial conferences held in Stockholm are now beginning a new cycle as general conferences on Baltic studies in Europe with their center of gravity in the Baltic countries. At the first conference in Riga in 1995, it was decided to organize the second conference in Vilnius in 1997. The venue for this conference will be the University of Vilnius, one of the oldest universities in Europe.

The main theme of this conference is "Values and Norms of Society in Change." For centuries the Baltic region has been subject to political change. The 20th century has witnessed upheavals causing both consolidation and breakdown of values reflected in changing norms that in turn take their effect on society. No sphere of society remained untouched. The coming conference at the University of Vilnius aims to explore this phenomenon, its causes and effects within the framework of historic, political, social, intellectual and artistic development in the Baltic countries.

The conference will be divided into section to be announced after receiving applications. Topics outside the main theme may be treated in separate sections. Prospective participants are invited to make suggestions regarding the program of the

conference. The official languages will be English and German. If an invitation is necessary for obtaining funds, please note this on the application form. A second letter of information is planned to be dispatched around the turn of the year. The organizers are hoping for representative participation from Estonia and Latvia and are looking for possibilities of financing some prospective participants from those countries, especially younger scholars.

Please apply using the form on the next page.

Prof. Dr. R. Pavilionis
Rector,
University of Vilnius

Prof. Dr. B. Juodka
President,
Lithuanian Academy of Sciences

• **Latvia and Lithuania Holds Sea Border talks** The Latvian Prime Minister Andris Skele and his Lithuanian counterpart Prime Minister Mindaugas Stankevičius, met on September 9 in the village of Nica near Liepāja. During the meeting, the two leaders discussed the sea border dispute between the two nations. Although no agreement was reached, both sides decided that another high level meeting is needed to reach an understanding.

(JBANC)



Eugene Krizek, President of CRS (right) with Dr. Zigmas Paulauskas in Palanga Gintaras Childrens Health Center.



Jennifer Patterson of CRS with Dr. J. Oleka, the President of Vilnius Rotary Club and the Administrator of Žalgiris Hospital in Vilnius.



Primature baby-care in Vilnius Childrens Hospital.