

NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE IN LITHUANIA

A Story of Peaceful Liberation

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgments

Introduction

Chapter 1: Nonviolent Resistance Against Russification in the Nineteenth Century

The Goals of Tsarism in Lithuania

The Failure of Colonization

The Struggle for the Freedom of Religion

The Struggle for Lithuanian Press and Education

Chapter 2: Resistance to Soviet Rule, 1940–1987

An Overview

Postwar Resistance

The Struggle for the Freedom of Faith

The Struggle for Human and National Rights

The Role of Lithuanian Exiles

Chapter 3: The Rebirth

From *Perestroika* to the Independence Movement

Test of Fortitude

The Triumph of Sajudis

Chapter 4: Towards Independence

The Struggle for Constitutional Change

Civil Disobedience

Step by Step

The Rise of Reactionary Opposition

Chapter 5: The Struggle for International Recognition

The Declaration of Independence

Independence Buttressed: the Battle of Laws

First Signs of International Recognition

The Economic Blockade

The January Events

Nonviolent Action in the January Events

International Reaction

Chapter 6: Towards Civilian-Based Defense

Resistance to the “Creeping Occupation”

Elements of Civilian-Based Defense

From Nonviolent Resistance to Organized Civilian-Based Defense

The Development of Security and Defense Policy in Lithuania since 1992

Concluding Remarks

Appendix I

Appeal to Lithuanian Youth by the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania

Appendix II

Republic in Danger!

Appendix III

Appeal by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania to the People of Lithuania

Appendix IV

Decree on the Institution and Organization of Activities of the Commission of Psychological Defense and Civilian Resistance at the Department of National Defense

Appendix V

Resolution of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania: Guidelines for the Behavior of Governing Institutions of the Republic of Lithuania and Citizens of Lithuania in Case of an Active Occupation by the USSR

Appendix VI

Sajudis of Lithuania Supports Protest Actions

Appendix VII

Decree of the Defense Department on the Actions of Defense Units under Extraordinary Conditions

Appendix VIII

Appeal to the People of Lithuania by Sajudis of Lithuania

Appendix IX

Resolution of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania on Preparation for a Political Strike

Appendix X

Excerpts from The Law on the Basics of National Security

Appendix XI

Proposed Treaty on Cooperation in Civilian-Based Defense
Between Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia

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INTRODUCTION

I object to violence because, when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary, the evil it does is permanent.

M. K. Gandhi

Lithuania was the first republic of the former Soviet Union to declare its independence. On March 11, 1990, a mere 1.5% of the Soviet population—inhabiting only 0.3% of Soviet territory—posed a fundamental challenge to the vast empire and its powerful apparatus of repression. The world had indeed noticed the challenge, though at first with little formal engagement yet plenty of (if at times condescending) sympathy. Only after the bloody events of January 1991 and the failed hard-line August 1991 putsch attempt did Lithuania receive widespread international recognition. On September 17, 1991, Lithuania was granted membership in the United Nations.

Lithuania's struggle, like those of Estonia and Latvia, exemplified the nonviolent way of East European liberation from the grip of totalitarian empire. Taken together, the scale of the East European nonviolent liberation movements can only be compared to India's drive for independence, led by Mohandas Gandhi. Such liberation movements have clearly confirmed that there is an alternative to violent and military-driven social change. The attention of scholars has been drawn to nonviolent action as an effective, nondestructive type of "weapons system."

Gandhi was among the first national leaders to show both in theoretical analysis and practical action that nonviolent struggle is a positive force that can be successfully used in conflict. He was convinced that nonviolent action provided means of action incomparably superior to those of violence. Gandhi had noted that rulers and the ruled are ultimately bound by a relationship of partnership and mutual dependence rather than by one of force: "In politics, [the use of nonviolent action] is based upon the immutable maxim that government of the people is possible only so long as they consent either consciously or unconsciously to be governed."¹ The proposition can be held as the axiom of the theory of nonviolent action. This is of course not something entirely new. The idea was clearly stated by the sixteenth century writer Étienne de la Boetie, and later by Locke, Montesquieu and other classical representatives of political liberalism. Yet with Gandhi we see this axiom applied on a nearly unimaginable scale for national liberation.

Historical studies of the development and dynamics of nonviolent action can offer unique

¹ Quotation from Gene Sharp, *Gandhi as a Political Strategist, with Essays on Ethics and Politics* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Porter Sargent, 1979), pp. 14–15.

insights into this form of social, economic, and political power. The present essay is an overview of nonviolent resistance in Lithuania in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Beginning with the story of Lithuanian resistance to Tsarist Russification, an attempt is made to show that the nonviolent character of the resistance was of major importance in defeating the Tsar's policies. The second chapter is a short account of the struggle for the preservation of national identity and values during the Soviet occupation from 1940 up to 1987. Chapters three and four analyze the emergence and actions of the independence movement after 1987, from early discussions by intellectuals to the mass liberation movement known as "Sajudis" (meaning "co-movement" in Lithuanian). Chapter five, comprising the period from the March 1990 declaration of independence to the bloody events of January 1991, describes the development of "people power" from spontaneous protest to such a level of organized nonviolent action that it directed the course of political events. From the January 1991 Soviet assault to the attempted hard-line Soviet coup in August 1991, Lithuanian defense policy developed mainly along the lines of "civilian-based defense." This and the subsequent incorporation of nonviolent action into Lithuanian defense policies are looked at in chapter six. The appendices provide documentation, some for the first time in English, of these developments.

This monograph seeks to highlight the important role that nonviolent action has played in Lithuania, especially in the reassertion of independence in the 1980s and 1990s. In no way is it my intention to try to revise or to downplay the troubling, and at times horrific, infliction of violence in Lithuanian history, particularly in regards to the destruction of the Lithuanian Jewish community during the Second World War. Rather, I seek only to draw attention to an often-ignored strand of the Lithuanian experience, one that—given greater understanding and development—could help diminish the prospect of a recurrence of such destructive national and communal violence.

Chapter 1

NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE AGAINST RUSSIFICATION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The history of a nation should be in every citizen's memory, then the nation will be immortal.

M. Akelaitis

The Goals of Tsarism in Lithuania

Widespread and effective use of nonviolent action in the twentieth century has amply demonstrated that the option of nonviolent resistance resides in all cultures, available to each and every person seeking a means of struggle to address some perceived wrong. It need not be imported (as weapons); rather it only needs to be awakened from each culture's history. This awakening process can be seen in the history of Lithuania. The liberation struggle of the late twentieth century built on earlier efforts to protect and preserve the Lithuanian nation.

In 1795 Lithuania was forcibly annexed by the Russian empire.² From the start a main goal of the Tsarist administration was to check the separatist currents at the fringes of its expanded empire. In practice this meant compulsory "Russification" of the existing nationalities in the northwestern region: the Lithuanians, the Poles, the Finns, the Estonians, and the Latvians.³ As historian Maksim Kovalevski notes, the Russians regarded themselves as the ruling

² The story of Lithuanian statehood reaches back to the 13th century. Its first outstanding ruler, Mindaugas, was baptized in 1251 and crowned King of Lithuania on July 6, 1253. In 1386 Lithuania formed a personal union (through a royal marriage) with Poland. In 1410 Lithuanian and Polish forces defeated the Teutonic knights at the battle of Tannenberg and expanded their realm to the Black Sea and the outskirts of Moscow. In 1596, the Union of Lublin formed a Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth, with joint sovereigns and legislatures. In the course of the three partitions of the Commonwealth (1712, 1793, and 1795), Lithuania came under direct Russian rule. See Edvardas Gudavicius, *Lietuvos istorija* (Vilnius: Lietuvos rasytoju sajungos leidykla, 1999); and Zigmantas Kiaupa, Jurate Kiaupiene, and Albinas Kuncevicius, *The History of Lithuania Before 1795* (Vilnius: Lithuanian Institute of History, 2000).

³ See Edward C. Thaden (ed.), *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981) and Tadeuss Puisans, *The Emerging Nation* (Riga: Centre of Baltic-Nordic History and Political Studies, 1995), pp. 55-72. Ethnic Russians, though dominant, often comprised less than half of the Tsarist empire's population; even before the First World War Russians constituted only 43% of the empire's population. See Pranas Cepenai, *Naujuju laiku Lietuvos istorija* [A history of modern Lithuania] (Vilnius: I tomas, 1992), p. 103.

and overpowering nation. The ideal of the empire was “one Tsar, one religion, one nation.”⁴

Russia sought to obliterate the Lithuanian nation through assimilation. In fact, the very name of Lithuania was to be erased from the map. By decree Lithuania was renamed the “Northwestern Territory” and proclaimed original Russian land.⁵ Historical Lithuanian territories were divided into nine Russian administrative provinces (*gubernia*). Lithuania was ruled by decree. Governor General Konstantin Kaufman euphemistically called the bureaucracy’s arbitrary rule “civilian occupation,” a process of “bringing ... new civilization to the country.”⁶ Let us consider how the “civilizing” efforts of the Tsarist administration fared in Lithuania.

The Failure of Colonization

The goal of colonization was to create a nucleus of citizenry loyal to the empire. Tsarist administrators offered economic incentives to entice settlers from Russia to form this core. Lands confiscated from the rebels of the 1831 and 1863 uprisings,⁷ together with the expropriated properties of the Roman Catholic Church (the dominant creed in Lithuania), comprised in effect a colonization fund. Estates were donated to Russian nobles, to the Tsarist administrators, and to the military. State banks were instituted to lend cheap money to Orthodox farmers and Russian nobility: interest rates were lower than in commercial banks, and debts were frequently written off.

Colonist farmers were granted another essential privilege. Not until 1905 were Russian peasants allowed to leave their villages or to receive a passport without the consent of the community. This restriction was lifted for those who moved to Lithuania. Colonists were provided land free or at minimum price and were exempted from taxes for the first three years of their residency in Lithuania. By contrast, the indigenous Catholic population was saddled with economic restrictions: buying of land was forbidden, while selling land was allowed only to persons of Russian descent. Lithuanians were also banned from administrative posts, not only in Lithuania but also throughout the empire (a measure particularly painful for railroad

⁴ Ibid., p. 108.

⁵ Rimantas Vebra, *Lietuviu visuomene XIX a. antrojoje puseje* [Lithuanian Society in the Second Half of the 19th Century] (Vilnius: Mokslas, 1990), p. 21.

⁶ Ibid., p. 23.

⁷ The uprising of 1830–1831 in both Poland and Lithuania against Russian autocracy was vigorously suppressed by the Tsarist government. Participants were persecuted, the Vilnius university was closed (1832), the Lithuanian Statute was abolished (1840), and Russian legislation was introduced. In the 1863–1864 uprising peasants joined the nobility’s struggle for national liberation in part as a reaction to Tsarist land reforms. The abolition of serfdom in 1861 did not fulfill the peasants’ expectations. The rebels demanded the abolition of all obligations to the owners of land, including redemption payments. The uprising was ruthlessly suppressed: 180 Lithuanians were executed and 9,000 were deported to Siberia. See Simas Suziedelis (ed.), *Encyclopedia Lituanica*, vol. 2 (Boston: Lithuanian Encyclopedia Press, 1972), pp. 471–478.

servicemen). Similar restrictions on Jews, meanwhile, had been introduced much earlier.⁸

The history of Russian colonization has been amply researched.⁹ Let us review some of the results, as reported by its executors. An 1897 report of the governor general of Vilnius deplored that Russian landlords rarely visited their estates and, consequently, the lands were poorly managed, the forests depleted, and the estates themselves utterly impoverished, indebted, and mortgaged. Despite the ban on selling land to Catholics, estates were being sold plot by plot to local peasants or neighboring landlords. A report to the Russian Ministry of the Interior stated that “since 1880 events have been observed of ... settlers transferring their land to farmers of the Catholic creed. All of them have been seduced by very high prices for land, more than 100 rubles per acre, and they moved to the Mogilev province [near Vilnius] where they pay no more than 10 rubles per acre of land.”¹⁰ From 1897 to 1901, 21.8% of the land in Vilnius province passed into the hands of Lithuanians.¹¹

In 1861, 22,372 Russians resided in Lithuania (among 1,468,693 Lithuanians), the great majority of whom settled between 1832–1860. By 1897, however, nearly 250,000 Russians lived in Lithuania, comprising 7.6% of the population.¹² Despite this massive influx, Russian colonization was a failure; vast numbers of Russians departed Lithuania in the ensuing years. By 1914, Russians comprised only 4.5% of the population.¹³ The failure was not due to violent resistance, but because the goals of Tsarism defied economic logic and the people’s self-interest. Lured by privileges, Russians, both of common and noble descent, settled in Lithuania, only to

⁸ Restrictions on Jews living in the Russian Empire were introduced at the end of the 18th century. After 1804, Jews were allowed to reside only in Russia's northwestern provinces (including those of Kaunas and Vilnius). However, the ban was not strictly adhered to. It was in response to the active involvement of Jews in the revolutionary movement of the 19th century that Tsarism finally ousted the Jews from ethnic Russia to its western provinces by imposing the settlement qualification on them in 1882. This led to the increase of the Jewish population in Lithuania until it reached 13%. Jews were not allowed employment in government offices or as lawyers. They were also banned from owning land and operating farms. See Alfonsas Eidintas (ed.), *Lietuvos zydu zudyniu byla* [The Case of the Massacre of the Lithuanian Jews] (Vilnius: Vaga, 2001); Solomonas Atamukas, *Zydu kelias Lietuvoje* [A Way of Jews in Lithuania] (Vilnius: Alma Litera, 1998); and Egidijus Aleksandravicius and Antanas Kulakauskas, *Caru valdzioje: Lietuva XIX amziuje* [Under Czar's Rule: Lithuania in the XIX Century] (Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 1996), pp. 217-221.

⁹ See Leonas Mulevicius, "Laisvujų žmonių žemevalda Lietuvoje XIX a. pabaigoje – XX a. pradžioje" in *LTSR Mokslu Akademijos darbai*, Series A, 1963, vol. 1; Leonas Bickauskas-Gentvila, *Zemės kreditas Lietuvoje (1861–1905)* (Vilnius: Mintis, 1973); Cepenai, *Naujujū*; and Vebra, *Lietuviū*.

¹⁰ Quotations from Vebra, *Lietuviū*, p. 29.

¹¹ See Cepenai, *Naujujū*, p. 118. Not all of these sales were to Lithuanian Catholics; some went to Lithuanian followers and converts of the Russian Orthodox religion.

¹² See Simas Suziedelis (ed.), *Encyclopedia Lituanica*, vol. 1 (Boston: Lithuanian Encyclopedia Press, 1970), p. 564.

¹³ By 1914, out of total population of 4,000,000, only 180,000 (4.5%) were Russians. In 1923 only 50,700 Russians remained in independent Lithuania, (2.3% of the population), with about 30,000 in the Polish-occupied territory of Vilnius. Ibid.

confront a hostile and alien cultural environment. After a short time many defied Tsarist regulations, sold their estates to Lithuanians for profit, and returned to Russia. Despite the land sale restrictions, Lithuanian peasants managed to acquire 173,690 acres of land in 35 years' time (1864–1899).¹⁴

The Tsarist control apparatus could not maintain the Tsar's policies. In 1890 a Vilnius court ruled that administrative orders prohibiting Catholics from buying land did not have the power of law. The Senate of Russia, faced with numerous appeals, ruled in 1899 that Lithuanian peasants had equal rights with Russians in matters of land use. The Tsarist government responded with new restrictions, yet these were largely ignored. In 1905 all restrictions on buying and selling of land were lifted.

The Struggle for the Freedom of Religion

As stated, the Tsarist administration pursued two main directions in its Russification policy: direct colonization and assimilation of the indigenous populations. Tsarist ideologues were given the task of undermining the historical, religious, and linguistic identity of Lithuanians.

Lithuania, the last pagan country in Europe, was converted to the Roman-Catholic faith after 1386.¹⁵ Gradually the Catholic church became the dominant institution in Lithuanian social and political life. Parish rectories and monasteries served not only religious purposes, but became cultural and educational centers as well. In 1579 the Society of Jesuits founded the Academy of Vilnius. The first Lithuanian Catholic prayer book *Rozancius* (the Rosary) was prepared in 1681.¹⁶ By the nineteenth century, Catholics constituted a majority of religious believers in the territory of present-day Lithuania.¹⁷ Russification could only proceed through the

¹⁴ Cepenas, *Naujuju*, p. 120.

¹⁵ The thirteenth century ruler Mindaugas, who had effectively united the tribes of present-day Lithuania, attempted to integrate his realm into the Western European political system. He converted to Christianity, yet was killed by political opponents, and the realm reverted to pagan customs. Pressed by continued incursions of the Teutonic Order, the Lithuanian Great Prince Jogaila sought assistance from Poland. A condition of his marriage to the Polish Princess Jadwyga in 1386 required the baptism of his Lithuanian pagan subjects into the Latin Rite. See Romuald J. Misiunas and Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence 1940–1980* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University California Press, 1983), pp. 1–4.

¹⁶ The first known book in the Lithuanian language, *Katechismas* (Catechism), was printed in 1595 by Lutheran priest Martynas Mazvydas in Königsberg. For information on the Reformation movement in Lithuania and the sixteenth century Counter-Reformation (known as the Catholic Reformation), see Antanas Musteikis, *The Reformation in Lithuania: Religious Fluctuations in the Sixteenth Century*, East European Monographs, no. 246 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988) and Inge Luksaite, *Reformacija Lietuvos Didžiojoje kunigaikštysteje ir Mazojoje Lietuvoje* (Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 1999).

¹⁷ See Simas Suziedelis (ed.), *Encyclopedia Lituanica*, vol. 4 (Boston: Lithuanian Encyclopedia Press, 1975), pp. 515–526. While a Jewish community existed in Lithuania since the twelfth century, it is estimated that only 10,000–15,000 Jews lived in ethnographic Lithuania (as opposed to mainly Polish territories) at the

destruction of Catholicism.

The battle was waged on a number of fronts: the Roman Catholic Church was discriminated against economically, Catholics' rights were curtailed, and the Orthodox Church in Lithuania was granted special privileges. Of 350 monasteries operating in ethnographic Lithuania at the beginning of the nineteenth century, only 6 were left open, but even these were barred from accepting new candidates. From 1863–1866, 32 churches and 52 chapels were closed.¹⁸ Three quarters of the funds confiscated from the Catholic Church were diverted to the Russian Orthodox Church.¹⁹ During 1863–1865 alone, 100 Orthodox churches were built or reconstructed. Catholic religious activity was curtailed in many ways: training of priests was restricted, religious marches were banned, priests could not move outside their parishes without permission (even for pastoral tasks), and maintenance work on churches and chapels required special authorization. Congregations were urged to quit Catholicism, sometimes by the use of brute force.

The Lithuanian population strongly resisted the suppression of their dominant creed. The shutdown of the Kraziai church in 1893 became a historic symbol of this resistance. On hearing the news of the church's imminent closure, parishioners petitioned the governor general and the Tsar for a transfer of the church to the parish. The petition was rejected. The parishioners occupied the church to ensure that no sacraments and ritual items were confiscated. Cossacks and police were ordered to clear the church. Mounted police pushed the parishioners onto the banks of the nearby river, Krazante. During the fighting 9 people died, 10 suffered bullet wounds, 44 were severely flogged, and 150 imprisoned. The trial (1894), however, turned into a moral indictment of the Russian empire. The accused were defended, without fee, by some of the most prominent Russian lawyers. Thirty-six people were acquitted, 26 were given small penalties. Later, the court appealed to the Tsar for an amnesty, which was eventually granted.

Widespread resistance of the Lithuanian population, aided by Western denunciations of the atrocities,²⁰ forced the Russian government to desist from closing more Catholic churches. The Tsarist administration acknowledged its own defeat in 1904 with the declaration of the Tolerance Act, after which many of those who were converted to the Orthodox religion returned to Catholicism.

The Struggle for Lithuanian Press and Education

time of the 1795 partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. See *Encyclopedia Lituanica*, vol. 2, p. 522. Small numbers of Lutherans and Calvinists lived in northeastern Prussia as well.

¹⁸ *Encyclopedia Lituanica*, vol. 4, p. 521.

¹⁹ Cepenias, *Naujuju*, pp. 137–138.

²⁰ The Lithuanian community in the United States formed a commission to inform the world of the atrocities. The Kraziai events were widely reported in the British and German press. See Cepenias, *Naujuju*, p. 139–140.

After the 1863 uprising the Russian Ministry of Education established primary schools with Russian as the only language of instruction. The standard Latin alphabet (frequently referred to as the “Latin-Polish” alphabet) was banned from use in the Lithuanian press. It was to be substituted by the Russian (Cyrillic) alphabet known as *grazhdanka*. The population’s response was swift: they boycotted the primary schools, refused to pay education fees, established clandestine schools, and launched an extensive underground Lithuanian press.

The clandestine schools taught children from textbooks published abroad and smuggled into Lithuania (from 1864–1898 nearly half a million Lithuanian textbooks were published, mainly in East Prussia).²¹ While attendance in state schools dropped significantly, literacy remained high. The census of 1867 showed a literacy rate of 54% among those 10 to 19 years old, yet the state primary schools at that time were attended by merely 6.8% of the school-age population.²² “Clandestine schooling is the strongest factor of resistance to state education. ... [T]he youth and younger children have become utterly wild, respecting neither the government nor the law,” wrote a government official at the turn of the century.²³ Clandestine schools were fiercely persecuted (parents and teachers could receive penalties of 300 rubles or three months imprisonment). Only in 1906 was the law penalizing clandestine schooling abolished.

At secondary schools, the struggle for the right to use native language went hand in hand with the fight for religious rights. Posters declaring the prohibition of spoken Lithuanian or Polish could be seen as late as 1905 in school and administrative buildings. Initially students demanded that Lithuanian be allowed for religious instruction (all students were compelled to use Russian prayer books). In 1896 in Kaunas, Mintauja, and Siauliai, large numbers of students boycotted compulsory Orthodox services. Students in Mintauja appealed to the Pope and the Russian minister of education demanding freedom of religion. Eventually, the Tsar decreed that Catholic students could abstain from Orthodox Church services.

The fight over the Lithuanian press and publishing is a particularly impressive example of effective nonviolent action. Nearly the entire Lithuanian population, from smugglers to bishops, participated in defying Russian authorities. The ban on the use of the Latin alphabet was instituted, in the words of statesman Nikolai A. Milutin, “to finish off by Russian letters what has been started by the Russian sword.”²⁴ The task appeared to be relatively simple: confiscate the old texts, ban the printing of new books, journals, or papers in Lithuanian, and substitute *grazhdanka* for all printed matter.

This form of Russian cultural imperialism was met with mass resistance, inspired and led

²¹ Ibid., p. 167.

²² Antanas Tyla, “Slaptas lietuviu mokymas 1862–1906 metais,” in *Lietuviu atgimimo istorijos studijos* (Vilnius: Sietynas, 1990), p. 57.

²³ Ibid., pp. 59–60.

²⁴ Cepenas, *Naujuju*, p. 223.

by Motiejus Valancius, bishop of Samogitia from 1850–1875. The resistance was known as the *Knygnesia* (*knyga*= book, *nesti*= to carry) movement. An alternative system of publishing and distribution was created. Books and other printed matter were published abroad, mostly in Tilze (Tilsit, East Prussia), but also in the USA and Britain, and then smuggled across the heavily guarded Russian-German border. A vast network of book suppliers assured that printed matter reached every corner of the country. The risks were high: captured “book-carriers” were deported to Siberia for 3 to 5 years or imprisoned locally for 1 to 5 years. Books were confiscated at customs posts and destroyed.²⁵

Lithuanians discovered ways to blunt the police’s vigilance. Since books published before the ban were not liable to confiscation, publishers printed fake dates of publication. For example, Bishop Valancius’ book *Palangos Juze* was written in 1869, but dated 1863. Newspapers were distributed by mail in envelopes disguised as business correspondence. Underground book distributors formed associations.²⁶ Publishing was funded by donations from the Catholic Church, landlords, farmers, and merchants, but sales were also brisk. Jurgis Bielinis, known as “the king of the book-smugglers,” even ran an underground commercial book distribution center (1885–1895).

Attempts to squash the illegal press became more and more costly and less and less effective. In spite of repression, 1,740 titles totaling 7.8 million copies were published during the press ban (1864–1904).²⁷ By contrast, Tsarist output of *grazhdanka* publications in this period, together with official documents, amounted to only 61 titles.²⁸

Alongside the illegal trading of books, legal methods were used to put pressure on the Tsarist government. The Lithuanian intelligentsia organized a letter writing campaign among peasants to the Tsar and the Minister of the Interior. From 1895–1904 the Tsar and various government institutions received 76 collective petitions from villages and parishes calling for the lifting of the ban.²⁹

Popular resistance and international attention finally caused more favorable public opinion in Russia proper. The prevalent attitude of Russian scholars was suggestively expressed by the academician Vasilij Lomanski, who reportedly stated that police have never “created

²⁵ Between 1891–1893, 31,718 Lithuanian books and newspapers were confiscated by the Russian police on the border. From 1900–1902, the figure was 56,182. See Simas Suziedelis and Vincas Rastenis (eds.), *Encyclopedia Lituanica*, vol. 3 (Boston: Lithuanian Encyclopedia Press, 1973), p. 149.

²⁶ The society *Atgaja* (the Recovery) operated in 1885–1895; the society *Sietynas* (the Constellation) in 1892–97 united over a hundred book distributors. Forty of its members received court sentences. The harshest sentence (15 years imprisonment) was imposed on mail carrier Jurgis Lietuvninkas and his wife Petronele. *Ibid.*, p. 149.

²⁷ Rimantas Vebra, *Lietuviskos spaudos draudima 1864–1904 metais* (Vilnius: Pradai, 1996), p. 214.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

²⁹ Cepenas, *Naujuju*, pp. 239–240.

letters for a nation.”³⁰ Respected institutions, such as the Imperial Geographic Society and the Department of Russian Language and Literature of the Russian Academy of Sciences, publicly demanded an end to the press ban. Even the Russian Senate eventually opposed the Tsar’s policies. For example, the literary journalist and editor Povilas Visinskis was sentenced to a 16 ruble fine and 4 days of incarceration for putting up posters written in the Latin alphabet. Visinskis appealed to the Senate, pleading he violated no law, since the ban had been enacted by mere administrative decree. The Senate annulled his sentence, along with earlier decisions of the court. One of Visinskis’ well known Russian lawyers, Kaminka, summarized the cases’ significance: “A decision in this case will affect the interests of a whole nation, a nation denied even the possibility of praying from the books its ancestors have been praying from for centuries.”³¹

On April 24, 1904, the imperial ban on the use of the Latin alphabet in the Lithuanian press was lifted. The victorious 40-year struggle was a preeminently positive struggle, a struggle *for*, not a negative and destructive fight *against*. It was not directed at destroying the opponent, rather it sought to organize an alternative system of publishing. In this constructive task the opponents were co-opted, customs officials and police were outwitted, bribed, or even won over. The strategy brought sympathy for the Lithuanian cause around the world.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 235.

³¹ K. Salkauskis, "Bylos del spaudos lietuviu raidemis," *Teise*, 1935, no. 32, p. 409.

Chapter 2

RESISTANCE TO SOVIET RULE, 1940–1987

*No effort in this world is lost
or wasted.*

Bhagavad Gita

An Overview

In 1939, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union carved up Poland and the Baltics. The secret protocols of the Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact (the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact) of August 23, 1939 (and subsequent revisions of September 28, 1939) placed Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania squarely in the Soviet sphere.³² In 1940, after 22 years of independence (1918–1940),³³ Lithuania was occupied and annexed by the Soviet Union. Socialist reforms were instituted, accompanied by a plummet in living standards and a rise in arbitrary rule and state terror. Popular nonviolent resistance soon began, mainly in the form of political boycotts, demonstrations of loyalty to the symbols of Lithuanian independence,³⁴ and noncompliance with the new order.

The Soviets labored to portray the annexation of the Baltics as legal and desired by the Baltic populations. The elections of July 14, 1940, to the so-called “People’s Diet” were to serve this purpose. On July 7, 1940, all non-Communist parties were banned. Four days later, over 2,000 prominent Lithuanians were arrested.³⁵ Electoral procedures violated all criteria for democratic elections; not even voter lists were prepared. Voters had to submit passports for signing by Soviet officials as later proof of a citizen’s loyalty. The elections were directly supervised by Soviet troops. Yet despite intimidation the population of Lithuania was so

³² Estonia and Latvia were initially assigned to the USSR sphere, while Poland and Lithuania were left to Germany. After the collapse of Poland, the Soviets successfully bargained for Lithuania. See Izidors Vizulis, *The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939: The Baltic Case* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1990).

³³ For more on this period of independence, see Georg von Rauch, *The Baltic States: Years of Independence: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, 1917–1940*, transl. by Gerald Onn (London: C. Hurst, 1994).

³⁴ For example, soon after annexation a teachers’ congress (8,000 participants) was convened to demonstrate the educators’ loyalty to the new regime, but concluded with the delegates singing Lithuania’s banned national anthem. See Zenonas Ivinskis, “Lithuania During the War: Resistance Against the Soviet and the Nazi Occupants,” in V. Stanley Vardys (ed.), *Lithuania under the Soviets: Portrait of a Nation* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1965), p. 63. Also see Vytautas Mankevicius, “Nonviolent Resistance in Lithuania: 1940-1952,” in Liliana Astra and Grazina Miniotaite (eds.), *Nonviolence and Tolerance in Changing Eastern and Central Europe* (Vilnius: Logos, 1995), pp. 106-118; Valentinas Brandisauskas, “Anti-Soviet Resistance in 1940 and 1941 and the Revolt of June 1941” in Arvydas Anusauskas (ed.), *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States* (Vilnius: Akreta, 2001), pp. 8-22.

³⁵ Vytautas Vaitiekunas, *Lithuania* (New York: The Committee for a Free Lithuania, 1965), p. 28.

uncooperative that the elections had to be extended for another day. It has been estimated that not more than 32% of the population took part in the elections (others have put the figure at 18%), though Soviet officials declared a turnout of 95.5%, with 99.2% of the votes supposedly cast for the Working People's Union of Lithuania.³⁶

Organized resistance groups began to emerge shortly after the Soviet occupation. The Lithuanian Activists Front (LAF) was the most prominent. By the time of the German invasion of the USSR (June 22, 1941), membership in the LAF totaled 36,000. Though weakened by mass deportations (the Soviets deported or executed 34,000–75,000 Lithuanians in 1940–1941³⁷), the LAF was able to lead an armed anti-Soviet rebellion at the outbreak of the German-Soviet war. Uprisings (involving up to 100,000 insurgents in various parts of the country) harassed retreating Red Army units.³⁸ The Nazis occupied Lithuania within three days.

“In every occupied country there is a spectrum, a continuum of responses, towards the occupier, ranging from complete identification with the occupier's goals to active resistance. These responses shift over time and under different circumstances. Political intent, purpose and motive are just as important as objective behavior in defining a place in the spectrum of responses to foreign occupation,” wrote the Lithuanian exile historian Saulius Suziedelis.³⁹ The quote accurately reflects the complex nature of Lithuanian responses to the Nazi occupation. As Misiunas and Taagepera have written:

The German attack came during the first period of massive arrests and deportations undertaken by the Soviet regime. ... The feeling seems to have been pervasive that the overthrow of the Soviet yoke by the Germans would enable the Baltic peoples to reassert their national independence. The majority of the native populations welcomed the arrival of the Germans at least passively. In some instances, the *Wehrmacht* was greeted with flowers. From the beginning, the German actions did nothing to preserve such feelings among the Baltic populations.⁴⁰

On June 23, 1941, a provisional Lithuanian government was formed. An independent

³⁶ See Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States*, p. 27, and David M. Crowe, *The Baltic States and the Great Powers: Foreign Relations 1938–1940* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), p.173.

³⁷ See Crowe, *The Baltic States*, p. 178.

³⁸ Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States*, p. 45.

³⁹ Saulius Suziedelis, "The Military Mobilization Campaigns of 1943 and 1944 in German occupied Lithuania: Contrasts in Resistance and Collaboration," in *Journal of Baltic Studies*, vol. 21, no. 1, Spring 1990, p. 33.

⁴⁰ Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States*, p. 44.

Lithuania, even one allied to Germany, however, did not fit into the Nazis' plans.⁴¹ The German occupiers blocked the ability of the provisional government to function and established their own administrative system. When not granted recognition by Germany, the provisional government, unwilling to play a puppet role, disbanded (August 5, 1941).

The Germans appointed a group of indigenous “General Counselors” to function in a primarily advisory and administrative capacity with little say in important government decisions. While some Lithuanians used their close positions with the Germans to defend Lithuanian institutions,⁴² others openly identified and collaborated with the Nazis.

The Nazi-perpetrated Holocaust in Lithuania eliminated one of the vibrant centers of Jewish cultural life in Europe.⁴³ Vilnius, or Vilna, for example, was the capital of the Yiddish language. While Jews had long experienced pogroms in many Eastern European countries, Lithuania had remained a relative haven of peace until 1941.⁴⁴ Anti-Semitism, however, ran deep among certain segments of the Lithuanian population. Right-wing extremists in the 1920s and 1930s launched vitriolic verbal and written attacks on Jewish influence in Lithuania. Jews were pushed out of many important positions after the 1926 rightist coup. Anti-Semites used the role of a number of Jews in supporting the 1940 Soviet occupation to heighten anti-Jewish sentiment, ignoring the fact that Jews comprised a disproportionate number of the victims of Soviet deportations and executions.⁴⁵

Between mid-July and the fall of 1941, German *Einsatzgruppen*, particularly the notorious *Einsatzkommando A* led by Colonel Karl Jaeger, assisted by Lithuanian auxiliaries and local henchmen, murdered the majority of Lithuania’s Jews.⁴⁶ Of the 240,000–250,000 Jews who lived in Lithuania in 1939, at least 170,000 were dead by the war’s end.⁴⁷

⁴¹ According to German documents, the Nazi’s long-range goal was to annex the Baltic region, expel two-thirds of the population, and settle the lands with German immigrants. One plan called for expelling 85% of the Lithuanian population. See *Ibid.*, pp. 47–48.

⁴² For example, Pranas Germantas, the Lithuanian Counselor for Education, seemed to be close to the Nazis, but used his position to reintroduce the old educational system which indirectly fostered the growth of resistance. As the Germans shut down higher education institutes in mid-1943, Germantas was sent to the Stutthof concentration camp. *Ibid.*, pp. 50–51.

⁴³ While small groups of Jews first settled in the territory of present-day Lithuania in the twelfth century, large-scale Jewish settlement dates from the fourteenth century during the rule of Lithuanian Grand Duke Vytautas, who had invited Jews to settle in the area.

⁴⁴ See Anatol Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Path to Independence* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 141–142. In 1897 Jews comprised 13.1% (350,000) of the entire population of Lithuania, yet made up 39.6% of all the urban population. By 1923 the numbers had diminished to 250,000 (7.6%). See *Lithuania: An Encyclopedic Survey* (Vilnius: Encyclopedia Publishers, 1986), p. 43.

⁴⁵ Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, pp. 150–151.

⁴⁶ "Setting the Record Straight: The Historical Perspective on Modern Lithuania and its Minorities," Lithuanian-American Community, Special Report No. 1 (n.d.), photocopy, p. 28.

⁴⁷ See Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States*, p. 61, and Don Levin, *Fighting Back: Lithuanian Jewry’s Armed Resistance to the Nazis, 1941–1945* (New York: Holmes & Meire Publishers, 1985), p. 11. After the

While the Germans were able to recruit local henchmen and Lithuanian civil administrators, many Lithuanians opposed the genocide. A number of Lithuanians—such as the writer Sofija Ciurlioniene, the priest Bronius Paukstys, the nun Ona Brokaityte, the opera singer Kipras Petrauskas, among others—assisted Jews to hide and escape the massacres. Some Lithuanians were denounced for such activities and executed by the Germans.⁴⁸

Organized resistance to the Germans emerged in the Fall of 1941, led by the Catholic-oriented Lithuanian Activists Front⁴⁹ (after late 1942 known as the Lithuanian Front, or LF), the secular Union of Lithuanian Freedom Fighters, and the student-dominated Lithuanian Unity Movement. In 1943 the groups merged into the Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania (VLIK). Lithuanian Jews also played an important role in the anti-Nazi armed struggle. “The Jewish resistance and fighting movement in Lithuania numbered at least ten thousand men and women,” distributed throughout the Lithuanian Division and other units of the Soviet army as well as in the Polish armies. Further, “more than two thousand were affiliated with resistance organizations in the ghettos and labor camps or served in the ranks of the partisans.”⁵⁰ The groups published underground papers and established a clandestine radio station. Although military resistance occurred throughout the country, it was never able to seriously challenge German control. Soviet partisans organized a small guerrilla movement in the eastern Lithuanian forests. Yet the costs of its military activities were borne mostly by civilians. In revenge for a guerrilla attack the Germans put to flames the village of Pirciupis (June 3, 1944), burning alive 119 persons.

war most of the surviving Lithuanian Jews gradually emigrated to Israel. By 1989 only 11,170 (0.3% of the population) Jews lived in Lithuania. *Lithuania: An Encyclopedic Survey*, p. 43. For a long time the involvement of Lithuanians in the Holocaust was ignored by both the historians of Soviet Lithuania and the Baltic emigration. Only in the 1990s with the publication of documents have long-overdue public discussions begun. See the interview with Dr. Saulius Suziedelis (of Millersville University, Pennsylvania) in *Akiraciai*, vol. 10, November 1991, p. 234; a series of articles in *The New York Times* from September 5–10, 1991; and Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, pp. 139–158. In 1994 the Lithuanian Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius apologized for Lithuanian participation in the Holocaust during an official visit to Israel. In March 1995, Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas apologized to the Jewish people from the Knesset podium for acts of genocide carried out by Lithuanians during the Holocaust.

⁴⁸ The state Jewish museum in Vilnius has announced that they have registered more than 3000 Jews saved by 2700 Lithuanian citizens. The numbers are not final, for the collection of data continues. 424 persons in Lithuania were awarded the medals of the World's Righteous and diplomas (Israel's *Jad Vasem*). Lithuania's award, the Cross of the Lifesaver, was awarded to 280 Lithuanian citizens. See Eidintas, *Lietuvos zydu zudyniu byla*, p. 190. See also Dalia Kuodyte and Rimantas Stankevicius (eds.), *Isgelbeje pasauli...Zydu gelbejimas Lietuvoje (1941-1944)* [The Saviors of the World: The Saving of the Jews in Lithuania (1941-1944)] (Vilnius: Lietuvos gyventoju genocido ir rezistencijos tyrimo centras, 2001).

⁴⁹ As stated (see n. 46), the LAF had adopted anti-Jewish policies. However, they opposed German annexation. The LAF sent Hitler a memorandum on Lithuanian independence. In September 1941 the head of the LAF, Leonas Prapuolenis, was deported to Dachau. See Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States*, p. 63.

⁵⁰ See Levin, *Fighting Back*, p. 227.

Resistance to the German occupation primarily took the form of nonviolent struggle. Underground political organizations were established and the occupation regulations were sabotaged. For example, German labor mobilization campaigns in Lithuania were largely unsuccessful due to widespread noncooperation. At the beginning of 1942 the Nazi labor force quota for Lithuania, 100,000 people, was only fulfilled by 5%; in early 1944 only about 8,000 people were provided from a quota of 80,000.⁵¹ German attempts to mobilize an SS “Lithuanian Legion” also failed. On March 17, 1943, “the Germans publicly announced ... that the recruitment for the SS legion was being stopped and angrily charged that Lithuanians were unworthy to wear SS uniforms.”⁵² Although the Germans tried again in late 1943 and early 1944 to form Lithuanian military units, these efforts eventually failed.⁵³

By August 1944 the Red Army had pushed the Germans out of much of Lithuania. The second Soviet occupation began with a vengeance. In 1941 and in 1945-1953 the enkavedists carried out 35 mass deportations. The total count of deported families was about 44,000 (approximately 130,000 persons).⁵⁴ The harshness and reprisals of the Soviets forced many people to flee to the woods where they formed guerrilla units.

Postwar Resistance

Historians have divided postwar Lithuanian resistance into three periods, chronologically related to changes in Soviet leadership: that of Stalin (1944–1953), of Khrushchev (1954–1964), and of Brezhnev (1964–1982).⁵⁵ The first period was characterized by stark guerrilla resistance, primarily that of the “Forest Brothers.” In 1945 an estimated 30,000 armed men lived in small units in the woods, attacking and harassing Soviet interior ministry forces, functionaries, and

⁵¹ Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States*, pp. 53–54.

⁵² Ivinskis, "Lithuania During the War," p. 80.

⁵³ In February 1944 Gen. Povilas Plechavičius negotiated an agreement with German Police General Friedrich Jeckeln to form Lithuanian "Local Detachments" (*Vietinė Rinktinė*) under the following conditions: "The military units would be stationed only in Lithuania under Lithuanian command; they were to be outfitted with Lithuanian uniforms; the manpower would consist solely of volunteers." (See Suziedelis, "The Military Mobilization Campaigns," p. 43.) Within days 20,000 men came forward. However, it was naïve of Lithuanian leaders to expect the Nazis to respect the negotiated conditions. In May the Germans ordered the transfer of the Local Detachments to the Auxiliary Police Services of the SS. An immediate self-demobilization was initiated; most of the troops "fled and went into hiding, taking their weapons with them." (See Ivinskis, "Lithuania During the War," p. 84.) Gen. Plechavičius and his staff were arrested and sent to the Salaspils concentration camp. As circumstances changed, the Local Detachments "moved from conditional cooperation to active resistance." (See Suziedelis, "The Military Mobilization Campaigns," p. 46.) All later recruitment efforts in Lithuania failed.

⁵⁴ See Eugenijus Grumskis, *Lietuvos gyventojų tremimai 1940-1941, 1945-1953 metais* [Deportation of Lithuania's Population in 1940-1941, 1945-1953] (Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos institutas, 1996), p. 281.

⁵⁵ See Tomas Remeikis, *Opposition to Soviet Rule in Lithuania* (Chicago: Institute of Lithuanian Studies Press, 1980), pp. 37–38.

Lithuanian collaborators. The main guerrilla units operated through 1948; by 1949 however they “adopted tactics more suitable to small conspiratorial groups and continued resistance until destroyed sometime around 1952.”⁵⁶

In June 1946 a number of guerrilla groups, in an attempt to shift to more nonviolent resistance, formed the United Movement for Democratic Resistance in order to achieve “more adequate and effective results in the struggle for the restoration of Lithuania’s independence and for the realization of the great ideal of democracy.”⁵⁷ In January 1947, however, a national conference of guerrilla leaders rejected the “proposal to reorganize into a movement of nonviolent, ‘passive’ resistance.”⁵⁸

Nevertheless, nonviolent resistance existed alongside guerrilla activity. Lithuanian farmers spontaneously boycotted the collectivization of the agricultural system for two years (1947–1948), though they were defeated by Soviet repressive measures (primarily a series of deportations between 1947–1950).⁵⁹ A youth organization, calling itself the United Labor Front, stressed the peaceful character of its resistance program, such as the “exposure of the occupant’s real aims, boosting of national self-respect, etc.”⁶⁰

By the second period of postwar resistance (1954–1964), Lithuania had already lost one sixth of its population due to deportations, war, and resistance.⁶¹ According to Tomas Remeikis, the second period was characterized by a change in public attitudes: open resistance and opposition turned into an attitude of exploiting, reforming, and adjusting the system.⁶² Lithuanian national “cadres” gradually penetrated the governing Soviet bodies. In 1952 the Lithuanian Communist Party (LCP) was 30% Lithuanian, by 1957 it was 50% (this trend continued in later years: by 1970 it was 67%, in 1985 it was 70% Lithuanian).⁶³ While some Lithuanian Communists identified completely with the goals of Sovietization (and benefited from the privileges of the system), their ever increasing number in the LCP led to the development of “a nationalist segment of the intelligentsia in the Communist party itself, which

⁵⁶ V. Stanley Vardys, “The Partisan Movement in Postwar Lithuania,” in Vardys (ed.), *Lithuania under the Soviets*, p. 85–86. At their height the Forest Brothers had a general staff, printed newspapers, and ran an underground officers’ training course.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.102.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ See Pranas Zunde, “Lithuania’s Economy: Introduction of the Soviet Pattern,” in Vardys (ed.), *Lithuania under the Soviets*, pp. 141–152.

⁶⁰ Algimantas Liekis, *Nenugaletoji Lietuva: Antisovietinis pogrindis: Kalba dokumentai* (Vilnius: Sudaryt. A. Liekis, Valst. leidybos centras, 1993), vol. 1, p. 8.

⁶¹ In 1940 Lithuania’s population was 3.1 million, in 1953 it was only 2.6 million, 75% of whom were Lithuanians. See *Lietuviskoji tarybine enciklopedija* (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mokslas,” 1980), vol. 6, p. 570.

⁶² See Remeikis, *Opposition*, p. 38.

⁶³ Liekis, *Nenugaletoji*, p. 138.

actively [strove] for the enhancement of national values.”⁶⁴

The main feature of the third period of postwar resistance—Brezhnev’s reign, eventually leading to Gorbachev’s ascension in 1985—was the emergence of the dissident movement. As a social system becomes more complex its functional efficiency requires more autonomy for its elements. A totalitarian society bent on industrial development inescapably faces the contradiction between centralized rule and pluralist tendencies. Revolutionary changes in communication technology provided a further structural factor for the emergence of the dissident movement. Recordings, copying techniques, and telecommunications in many ways weakened control over the individual. A microfilm of a book smuggled abroad could be broadcast back over the radio (such as Vatican Radio, Voice of America, Radio Liberty, and Radio Free Europe), making its contents available to millions. Dissidents had a world audience. In the following sections, we will look at two currents of resistance and dissent in Lithuania, one religious, the other secular.

The Struggle for the Freedom of Faith

As stated earlier, the Catholic Church possesses immense moral authority for its contributions to Lithuanian history and culture and its consequent links with the very identity of the nation.⁶⁵ The Catholic Church played a leading role in resisting the Soviets.⁶⁶

From the start the Soviets tried to neutralize the Church’s power. A government proposal to sever the Church’s ties with the Vatican was vigorously resisted by the clergy. Despite intimidation and seductive offers, not a single priest could be found to support the initiative.⁶⁷ The government responded to the Church’s noncompliance with deportations and destruction of the Church hierarchy.⁶⁸ By 1947 only one elderly bishop, Kazimieras Paltarokas of Panevezys, was left in Lithuania; others had been deported or killed.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ Tomas Remeikis, "The Administration of Power: The Communist Party and the Soviet Government," in Vardys (ed.), *Lithuania under the Soviets*, p. 140.

⁶⁵ This is not to deny that diverse religious communities have historically thrived in and enriched Lithuania.

⁶⁶ For a detailed account, see Saulius Suziedelis, *The Sword and the Cross* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 1988).

⁶⁷ One report claims that a priest sentenced to 25 years imprisonment was offered freedom, the parish of St. John’s in Vilnius, and a 100,000 ruble bribe to take on the initiative. He did not accept the offer. See Remeikis, *Opposition*, p. 107.

⁶⁸ Three-hundred and fifty priests, one third of their total number in Lithuania, were deported in 1946–1949. See Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States*, p. 120.

⁶⁹ Bishop Vincentas Borisevicius of Telsiai was arrested on February 3, 1946, and condemned to death by a secret court in Vilnius. His auxiliary, Bishop Pranas Ramanauskas, was arrested late in 1946, tried, and deported. About the same time, Bishop Teofilius Matulionis of Kaisiadorys and Archbishop Mecys Reinyis of Vilnius were deported to hard-labor camps. Archbishop Reinyis died in November 1953 in

All Lithuanian monasteries (numbering 122) and chapels (numbering 20) were shut down; of four seminaries only one remained open. Until 1956 all religious publications were prohibited. Catechistic schooling, religious processions, and charity functions were all prohibited. The authorities established parish committees, subordinate to local government administration, to keep watch on priests and parishioners.

In the social and political thaw after Stalin's death the Church was able to restore some of its lost potential. By 1960 the number of priests nearly reached its 1945 level of 929.⁷⁰ However, a new anti-religious campaign—culminating in the 1961 “New Program for the Building of Communism”—rolled back these gains. The severe restrictions on pastoral activity and the drastic reduction in the number of seminarians (from 80 in 1958 to 28 in 1964) threatened the Church with utter destruction.⁷¹ The danger of extinction led to the emergence of an overt Catholic opposition. Some priests began forthright proselytizing in their sermons, and openly condemned the injustice of the government's restrictions. Individual and collective petitions protesting the curtailment of religious activity were sent to party and administrative institutions. Under threat of severe punishment, 17,000 Lithuanians signed a 1972 memorandum on religious persecution to the Secretary General of the UN and to the Central Committee of the USSR Communist Party.⁷² Underground training of seminarians began at the end of the 1960s.

The seventeen-year underground publication (1972–1988) of *The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* was the longest running dissident publication in the USSR.⁷³ At first *The Chronicle* merely registered acts of persecution against Catholics and the Church; later it broadened its coverage to all violations of human rights. *The Chronicle* published more than 3,000 articles and documents—petitions, memoranda, letters both to local and central authorities of the USSR and to international organizations—as well as more than 60 articles on religious persecution in other parts of the Soviet Union. Publication of *The Chronicle* required great personal courage and devotion: the material had to be collected, processed, and distributed both home and abroad under a tight net of KGB agents and informers.⁷⁴ The assistance of Russian dissidents and Lithuanian exiles was of considerable importance for the survival of *The*

Vladimir prison. See Vittorio Vignieri, "Soviet Policy Toward Religion in Lithuania: The Case of Roman Catholicism," in Vardys (ed.), *Lithuania under the Soviets*, p. 221.

⁷⁰ Remeikis, *Opposition*, p. 109.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

⁷² Liekis, *Nenugaletoji*, vol. 1, p. 180.

⁷³ Nearly all of the material of the *Lietuvos Kataliku Baznycios Kronika* has been published in ten volumes in Chicago by Lithuanian-Americans. The Chronicle is now published in English by the Society for the Publication of *The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*. The first English volume was printed in 1981 by Loyola University Press.

⁷⁴ After the arrest of the first publishers of *The Chronicle*—priest Sigitas Tamkevicius (who later became a bishop) and sister Nijole Sadunaite—priest Jonas Boruta and sisters of the Eucharist congregation resumed publication under doubly dangerous conditions.

Chronicle. Several other underground religious periodicals were printed as well: *Tiesos Kelias*, *Dievas ir Tevyne*, *Ausra*, and *Rupintojelis*.

In 1978 a group of priests established “The Catholic Committee for the Defense of the Rights of Believers” (CCDRB). At its inaugural press conference held before foreign journalists in Moscow, the Committee stated that its goals were “to draw the attention of Soviet government, of church leaders and of society at large to the condition of believers in Lithuania and other Soviet republics; to monitor if Soviet laws and their enactment in matters of the church and believers do not contradict international commitments of the USSR; to educate the priests and believers on their rights and help them defend them; the Committee will act publicly and will not pursue any political goals.”⁷⁵ During the first five years of its existence the Committee prepared 53 documents, primarily letters of protest and appeals to diverse audiences, such as Pope John Paul II, leaders of other churches, the World Council of Churches, foreign governments (including to US President Jimmy Carter), Soviet party and government leaders, and the hierarchy of the Lithuanian Catholic Church. The documents reported arbitrary arrests and discrimination against religious believers both in Lithuania and other parts of the USSR. One after another the organizers of the Committee were sentenced to imprisonment “for anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda.” The arrests had wide repercussions in Lithuania: 123,000 people signed a declaration of protest by early 1984.⁷⁶ In the same year an underground section of CCDRB was formed and continued the Committee’s functions.

Struggle for Human and National Rights

After the Soviet Union signed the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, Helsinki monitoring committees began to sprout all over the empire. The human rights provisions of the Helsinki accords provided a legal basis for the struggle against the Soviet regime. The Lithuanian Helsinki Group (LHG) was established in 1976. Initially comprised of experienced resistance activist Viktoras Petkus, priest Karolis Garuckas, the poet and former political prisoner Ona Lukauskiene-Poskiene, the poet Tomas Venclova, and the scientist Eitan Finkelstein, the group emphasized the legal and peaceful character of its activity: “we will neither support violent struggle, nor participate in it.”⁷⁷ During the first months of the group’s existence a number of people from Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia appealed to it for help, for it seemed to be an almost official institution for the defense of their rights.

The LHG closely cooperated with the Moscow Helsinki Group, though it differed from the latter in being as much concerned with national rights as with individual rights. In its first

⁷⁵ Liekis, *Nenugaletoji*, vol. 2, p. 56.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 493.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 36.

manifesto the LHG stressed that it sought the “restoration of the independent Lithuanian state as it existed before its illegal occupation by the Soviet army on June 15, 1940.”⁷⁸ Though strongly nationalist, the group was also concerned with violations of the rights of national minorities in Lithuania: Byelorussians, Germans, Jews, Tatars, Karaites. In the first half year of its activity the group issued some 20 documents. Then persecution began: Venclova was deprived of citizenship, Petkus and Balys Gajauskas were imprisoned. (The average period of a member’s activity before being arrested by the KGB was half a year.)⁷⁹ The Lithuanian Helsinki Group was destroyed with the arrests in March 1981 of leaders Vytautas Vaiciunas and Mecislovas Juravicius.⁸⁰ However, even after the functional end of the LHG, human rights activities (and arrests) continued.⁸¹ Letter-writing and petition campaigns for political prisoners were launched in 1982 and 1984.

In 1978, a radical organization with the explicit goal of Lithuanian independence was formed—The Lithuanian Freedom League (LFL). Founded by Antanas Terleckas, the LFL was one of the first groups to raise publicly the issue of the secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. An LFL-initiated petition—addressed to UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim, the governments of the Atlantic Charter, the governments of the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic, and the USSR—called for the nullification of the pact, the withdrawal of occupation troops from the Baltic countries, and the right of free development.⁸² The petition, issued on the eve of the fortieth anniversary of the pact, was signed by 38 Lithuanian dissidents, one Latvian, one Estonian, and a number of Moscow dissidents, including Andrei Sakharov and Yelena Bonner. Soon thereafter the chief LFL activists were arrested and sentenced to imprisonment (Terleckas for the third time).

In this period, Lithuanian dissent was the most active in the entire Soviet Union, as shown in David Kovalevski’s analysis of public protest acts in the period of 1965–1978. Kovalevski studied 51 cases of protest acts in Lithuania, as registered in underground publications. These acts constituted 10.3% of all protest acts he counted in the Soviet Union, although the Lithuanian population comprised only 1.5% of the USSR’s population. Over 66%

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 41.

⁷⁹ Algirdas Statkevicius continued the efforts of the initial group. He collected and sent abroad nearly 20 documents. In 1980 he was arrested and sentenced to compulsory psychiatric treatment but was permitted to travel to the United States in 1988. Vytautas Skuodis, an American-born professor of geology at the University of Vilnius who was active in human rights causes and well known for his Catholic beliefs, received a twelve year sentence in December of 1980 but was released in 1987 and allowed to travel to the United States.

⁸⁰ See Ludmila Alexeyeva, *Soviet Dissent: Contemporary Movements for National, Religious, and Human Rights* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1985).

⁸¹ See Thomas A. Oleszczuk, *Political Justice in the USSR: Dissent and Repression in Lithuania, 1969–1987* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), pp.155–177.

⁸² See Remeikis, *Opposition*, pp. 659–663.

of Lithuanian demonstrations in this period were for religious rights, 33.3% for national rights. The number of acts increased almost every year.⁸³ Most notable were the 1972 youth demonstrations in Kaunas that ended in clashes with the militia. On May 14, 1972, a secondary school student, Romas Kalanta, committed public suicide. Shouting “Freedom for Lithuania!,” he set himself on fire in the center of the city. (The suicide was probably timed to coincide with US President Nixon’s visit to Moscow.) In order to avoid political disturbances the authorities made his burial secret. This provoked a stormy reaction. Thousands of people took part in demonstrations with slogans of “Freedom for Lithuania!” Troops were used to disperse the crowds, 500 people were arrested, dozens were injured. Kalanta’s suicide and the subsequent disturbances in Kaunas had wide repercussions abroad, which helped further stimulate resistance.⁸⁴

Lithuania also had the most developed underground publishing network in the Soviet Union. For example, in 1979 alone nineteen separate periodicals were in production.⁸⁵ Their total volume per year amounted to 3,000 pages of standard type text. As regards the output of underground publications per person, Lithuania led all of Eastern Europe.⁸⁶ More than 2,000 book titles were published, both fiction and nonfiction, including Solzhenitsyn’s *The Gulag Archipelago* and the *Memoirs* of Juozas Urbsys, the last foreign minister of prewar Lithuania. All underground press was firmly grounded in the quest for independence. The secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact were thus of primary concern. In fact, the protocols were first published in the Lithuanian underground press in 1972. In 1973 in Vilnius, Kaunas, and Riga (Latvia) more than 100 people were arrested and sentenced for copying and distributing these texts.

The Role of Lithuanian Exiles

After the war, with the second Soviet occupation, much of the political life of Lithuania moved to the West. Diplomatic representatives of the Baltic states remained accredited in Great Britain, the United States, Canada, and Australia. France restored limited accreditation after the war. In exile, political parties, journalists, diplomats, and academics pursued a range of activities on behalf of Lithuania.

In 1949 Lithuanian exiles in Germany reconstituted The Supreme Committee for Lithuanian Liberation (VLIK) and published “The Lithuanian Charter.”⁸⁷ The document outlined

⁸³ Ibid., p. 120.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 118.

⁸⁵ Along with those already mentioned were *Ausrele*, *Alma Mater*, *Ateitis*, *Salin Vergija*, *Vytis*, and *Lietuvos Kulturos Archyvas*.

⁸⁶ Liekis, *Nenugaletoji*, vol. 1, pp. 148–150.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

the main political and cultural targets of resistance: the restoration of state independence and the preservation of national values.

Lithuanians abroad labored to strengthen Western resolve to refuse recognition of Soviet annexation of the Baltic states. Only Germany (January 10, 1941) and Sweden (May 30, 1941) eventually granted *de jure* recognition. As early as October 15, 1940, Lithuanians visited US President Roosevelt, who later confirmed that the United States would not recognize the legitimacy of Soviet rule in the Baltics. On the initiative of Lithuanian-American groups, several US Senate committees (1952, 1961, 1966) considered the occupation of the Baltic states. A 1967 conference in the United States drew together all the political structures of Lithuanian exile. The conference's "Manifesto on the 50th Anniversary of the Restoration of Lithuania's Independence" (to mark the then upcoming anniversary of the February 1918 Independence Declaration) emphatically stated that the Lithuanian people "will never acquiesce in Lithuania's subjugation" and demanded the immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops.⁸⁸ The conference petitioned the UN for help in restoring an independent democratic Lithuanian state.

The United States took a strong verbal position in support of Lithuanian independence. This support strengthened during the Reagan Administration. US President Reagan proclaimed June 14, 1982—the commemoration day for mass deportations from the Baltic states—"Baltic Freedom Day." In 1985 President Reagan again drew the world's attention to the issue by signing a special act which reminded the Soviet Union of its obligations under the Yalta agreements of 1945 to allow free elections in the countries it had occupied.

Thanks to the activity of Lithuanians in exile the issue of Soviet annexation of the Baltic states was not removed from the international agenda. The exiles served as a vital link between the underground activity in Lithuania and the wider international community.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

Chapter 3

THE REBIRTH

It seemed that the order that had emerged in Europe after the Second World War could only be shattered by another war; but it was prevented by nonviolent action of the people who resisted the power of force by finding effective ways to demonstrate their respect for Truth. This has disarmed the enemy.

Pope John Paul II

From Perestroika to the Independence Movement

Perestroika (or “restructuring”) officially inaugurated by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985 was first met with reservation in Lithuania due to “the conservatism of the Lithuanian Communist Party and the cautious nature of the Lithuanians in general.”⁸⁹ Lithuania had its share of Communist hard-liners who had no interest whatsoever in changes to the Soviet status quo.

The possibilities of *glasnost* (or “openness”) were first seized by intellectuals: writers, artists, and scholars. The circulation of literary magazines exploded; many at first concentrated on the exposure of Stalinist atrocities, but then proceeded to fundamental critiques of the socialist system. The first expressions of openness in Lithuania were tinged with nationalism, sometimes disguised under Soviet phraseology, such as “pluralistic socialism,” “national in form and socialist in content,” and so on.

Concern for ecological matters and for the lamentable condition of the old town in Vilnius led a group of scholars and writers to establish in 1987 the *Zemyna* and the *Talka* environmental protection clubs. Beyond Vilnius, environmentalists raised concerns about pollution of the Baltic Sea, the poor quality of the food supply, and the dangers of the Ignalina nuclear power station. (A proposed expansion of Ignalina would have created the largest nuclear power station in the world with Chernobyl-type reactors.) As the ecological movement gained in scope and influence, its social criticism and concern for national identity became more explicit.

Political dissent multiplied in early 1988. The Writers Union formally condemned the ecological policy of central authorities. A group of intellectuals petitioned the USSR Council of Ministers Chairman Nikolai Ryzhkov on the ecological threats to the Baltic Sea; nearly 5,000

⁸⁹ V. Stanley Vardys, “Sajudis: National Revolution in Lithuania,” in Jan Arveds Trapans (ed.), *Toward Independence: The Baltic Popular Movements* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), p. 12.

Lithuanians signed it. The Artists Union held a turbulent conference as participants voiced their discontent with the subjugation of the arts to ideology; the union's leadership was ousted. Heated discussions on history and political philosophy took place in the *Zinija* society; debates centered on the deportations to Siberia, the role of the Catholic Church, the future of the Lithuanian language, and the concept of civil society. By spring 1988 the main intellectual centers of the nascent opposition had already formed. At the Academy of Sciences, a group of scholars began drafting a new constitution while economists began to outline plans for the economic sovereignty of the republic. The need for a coordinating center of the reformist activities was acutely felt. At a gathering in the Academy of Sciences on June 3, 1988, some five hundred people elected a 36-person coordinating group of the Lithuanian Reform Movement, known as "Sajudis" (meaning "co-movement" in Lithuanian).

The group consisted of writers, artists, journalists, scholars, architects, musicians, and philosophers. Notably, no professional politicians or renowned dissidents were among them. Rather, the group was comprised of former loyal citizens, 17 among them members of the Lithuanian Communist Party (LCP). Under the guiding slogan "openness, democracy, and sovereignty," the coordinating group established separate commissions to examine socio-political, economic, national, legal, ecological, and organizational issues. The group had no permanent chairman, one was elected for each session. On June 13 the first unofficial newsletter of Sajudis, *Sajudzio zinios*, was published.

Sajudis began its activities with no funds, no rooms, nor any means of communication with the public, but within three months it would become an alternative power structure. On June 14, 1988, Sajudis convened a small, closed-door commemoration for the victims of Soviet deportations. On the same day the Lithuanian Freedom League, not bothering to secure official permission, organized a public meeting on Cathedral Square in Vilnius. Here, for the first time at a public gathering in postwar Lithuania, the national flag was displayed. On June 21 a small demonstration (500 people) at the entrance to the Lithuanian Supreme Council protested the demolition of historical monuments in the town of Trakai. Three days later the first mass meeting, organized by Sajudis, took place in Vilnius, on the historic square of Gediminas. Some 20,000 people attended. The ability to organize a gathering of this scale without media access revealed Sajudis' great organizational potential. People were invited to the rally simply by messengers and hand-written announcements posted on city walls.

The rally became a sort of public convention, issuing mandates to the official Lithuanian delegates who were to attend the upcoming Nineteenth Party Conference of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in Moscow. Gorbachev had called the party conference to boost his program of reforms without conceding the need for a radical restructuring of the USSR. Among the portraits of Gorbachev and slogans in support of *perestroika* at the mass meeting was the startling call of the Lithuanian Freedom League: "For a Free Lithuania in the Family of European Nations!"

The rally was addressed by two men who were to become Lithuania's leading figures: Vytautas Landsbergis (member of the Sajudis coordination group, professor of the conservatoire, and noncommunist), and Algirdas Brazauskas (member of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party). In his speech Landsbergis reassured the people that the goals of *perestroika* were "also the goals of Sajudis," and expressed approval of Gorbachev's proposal of "restoring the union republics' economic, cultural, and political sovereignty."⁹⁰ Brazauskas, in showing his solidarity with the goals of Sajudis, started a new political career as a reformer and populist.

The Nineteenth Party Conference in Moscow, which concluded with a firm commitment to *perestroika*, strengthened Gorbachev's position and opened wider opportunities for democratic change in the Soviet Union. On July 9 Sajudis arranged a "welcome back" rally to increase public pressure and accountability on the Lithuanian conference delegates. The rally in Vingis Park in Vilnius was attended by more than 100,000 people. National flags, though officially still unrecognized, fluttered throughout the crowd. The national anthem was sung by thousands for the first time since the end of the war. (The organizers had published and distributed some 30,000 copies of the anthem and even invited a choral group to lead the singing). Brazauskas, in his address to the meeting, demonstrated that the authorities were willing to concede some of the people's wishes: he declared that the government had cut the financing of further construction at the Ignalina nuclear station and that the national Lithuanian flag was soon to be officially recognized. There was no trouble at the rally; order was kept by Sajudis volunteers. Sajudis received financial support from the public: donations at the rally amounted to 20,650 rubles. "The miracle has happened," so was the rally described in *Sajudžio žinios*.⁹¹ Gorbachev's *perestroika* turned into Lithuania's rebirth.

At the rally people were asked to boycott the Communist party newspaper *Tiesa* for its "biased and deceitful information." Circulation of the newspaper reportedly dropped by 40,000 copies in August.⁹² After the Vingis event political life became highly dynamic. Social groups that had so far remained neutral became ardent supporters of Sajudis. The day of July 20, 1988, became a "blitzkrieg" of protest activity (the day marked the 48th anniversary of the declaration of Lithuania as a Soviet republic). A photography exhibit on Sajudis' activities was opened (and later continually renewed). On the same day a "ride for ecology" by a group of 100 bicyclists began. The group traveled 900 kilometers throughout the country and organized 24 rallies along the way, all in support of Sajudis. Also on July 20 an ecological march from the small town of Zubiskes to the coast of the Baltic Sea sought to draw the public's attention to industrial pollution, seen as a result of Soviet colonial policy. Further, a "rock-n-roll march" through

⁹⁰ Vytautas Landsbergis, *Atgavė vilti* (Vilnius: Sajudis Press, 1990), p. 8.

⁹¹ *Sajudžio žinios*, July 16, 1988, no. 9.

⁹² *Sajudžio žinios*, August 10, 1988, no. 19.

Lithuania began on the same day. Organized by Algirdas Kauspedas, a member of the Sajudis coordinating group and leader of the popular rock band *Antis*, the march typified the change in attitudes: “Yesterday you shouted ‘more metal,’ today you shout ‘freedom for Lithuania’—this is truly a rebirth!”⁹³

The growing influence of the new movement alarmed the authorities. On August 2 the Presidium of the Lithuanian Supreme Council curtailed the freedom of assembly, demonstrations, and marches. The decree commanded that authorities be informed 10 days in advance of any planned public gathering. Official permission was required. Sajudis responded with a protest demonstration on the square before the Supreme Council building (attended by some 5,000 people).

Of particular importance for the growth of Sajudis’ authority was the rally of August 23, 1988 (the 49th anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact). The Soviets had claimed that in 1940, as a result of a “socialist revolution,” Lithuania voluntarily joined the Soviet Union. The secret protocols of the pact, however, left it beyond doubt that Lithuania, as well as Latvia and Estonia, were forcibly annexed (the Soviet Union denied the existence of the protocols). On August 21 *Sajudzio zinios* published the secret protocols while *Literatura ir Menas* published the entire text of the pact. This was the first time the text of the protocols was published openly in the USSR (as noted earlier, the protocols had been printed underground in 1972).

Some 250,000 people, many bearing national flags bound with black ribbons, attended the commemoration in Vilnius. For nearly three hours, historians, Sajudis activists, representatives of the Catholic Church, and government officials addressed the largest rally in Lithuania’s postwar history. The spirit of the rally was well expressed by the poet Justinas Marcinkevicius: “Long live the nation freed from the fetters of the past.”⁹⁴ Rallies were also held in Kaunas (50,000 participants), Siauliai (6,000), and Kretinga (5,000). After the rallies, Sajudis support groups were established throughout the country. Professor Alfred Senn captured this turning point in his book *Lithuania Awakening*: “Sajudis now stood almost as a second government in Lithuania. Historians spoke among themselves of *dvoevlastie*, dual power, a reference to the uneasy balance between the Petrograd Soviet and the Provisional Government in the first months of the Russian Revolution of 1917. Sajudis had not official authority, it could pass no laws, but it had a moral authority to which the population responded.”⁹⁵

By merging with Sajudis, the Green movement—which had been active before the formation of Sajudis—also gained in strength. In September 1988 some 15,000 people in Estonia, 50,000 in Latvia, and more than 100,000 in Lithuania came together to form hand-in-hand chains to embrace the Baltic Sea as a symbolic gesture of protection from catastrophic

⁹³ Alfred Erich Senn, *Lithuania Awakening* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), p. 94.

⁹⁴ *Sajudzio zinios*, August 16, 1988.

⁹⁵ Senn, *Lithuania Awakening*, p. 136.

pollution.⁹⁶ On September 16-18, Sajudis led a protest action, called “the ring of life,” at the Ignalina nuclear station. More than 15,000 people encircled the station, demanding the suspension of construction of a new reactor (construction continued despite Brazauskas’ July announcement of a halt) and a safety examination of units in operation.⁹⁷

On September 17 the first legally published newspaper of Sajudis, *Atgimimas*, appeared, signaling an upsurge in independent publications. Soon nearly 150 independent periodicals were in circulation. On September 19, 1988, the coordinating group of Sajudis appeared for the first time on national television. The movement was winning over the whole country and was strong enough for more radical action.

Test of Fortitude

The first prominent conflict between Sajudis and the authorities occurred at the end of September 1988. The conflict was triggered by the militia’s use of force against a peaceful demonstration by the Lithuanian Freedom League. Though the meeting was not officially permitted, some 15,000–20,000 people attended. Making full use of rubber batons the militia dispersed the crowd. The next day Sajudis lodged official protests and called for a rally on Gediminas Square. For the first time Sajudis held a rally together with the more radical Freedom League. Landsbergis urged the crowd to keep calm and to resist provocations. An avalanche of protest letters and declarations flooded the Supreme Council and the Council of Ministers. The October 4 plenary session of the Central Committee—to which members of the Sajudis coordination group were invited as observers—was picketed. In his address to the committee, Bronius Genzelis of Sajudis pointed out that the Central Committee was “losing people’s trust” and was “out of touch with processes going on in the country.” He demanded the resignation of Rimgaudas Songaila, first secretary of the LCP, and Stasys Lisauskas, minister of the interior.⁹⁸ The authorities tried to make some amends: the Supreme Council permitted the official raising of the national flag over the Gediminas Castle (celebrated later by some 100,000 people) and proposed a constitutional amendment to grant official status for the Lithuanian language.

The campaign for reform continued to split official structures of power. Local Communist party organizations demanded Songaila’s resignation. Sajudis support groups sprouted up in official administrative bodies and even in some party committees. A joint session of the writers, artists, and musicians unions sent a telegram to Gorbachev which stated that “party bureaus and the leadership of the unions have expressed their political distrust for the party secretaries R. Songaila and Nikolai Mitkin ... [T]he only solution is to call a plenary

⁹⁶ See *Lithuanian Way* (Vilnius: Sajudis Press, 1990), p. 26.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ *Atgimimas*, October 15, 1988.

session of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party on the issue of reorganization.”⁹⁹ Unable to withstand the growing pressure Songaila resigned on October 19. (Mitkin, too, later resigned.) He was replaced by the reformer Brazauskas, who had the support of Sajudis.

The Triumph of Sajudis

Sajudis was imbued with a victorious spirit when it convened its first congress from October 22–24, 1988. Within the short period of five months since its founding the ideas of Sajudis were supported throughout Lithuania. It controlled an independent press network and had access to national television. The problems and conflicts that would later demand unflinching solidarity, commitment, and inventiveness were still beyond the horizon.

The congress took place at the Sports Palace, with more than a thousand participants and nearly four thousand guests and reporters.¹⁰⁰ The proceedings were shown on national television—in effect, the whole country took part in the event. In his address Brazauskas read Gorbachev’s congratulations to Sajudis (“a positive power that can well serve the goals of the reform”) and expressed his hope that the movement’s program would “leave a proper place for the Lithuanian Communist Party.”¹⁰¹

The program adopted at the congress still acknowledged the movement’s ties with *perestroika*: Sajudis “as a spontaneous social movement ... supports and extends the democratic and humanist reforms of the socialist society initiated by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.” Nevertheless, the program contained statements that went beyond the confines of *perestroika*: “Sajudis holds illegal the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939, its supplementary protocols, and its consequences for Lithuanian sovereignty.... The main goals of Sajudis are openness, democracy, and the rule of law, as well as political, economic, and cultural sovereignty of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic.”¹⁰² As the quotation shows, while the program of Sajudis was definite as concerned the political sovereignty of Lithuania, it was far less certain concerning radical social change.

The congress elected a *Seimas* (meaning “diet,” the term used in Lithuania as far back as the fifteenth century) as the movement’s representative body, consisting of 220 members: 202

⁹⁹ *Literatura ir Menas*, October 22, 1988.

¹⁰⁰ Here are some statistics on the delegates of the congress: 1021 registered voting delegates: 155 women and 854 men; ethnic makeup: Lithuanians–980, Poles–9, Russians–8, Jews–6, others–13; level of education: primary school–4, secondary school, uncompleted–11, secondary school, completed–41, trade school–1, technical colleges–37, university, uncompleted–51, university, undergraduate–693, university, graduate degree–177. In *Lithuanian Way*, p. 28.

¹⁰¹ *Atgimimas*, November 4, 1988.

¹⁰² *Lietuvos Persitvarkymo Sajudžio bendroji programa* (Vilnius: Mintis Press, 1988), p. 3.

men and 11 women, 209 among them ethnic Lithuanians. The *Seimas* then elected a 35 person Executive Council (*Taryba*). The only woman on the council was an economist, Kazimiera Prunskiene.

The Sajudis congress had created an alternative power structure to the official authorities, a structure that was grounded in the people's moral support, not on a repressive apparatus. The main events, however, were still ahead.

Chapter 4

TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE

*If the people will lead,
the leaders will follow.*

M. K. Gandhi

The Struggle for Constitutional Change

In the words of Romualdas Ozolas, member of the Sajudis Executive Council, after its first congress Sajudis moved from a “banner period” to a “constitutional period.” As a growing political force, Sajudis pursued three main goals: (1) exerting moral pressure on the executive and the legislature, (2) winning elections to the parliament, and (3) winning international recognition of Lithuania’s forcible annexation in 1940. With legislative power, Sajudis could utilize provisions of the Soviet constitution to further its program. The Soviet constitution formally granted that a “union republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state” (clause 76), that it had “the right of free secession from the Soviet Union” (clause 72), and had “the right to establish relations with foreign nations, to enter into international agreements, to exchange diplomatic and consular representation, and to take part in the activities of international organizations” (clause 80).¹⁰³

During the Nineteenth Party Conference of the CPSU in Moscow, several constitutional amendments were approved: a new election law, and a proposal to create a working parliament (Supreme Soviet) that was to be elected by a larger and popularly elected assembly, the new Congress of People’s Deputies. Growing ethnic tensions and separatist tendencies in the USSR had prompted Moscow to propose the amendments in an attempt to keep its grip on the country. The amendments would have reduced the status of union republics to that of the USSR’s autonomous provinces, placing them under firmer control of central authorities. The proposed election law would have abandoned the principle of direct and equal votes by granting labor unions and other public organizations one third of the seats in the Congress of People’s Deputies.

At its first session the *Seimas* of Sajudis condemned both the proposed amendments and the election law as “antidemocratic and alien to the spirit of the 19th Party Conference” and urged the USSR Supreme Soviet to abstain from consideration of the measures.¹⁰⁴ The

¹⁰³ *TSRS Konstitucija* (Vilnius: Mintis Press, 1982).

¹⁰⁴ *Lithuanian Way*, p. 49.

complaints were explained in a telegram to Gorbachev. A coordinating caucus of the representatives of Sajudis and the Popular Fronts of Estonia and Latvia petitioned both central and republic authorities, demanding that it “be acknowledged that the proposed drafts cannot serve as the foundation for changes in the Constitution of the USSR, they should be unconditionally rejected.”¹⁰⁵ In order to strengthen the demands a “one million signatures” campaign was started in the three Baltic republics. In just ten days 1,808,689 signatures in Lithuania alone (nearly 50% of the population) were collected and later delivered to the USSR Supreme Soviet.¹⁰⁶ The Lithuanian Supreme Council postponed consideration of the constitutional amendments. However, the November session of the USSR Supreme Soviet approved the amendments without heeding the protests in the Baltic republics.

On November 16, 1988, the Estonian Supreme Soviet passed a declaration “On the Sovereignty of the Estonian SSR” that proclaimed supremacy of Estonian law over the territory of Estonia. According to the declaration, “amendments in the Constitution of the USSR will only be valid in Estonia if they are approved by the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR and if the appropriate amendments in the Estonian constitutions are made.”¹⁰⁷ The Estonian declaration, a decisive step towards political independence, was greeted with enthusiasm in Lithuania, for it appeared almost certain that the Lithuanian Supreme Council would adopt an analogous amendment at its November session. Yet the adverse reaction of Moscow to the Estonian move kept the issue from the agenda. (Several important legislative acts were adopted, such as the official status of the Lithuanian language, the national flag, and the national anthem.) Sajudis’ reaction was one of fury: it demanded the resignation of the Supreme Council’s chairman and secretary. Rallies of protest were held throughout the country and a symbolic ten-minute transport boycott was announced in major cities. The *Seimas* issued a “Statement of Moral Independence” that read: “Lithuania alone can adopt and observe its laws. Until this principle becomes a legal rule, it must be everyone’s personal resolve. Henceforth only those laws which do not restrict Lithuania’s independence will be respected in Lithuania.”¹⁰⁸ Vytautas Landsbergis was elected chairman of the Sajudis *Seimas*.

In January 1989 four Sajudis candidates won supplementary elections to the Lithuanian Supreme Council. Elections to the USSR Congress of People’s Deputies in March gave Sajudis a decisive victory: 36 out of a 42-seat quota for Lithuania. Sajudis’ decision to take part in the latter elections was bitterly opposed by the Lithuanian Freedom League, which had called for a boycott.¹⁰⁹ Some 80% of the electorate cast their votes. Success at the elections demonstrated

¹⁰⁵ *Atgimimas*, November 11, 1988.

¹⁰⁶ *Lithuanian Way*, p. 86.

¹⁰⁷ *Atgimimas*, November 22, 1988.

¹⁰⁸ *Lithuanian Way*, p. 87.

¹⁰⁹ The Lithuanian Freedom League declared: “Your taking part in the elections can only mean that you consider democratic a system which was denounced by 1.8 million people. . . . Voting even for the best

once again the power of Sajudis. Within six months it was able to push through the adoption of four constitutional amendments to the Lithuanian Constitution that proclaimed the sovereignty of the Lithuanian SSR and the supremacy of its laws on its territory.

Civil Disobedience

In December 1988 Christmas was freely celebrated in Lithuania for the first time since the war. On Christmas Eve people were asked to turn off their lights for half an hour and to put candles in their windows as a symbolic referendum for Lithuanian independence. It was a truly impressive sight: in a moment the drone of electric lights in the cities was replaced by the twinkling of thousands of candles. Human solidarity seemed almost tangible.

New Year's eve was marked by a mass boycott of dairy products due to their poor quality. The action, organized by the Greens and Sajudis, was directed against the state monopoly *Agropromas* (an agricultural products' trust). The consumption of dairy products fell by 30%.¹¹⁰ While the boycott achieved some of its goals (the quality of dairy products improved, at least for some time), its real significance lay in revealing the vast potential of forms of noncooperation. In spring 1989, car owners refused to comply with a tax increase on private automobiles. An automobile picket line surrounded the Lithuanian Supreme Council. The increase was repealed in several months' time.

When the secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact were published openly in the Lithuanian press (1988), there remained little doubt about the illegal nature of the 1940 Soviet occupation. In July, 1989, a Baltic-wide petition campaign was started. The petition, addressed to the governments of the Soviet Union, West Germany (FRG), and East Germany (GDR), read: "We demand that the governments of the USSR, FRG, and GDR proclaim the secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact invalid as of the date of their signing. We demand that the Soviet Union eliminate the consequences of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, withdraw its occupying army from the Baltic states and permit the nations of these states to determine their political and economic system in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia themselves."¹¹¹ Over 1.5 million signatures were collected in Lithuania alone.

Sajudis of Lithuania and the Popular Fronts of Latvia and Estonia marked the 50th anniversary of the signing of the pact by a huge event called "The Baltic Way." On August 23, 1989, two million people in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia joined hands in a continuous 650 kilometer chain linking the capitals Vilnius, Riga, and Tallinn to protest the Soviet occupation

you will be voting for the repressive system of colonial rule. . . . By your participation in the elections you will give consent to the constitution of the USSR which legalized Lithuania's annexation." In "I Lietuvos piliecius," *Lietuvos Laisves Lyga Informacinis Biuletenis*, March 14, 1989.

¹¹⁰ *Lithuanian Way*, p. 30.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

and to demonstrate Baltic solidarity. The Baltic petition had marked influence. A commission of the Lithuanian Supreme Council officially recognized the existence of the protocols in August 1989. At the second meeting of the Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR in December 1989, a special commission of the USSR Supreme Soviet declared the pact illegal.

Official acknowledgment of Lithuania's illegal occupation made relations between the population and the Soviet armed forces in Lithuania (over 10,000 in 1989) more tense. It also strengthened the earlier campaign against conscription of Lithuanian youth to the Soviet military. Activists exposed the inhumane conditions of Soviet military service that frequently resulted in violent death, mutilation, and suicide (e.g., in 1988, 18 Lithuanians were either killed or committed suicide in the Soviet military).¹¹² The Women's Union of Lithuania forced the establishment of the Youth Military Service Commission at the Lithuanian Supreme Council to collect and study the conditions in the Soviet armed services.¹¹³

Talks were initiated with the Defense Ministry of the USSR on the possibility of Lithuanian conscripts serving only within the borders of their home republic. During the talks Sajudis picketed military conscription centers and the Supreme Council. The picketers demanded the suspension of conscription until the talks were concluded.

Young people, students in particular, demonstrated by publicly burning their conscription cards and summons writs. The youth organization *Jaunoji Lietuva* (Young Lithuania) and the youth fraction of the Lithuanian Freedom League urged a boycott of the draft. Secondary school students wrote declarations and manifestos in support of the boycott.¹¹⁴ The student parliament of the Vilnius Engineering Institute urged students to picket the December 1989 session of the Lithuanian Supreme Council: "The session should adopt the resolution that no citizen of Lithuania can be conscripted to the Soviet army and that force cannot be used against the objectors, following the [U.N. Universal] Declaration of Human Rights, the Geneva Convention, and the Lithuanian Supreme Council's recognition of the forcible invasion of our country. We would thus show the solidarity of our nation, while our neglect of the issue would make us butchers of our own nation."¹¹⁵ The students' demands were not heeded.

Veterans of the Afghan war joined the protests. At a December 1989 rally commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, 102 veterans publicly returned their military medals and awards to the Supreme Council (which then sent them back to Moscow). The veterans declared: "We consider the state awards illegal and immoral. We urge all the participants of the Afghan war to turn in all the awards to their true

¹¹² Ibid., p. 31.

¹¹³ See Vytaute Zilinskaite (ed.), *Prase neverkti: Motinu, tevų, atrimuju laiskai ir pasakojimai apie zuvusius butinoje karineje tarnyboje Lietuvos vaikus* (Vilnius: Lietuvos Rasytoju Sajungos leidykla, 1991).

¹¹⁴ See *Lietuvos Laisves Lygos Informacinis Biuletenis*, March 25, 1989.

¹¹⁵ The author's archive.

owners.”¹¹⁶

Yet neither the actions against subscription nor official meetings with Gorbachev and USSR Defense Minister Yazov succeeded in changing the conscription law. Nevertheless, the autumn 1989 call-up to the army was effectively boycotted by Lithuanian youth.

Step by Step

The year 1989¹¹⁷ can be called the year of symbolic independence: nearly all public organizations, unions, and societies declared their separation from Moscow and established or reestablished their independence from Communist party controlled structures. The reestablishment of organizations that existed in independent Lithuania, such as *Valstieciu sajunga* (a farmers union), the Scouts, the *Ateitis* Federation (Federation of the Future), and the Catholic women’s association *Caritas*, contributed to the revitalization of national consciousness. Prewar political parties were reestablished (such as the Social Democrats and the Christian Democrats) while others were newly created (such as the Labour Union and Independence Union). Sajudis was officially recognized as a social organization. An intricate network of groups closely related to Sajudis emerged. With this explosion of independent social, economic, political, cultural, and national organizations, it was no coincidence that the Supreme Council of Lithuania was the first in the Soviet Union to discard the constitutional provision mandating the “leading role of the Communist Party” and was the first to legalize the multiparty system.

As anti-Communist and anti-Soviet sentiments grew stronger, the power of (and membership in) the LCP and its youth organization, the *Komsomol*, steadily diminished. To survive in the political arena both organizations had to adapt themselves to the national movement.¹¹⁸ First the *Komsomol* and half a year later the LCP officially broke with their USSR counterparts and established independent national organizations, the Lithuanian Young Communist League (June 1989) and the independent Lithuanian Communist Party (December 1989), the latter with Algirdas Brazauskas as first secretary. Even though the secession did not halt the decline in membership, the two organizations were able to attract some intellectuals and remain a political force. In fact, of the nineteen members of the newly elected political bureau of

¹¹⁶ The author’s archive.

¹¹⁷ 1989 was of course a year of profound change in Central and Eastern Europe. Mass people power movements, social and economic crises, and changes in Soviet policy led to the collapse of one-party rule in Poland, Hungary, East Germany, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Romania. The processes of change in these countries were complex and uneven, and beyond the scope of this monograph. It must be noted, however, that mass nonviolent mobilization was an important factor in each country (though violence played a significant role in Romania) and that the 1989 revolutions further complicated Soviet policies towards the Baltic states.

¹¹⁸ See Algirdas Brazauskas, *Lietuviskos skyrybos* (Vilnius: Politika Press, 1992).

the independent LCP, seven were representatives from the Sajudis Executive Council.

The secession of the LCP from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union represented a fundamental challenge to the imperial structure of the Soviet Union, much more than, say, the secession of the Writers' Union. The LCP congress that formally announced the split was greeted by a rally on Cathedral Square in Vilnius, with some 8,000 participants.¹¹⁹ This bold step, followed by Gorbachev's visit to Lithuania in January 1990, strengthened the authority of the independent LCP and its leader, Brazauskas, in particular.

The Rise of Reactionary Opposition

Fundamental political and social change inevitably breeds reaction from those vested in the status quo. In Lithuania this reaction was embodied in the emergence of *Edinstvo* ("Unity"), a pro-socialist, pro-imperialist organization. (It was a counterpart of the Latvian and Estonian "International Fronts.") *Edinstvo* pooled together primarily non-Lithuanians opposed to independence: representatives at its January 1989 conference were comprised of 59% Russians, 17% Poles, 10% Byelorussians, 6% Ukrainians, 3% Lithuanians, and 2% Jews.¹²⁰ It should be noted, however, that *Edinstvo*'s activities never reached the scope of its northern counterparts. This can be explained not only by the fact that non-Lithuanians constituted only 20% of the entire population (in comparison with 48% non-Latvians in Latvia and 39% non-Estonians in Estonia), but also by the less radical character of the national movement in Lithuania. For example, the citizenship law approved in November 1989 granted citizenship to all permanent inhabitants of Lithuania at the moment of the law's enactment. In Latvia and Estonia, by contrast, the right of citizenship was initially granted only to those who lived in the respective countries before the 1940 annexation and to their descendants.

Edinstvo sought, in its own words, a "radical improvement of socialism" within a unitary Soviet Union.¹²¹ It directed its actions against the official status of the Lithuanian language and other "nationalist" legislation. *Edinstvo* fought "discrimination against the Soviet army," claiming that "service in the armed forces of the USSR is an honorable duty of every [male] citizen of the USSR."¹²² It was no accident that *Edinstvo*, a self-described "mighty counterbalance to the extremism of Sajudis," was supported, at least verbally, by the Defense Ministry of the USSR.¹²³ In December, after the LCP broke from the CPSU, the ranks of *Edinstvo* swelled. Hard-line Communists also established a pro-Moscow "Communist Party of Lithuania (CPSU platform)" (CPL/CPSU) and elected a professor of Marxism, Mykolas

¹¹⁹ See *Lietuvos kelias*, (Vilnius: Sajudis Press, 1989), vol. 1, p. 43.

¹²⁰ *Soglasije*, February 2, 1989.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Sovetskaia Litva*, November 11, 1988.

¹²³ *Krasnaia Zvezda*, January 17, 1989.

Burokevicius, as secretary.

In addition to the reactionary opposition, the “Polish Union in Lithuania” was formed in 1989. Whereas ethnic Poles constituted 7% of the entire population in Lithuania, in and around Vilnius and some other localities they made up 90% of the population.¹²⁴ The union’s agenda, in addition to discussions of social and cultural problems of the Poles in Lithuania, included the issue of political autonomy for the heavily Polish south-east region of Lithuania. The issue of autonomy for Poles took on dramatic proportions after the 1990 declaration of independence.

Reactionary and separatist opposition was predictable. The Soviet policy of mass settlement of Russians in the Baltic states created a large social stratum dependent on the Soviet economic structure, socialist ideology, and the secret police. The explosive growth of Lithuanian national consciousness explicitly challenged this stratum. Further, as the Lithuanian language became official, some Russians and Poles experienced the transition of their status to that of a national minority.

¹²⁴ Halina Kobeckaite, Severinas Vaitiekus, Oskaras Jusys and Romualdas Kinka, *National Minorities in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Centre of National Research of Lithuania, 1992), p. 3.

Chapter 5

THE STRUGGLE FOR INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

Sooner the iron will turn into wax and water into stone than we disown the word we have spoken.

Gediminas, Grand Duke of Lithuania

The Declaration of Independence

On February 24, 1990, Sajudis won a landslide victory in the elections to the Supreme Council of Lithuania: they took 99 seats, as compared to 25 for the independent LCP, 7 for the pro-Moscow CPL/CPSU, and 5 for independent deputies.¹²⁵ Vytautas Landsbergis was elected chairman and Kazimiera Prunskiene was named prime minister. One of her deputy ministers was the leader of the independent LCP, Algirdas Brazauskas.

On March 11, 1990, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania passed the “Act on the Reestablishment of the State of Lithuania,” the first full declaration of independence by any republic of the Soviet Union:

The Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania, expressing the will of the nation, decrees and solemnly proclaims that the execution of the sovereign powers of the State of Lithuania, abolished by foreign forces in 1940, is reestablished, and henceforth Lithuania is again an independent state.¹²⁶

One of the first goals of the new government was to secure international recognition for independent Lithuania. The deputies had hoped that Western governments—which in the past had repeatedly denounced Lithuania’s annexation—would immediately recognize the undoing of one of the consequences of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. The government expected that the Soviet Union would have to yield to international pressure and “let loose” Lithuania, as well as Latvia and Estonia. The government’s expectations were premature. Only after 18 months of dedicated and bitter struggle of the Lithuanian people were they to be realized. This struggle is undoubtedly one of brightest pages in the history of nonviolent action.

¹²⁵ Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, p. 235.

¹²⁶ Romualdas Krakauskas and Ona Volungeviciute (eds.), *The Road to Negotiations with the U.S.S.R.* (Vilnius: State Publishing Centre, 1991), p. 70.

Independence Buttressed: the Battle of Laws

In addition to the declaration of independence, the government proclaimed that the Soviet law on mandatory military service would no longer be binding in Lithuania. The documents, together with a proposal for talks on all issues related to the reestablishment of an independent Lithuania (including the stationing of Soviet troops), were sent to Gorbachev on March 12. The Lithuanian actions coincided with the Extraordinary Third USSR Congress of the People's Deputies, convened in order to adopt a restrictive law on secession and to grant extraordinary powers to the president. On March 15 the session resolved that until the secession law was adopted, decrees of the Lithuanian government would have no "legal validity" and that "state governmental and executive organs of the Lithuanian SSR [should] take all measures to ensure that law and order on the territory of the [Lithuanian Soviet Socialist] Republic be maintained."¹²⁷ In his letter to the session Landsbergis stressed that while resolutions of a foreign power had no legal force in Lithuania, any legitimate interest of the USSR could be the subject of talks. Both sides were convinced of the legitimacy of their positions, with the essential difference that the Lithuanian government had the people's support while Gorbachev had to rely mainly on force.

Under these circumstances, a twofold strategy was adopted by Lithuania: first, to prove to the world that it was not Moscow but rather the Lithuanian government which had control over the situation on Lithuania's territory; and second, to maximally exploit the growing disintegration tendencies in the USSR and the political struggle between Gorbachev and Yeltsin.¹²⁸

The first battle line was over Soviet conscription. The Lithuanian government suspended the activity of Soviet conscription centers by cutting their finances. The Supreme Council, in "The Appeal to Lithuanian Youth," stated: "The Supreme Council has repudiated your duty of serving in the armed forces of the USSR. ... Lithuanian courts would not prosecute those who evade the conscription to a foreign army." (See Appendix I.) Lithuanian physicians refused to work for the conscription centers (forcing the Soviet military to import doctors from Byelorussia and Russia). Lithuanians serving in the Soviet military outside of Lithuania continued to desert (more than 1000 in 1990). On March 27 Soviet paratroopers invaded and attacked the havens for Lithuanian deserters, such as the Naujoji Vilnia Psychiatric Hospital in Vilnius and the Ziegdriu Psychiatric Hospital in Kaunas. They broke down doors, cut telephone lines used for emergency communications, tore down the flag of the Red Cross, abused nurses and doctors, and brutally

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 72. The government of the USSR of course continued to designate Lithuania as a "Soviet Socialist Republic" (SSR).

¹²⁸ See Graham Smith (ed.) *Baltic States: National Self-Determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania* (London: Macmillan, 1994), and Kristian Gerner and Stefan Hedlund, *Baltic States and the End of the Soviet Empire* (London: Routledge, 1993).

beat and abducted defenseless young Lithuanians and several sick psychiatric patients. The deserters were also attacked in their homes.

State borders formed the second battle line. The Lithuanian government's decision to begin preliminary border delimitation and controls was countered by Moscow's order to its border troops to "block the way for illegal actions that violate USSR law on state borders."¹²⁹ Soviet troops strengthened their positions on the borders and began confiscating all firearms from Lithuanians (including hunting rifles).

The third line of battle developed over the control of buildings and institutions. In the weeks after the declaration of independence, Soviet paratroopers occupied several buildings that had earlier belonged to the Communist party, though were later allotted to various institutions, among them the Pedagogical Institute. (After being ousted from their facilities, students and professors of the institute organized pickets around the building and continued their lessons on the surrounding grounds.)

On March 30, 1990, Soviet interior ministry troops occupied the prosecutor-general's office in retaliation of Prosecutor-General Arturas Paulauskas' explicit support for independence. A group of prosecution officers was sent from Moscow and established an alternative office (headed by a military prosecutor). However, 95% of the staff refused to acknowledge the Soviet replacement and remained loyal to Paulauskas.¹³⁰ The solidarity of the personnel made it much more difficult for Moscow to undermine this vital institution; the Soviet replacements were completely isolated and ineffectual. Despite direct impediments (e.g., Soviet troops blocked access for some personnel), the independent prosecutor-general's office continued to function.

First Signs of International Recognition

Even though no country officially recognized Lithuania's independence at first, the March 11 declaration had wide international repercussions. The first to congratulate the Lithuanian people with a "return to the family of free nations" were the deputies of Poland's parliament.¹³¹ Lane Kirkland, president of the AFL-CIO, sent a letter of congratulations in the name of 14 million Americans. Congratulations were extended by the Popular Front of Estonia. In Kishinev (Moldavia) several thousand people held a demonstration of solidarity with Lithuania. In light of the harsh reaction in Moscow to the independence declaration, the Lithuanian Supreme Council issued "An Appeal to the World's Nations, Governments, and All People of Good Will" that called for protests to "prevent the use of force against a member of the world community of

¹²⁹ *Lithuanian Independence: The Reestablishment of the Rule of Law* (Chicago: Ethnic Community Services, Lithuanian Independence Series, 1990), p. 78.

¹³⁰ *Atgimimas*, May 9, 1990.

¹³¹ Landsbergis, *Laisves byla*, p. 28.

nations, Lithuania, and its peaceful citizens.”¹³²

US President George Bush stated on March 23 that his country supported Lithuania’s right to self-determination: “We have repeatedly urged the Soviet Union—Soviet government—to enter into immediate negotiations with the Lithuanian government, which has itself called for those talks.”¹³³ President Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia called for a political dialogue between Lithuania and the USSR and offered his good offices for the negotiations. The European Parliament in Strasbourg, though withholding full recognition, addressed the USSR and Lithuania as two different states that had to resolve their disagreements by constructive dialogue.

The Economic Blockade

The Law on Certification Cards—Lithuania’s first step to bypass the USSR passport control system—adopted on April 5 caused Moscow to lose its patience. On April 17 Gorbachev and Ryzhkov (chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers) sent a forceful telegram to the Lithuanian Supreme Council: “If within two days the Supreme Council and the Council of Ministers of the Lithuanian SSR do not revoke their aforementioned decisions, orders will be given to suspend delivery of the type of production that is sold on the foreign market for hard currency to the Lithuanian SSR from other Soviet republics.”¹³⁴ That meant, above all, oil and natural gas (over 90% of Lithuanian energy resources were supplied by other Soviet republics).

The ultimatum was answered by another Lithuanian proposal to start bilateral talks. On April 25 Moscow cut off gas and oil supplies to Lithuania. The Lithuanian government announced the creation of the Department of National Defense, headed by a young physician, Audrius Butkevicius.¹³⁵

The blockade continued for 10 weeks. Lithuania’s main industrial enterprises stopped, transportation slowed down, television and radio transmissions became shorter, some food products became scarce. Nevertheless, the blockade did not achieve its main goal—to force the Supreme Council to revoke the March 11 independence declaration.

From the start the government and the population showed great inventiveness. A Blockade Committee was established, headed by Deputy Prime Minister Brazauskas. A public fund was created for donations (which received donations both from private persons and

¹³² Ibid., p. 43.

¹³³ *Lithuanian Independence: The U.S. Government Response 1990/1991* (Chicago: Ethnic Community Services, Lithuanian Independence Series, 1991), p. 7.

¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 118.

¹³⁵ In 1988 Butkevicius had organized the Lithuanian Movement of Political Prisoners and put together a number of dramatic expeditions to Siberia and elsewhere to bring home corpses of Lithuanians who had been deported and who had perished in Soviet prison and labor camps. He was elected to the Sajudis Council in 1988.

organizations in Lithuania and from those abroad, such as the World Lithuanian Community and the Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania). Anti-blockade headquarters were created in all major cities in order to distribute scarce resources, resolve emerging problems, and assist people most hurt by the blockade (such as the workers of shutdown industries). Of equal importance was private initiative: energy resources were clandestinely imported from Byelorussia, the Ukraine, and Russia (ingenious Lithuanians even managed to purchase oil and gasoline from Soviet troops stationed in Lithuania). Paradoxically, the severing of centrally allocated energy resources opened the way for a more free market economy, though the opportunity was not fully exploited.¹³⁶

Public organizations in various countries reacted strongly to the economic blockade. Support demonstrations were regularly held in Sweden. In the Soviet Union analogous rallies were frequent, while contacts between Lithuanians and leaders of democratic movements in other Soviet republics continued to widen. Letters and telegrams in support of Lithuania's independence were sent from different parts of the USSR. During the blockade people in Moscow brought food to the Lithuanian mission there.

As the blockade took full effect, French President Francois Mitterand and West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl urged Lithuanian leader Landsbergis to consider "a temporary suspension of the effects of the Lithuanian March 11 declaration of independence to get negotiations with Moscow started."¹³⁷ The letter prodded Lithuania's Supreme Council to call a 100-day moratorium (beginning June 29, 1990) on the enactment of the independence declaration as a compromise step. Soviet oil shipments resumed immediately. Negotiations, however, did not materialize for another two months.

The remainder of 1990 witnessed increasing intimidation by Soviet leaders: they threatened to destroy the Lithuanian economy, to set groups of the population against one another, to incorporate parts of Lithuanian territory into the Russian SSR. Heavy pressure was applied to try to force the Lithuanian government to sign a new union treaty that would have effectively annulled Lithuanian independence. The Lithuanian Supreme Council, in turn, consistently proposed bilateral talks while it continued to build the institutions of an independent state.

The situation could not have lasted indefinitely without undermining Moscow's credibility—Moscow had to figure a way to bring Lithuania back into submission. In September 1990 the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU issued an "Address to Communists and to the People of Lithuania" that urged them "to put a stop to intentional continuation of old wrongs, distortion of the past, and to make the right choice at this complicated stage of historical

¹³⁶ See Algirdas Degutis, "Karinis komunizmas: lietuviskas variantas?," *Atgimimas*, 1990, no. 18a.

¹³⁷ *The Lithuanian Review*, Vilnius, May 11, 1990, p. 5.

development.”¹³⁸ In October 1990 officials of the USSR refused to guarantee the implementation of agreements on the sale of material resources and goods to Lithuania. The USSR stepped up its terror campaign against young men who refused to serve in the Soviet military. Soviet authorities counted on support of its goals from the reactionary opposition (*Edinstvo*, the CPL/CPSU) and from Soviet forces stationed in Lithuania. The Soviets also encouraged dissension among non-Lithuanians, many of whom were dissatisfied with deteriorating living conditions.

In order to use mass force to crush Lithuanian independence, the Soviets would have to appear “justified” in the eyes of public opinion, both at home and abroad. Vociferous campaigns against the Lithuanian Supreme Council and Sajudis leaders were launched in the Soviet media. Obvious fabrications were employed. For example, Soviet television broadcast patently fake instructions of the Lithuanian Defense Department purportedly outlining plans for the imprisonment or deportation of supporters of the pro-Soviet Communist party.

Even today (mid-2001) it is not simple to answer why the Soviets shifted from a strategy of political intimidation and low-intensity conflict to one of overt military force, nor is it altogether clear who was responsible for this shift. More research and access to secret documents are required here. On the surface the solution of the conflict by mass force would appear to contradict Gorbachev’s process of democratization and undermine the highly touted “new political thinking.” However, widespread and active solidarity of the Lithuanian people, combined with growing international support, blocked Moscow’s efforts to hold together the Soviet empire through political means. “Lithuania as the local problem” was quickly evolving into a serious international conflict. Dramatic international developments, however, provided Moscow an opportunity to shift strategy vis-à-vis Lithuania. The August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait focused international attention on the Persian Gulf. The ensuing momentum for an US-led military intervention in Kuwait (launched in January 1991) provided the cover for Moscow to step up its efforts to reassert control over the Baltic states.

The January Events

On December 1 a presidential decree of the USSR ordered troops to enforce the conscription law in the union republics. On December 13 the USSR recalled its delegation from the joint Lithuanian–USSR negotiations.¹³⁹ On December 20 the USSR Defense Ministry introduced military patrols on the streets of Lithuanian cities and in other republics where draft resistance was high. The Supreme Council of Lithuania urged citizens “to keep calm and avoid being

¹³⁸ Krakauskas and Volungeviciute (eds.), *The Road to Negotiations*, pp. 156–157.

¹³⁹ The first meeting between the Lithuanian Preparatory Committee for Negotiations and the Soviet delegation took place on August 10, 1990.

drawn into any conflicts provoked by rude behavior of the arrogant military forces.”¹⁴⁰

A decision by the Lithuanian government gave Moscow an opening to attempt a coup. On January 7, 1991, Prime Minister Prunskiene, citing the staggering cost of state subsidies due to inflation, decided to raise the prices of chief foodstuffs by 320%. The next day members of *Edinstvo* and the CPL/CPSU organized a protest rally at the Supreme Council. The crowd pushed through lines of parliamentary guards and attempted to invade the building. In face of these actions and widespread discontent, the Supreme Council had to revoke the price increases, and Prunskiene and her cabinet were forced to resign.

On the same day, USSR Defense Minister Yazov ordered a special paratroop division from Pskov to enter Lithuania ostensibly to search for Lithuanian deserters. On January 10 Gorbachev threatened the introduction of direct presidential rule and demanded that the Supreme Council “immediately and completely reestablish the validity of the constitutions of the USSR and the Lithuanian SSR, and revoke the anti-constitutional acts which have been adopted.”¹⁴¹ In response the Supreme Council stressed that all “issues in dispute must be solved not through military coercion, not through blackmail, but on the principle of negotiations and treaties as recognized by the international community. The State Delegation of the Republic of Lithuania is prepared to continue contact with the State Delegation of the USSR.”¹⁴² On the same day the Supreme Council urged the population in the case of occupation “not to participate in any kind of elections, referendums, or other political rallies which are held by the occupational authorities or any organizations subordinate to them.”¹⁴³

On January 11 a shadowy new “authority” announced its existence: the National Salvation Committee (NSC). Members of the reactionary CPL/CPSU and the Soviet military constituted its core.¹⁴⁴ The NSC claimed to “take full responsibility for the fate of the republic.”¹⁴⁵ Soviet troops invaded and occupied the offices of the Lithuanian Department of National Defense in Vilnius, Alytus, and Siauliai. The press center in Vilnius was attacked and occupied. In the onslaught seven people from the crowd that was guarding the building (without

¹⁴⁰ Landsbergis, *Laisves byla*, p. 170.

¹⁴¹ *Lithuania, 1991.01.13: Documents, Testimonies, Comments* (Vilnius: State Publishing Center, 1992), p. 23.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 25.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹⁴⁴ According to the Commission of Independent Military Experts, the core of the NSC was comprised of the following persons: first secretary of the Central Committee (CC) of the CPL/CPSU Mykolas Burokevicius, secretary of the CC of the CPL/CPSU Juozas Jarmalavicius, secretary of the CPL/CPSU Major-General Algimantas Naudziunas, head of the department of the CC of the CPL/CPSU and colonel in the reserves of the USSR Army Valerij Shurupov, first secretary of the Vilnius City Committee of the CPL/CPSU Valentinas Lazutka, second secretary of the Vilnius City Committee of the CPL/CPSU Valentin Khadunkin, secretary of the CPL/CPSU’s primary organization of the Vilnius radio factory Filip Doskal and military commander of the Vilnius garrison, Major-General Vladimir Uskhopchik. See Krakauskas and Volungeviciute (eds.), *The Road to Negotiations*, p. 218.

¹⁴⁵ *Lithuania, 1991.01.13*, p. 18.

weapons) were wounded, four of them from rifle fire. On the same day the press center was occupied, journalists from thirteen separate periodicals published a joint independent newspaper, *Laisvoji Lietuva* (Free Lithuania).¹⁴⁶

On the evening of January 11 a task force of KGB paratroopers, *Alfa*, arrived in Vilnius. Around midnight on January 12–13, representatives of the NSC demanded the Supreme Council's resignation and "announced" the introduction of direct USSR presidential rule. On January 13, at 2 A.M., paratroopers in armored vehicles advanced on the radio and TV center and the television transmission tower in Vilnius. People had formed human barricades to protect the structures. In the attack on the tower 13 civilians and a KGB officer were killed and 702 people were wounded.¹⁴⁷ Loudspeakers from the tanks and armored personnel carriers announced that the NSC had taken political power, that a curfew was to be introduced at 6:30 A.M., and that the chief of the Vilnius military garrison, Major-General Uskhopchik, had been appointed military commandant of Vilnius.

Nonviolent Action in the January Events

In challenging the Soviet empire, the Supreme Council of Lithuania was well aware that its chief weapon rested with the mass support and solidarity of the Lithuanian population and the democratic community abroad. That support could only be earned and sustained by preserving the nonviolent character of the attempted political and social changes. The first resolutions of the council stressed the importance of nonviolent discipline in the pursuit of independence. A March 19, 1990, resolution, for example, emphasized that Soviet "military officers and their families are in no way responsible. It would be improper to bother or harass them, or encourage antagonism toward them. Let us be friendly and polite: we will thus part on good terms."¹⁴⁸ This attitude was expressed in numerous council resolutions as well as statements of Sajudis and public opinion-makers.¹⁴⁹ On December 22, as the threat of military violence became readily apparent, the Supreme Council issued the declaration "Republic in Danger!" that urged citizens "to adhere to the principles of nonviolence and noncooperation with the occupational authorities." (See Appendix II.) On January 8, as Soviet intentions of a coup became evident, Vytautas Landsbergis made a radio appeal: "Come and help your own government, otherwise a foreign one would overcome us."¹⁵⁰ Richard Attenborough's movie *Gandhi* was shown on national television. From January 8 on, a round-the-clock civilian watch began at the Supreme Council building and (in the next days) around other strategic facilities (such as the TV transmission

¹⁴⁶ Edmundas Ganusauskas, *Gyvoji barikada* (Vilnius: "Lietuvos Rytas" Press, 1992), p. 16.

¹⁴⁷ *Lithuania*, 1991.01.13, p. 367.

¹⁴⁸ *Lithuanian Independence. The Reestablishment*, p. 73.

¹⁴⁹ See Landsbergis, *Laisvos byla*, pp. 44–45, 51, 163, 169, 170, 182.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

tower). In an orderly manner, according to a defined schedule, people came from all over Lithuania to keep watch. Citizens of Vilnius offered them food and room for rest. Unarmed policemen and undergraduates of the police academy joined the watch, with the task of preventing armed confrontations.

On January 12, some 7,000–9,000 people gathered around the TV transmission tower, mostly young Lithuanians. The crowd sang, played music, and amused themselves deep into the night. When local radio brought news of tanks and other military vehicles on the move, people formed a human barrier around the tower. The tanks came forward, crushing cars, busses, and trucks that stood in their way. One woman and one man were crushed to death under the tank treads. Soviet soldiers beat Lithuanians in their path with rifle butts. As stated, the troops opened fire, killing fourteen people.

The soldiers' brutality, however, did not crush the people's will to resist. In the words of one student:

We all thought that they would come next to the parliament. I was afraid, and so were others, but in general the mood was more angry. That was so even when people came from the TV tower and told us what had happened; some of my friends came and their faces were quite changed, stony. ... Landsbergis broadcast over the loudspeakers, asking us to move to the side, so as not to be caught in the crossfire when the parliament was attacked. He said something like 'we need live witnesses, not more victims'; but we didn't move.¹⁵¹

Thousands thronged around the building. Heavy machinery from a nearby construction site was used to erect tank barriers. People sang and prayed. The Catholic priest Robertas Grigas conferred absolution on all present. Inside, servicemen of the defense department, armed mostly with sticks and old hunting rifles, erected defenses.

The unarmed people on the square were determined to halt the attack on the Supreme Council at any cost. However, the attack never materialized. While we do not have access to secret cables that would outline Soviet decision making, clearly the dogged determination of the Lithuanian people was an important factor in deterring the continuation of this military assault.

During the attack on the radio and television tower, live broadcasts of the atrocities continued until the Soviets wrested control. Because of clever camera layout, the whole of Lithuania—and consequently the whole world—could observe the details of the paratroopers' attack. When the tower and radio stations were seized, the Supreme Council's separate radio

¹⁵¹ In Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, p. 251.

transmitter inside the parliament building went off the air too. Yet several hours later technicians managed to connect with the transmission aerial in Kaunas. Soon after 5 A.M. the latest news from the Supreme Council was back on the air. Citizens from Kaunas and neighboring localities gathered around the Sitkunai transmission center and the Kaunas radio station. An appeal to Soviet troops “Do not shoot at peaceful people!” was read over the radio. The protection of the Sitkunai aerial was vital to secure the flow of information to the country.

At 4 A.M. on the morning of January 13 an emergency session of the Supreme Council adopted a law “On the Lithuanian Government in Exile” (to be led by Minister of Foreign Affairs Algirdas Saudargas) that authorized it “to take office from the moment that it becomes absolutely clear that the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania cannot assemble and make its decisions freely.”¹⁵² An act “On the Formation of a Provisional Defense Governing Body of the Republic of Lithuania” was also adopted.¹⁵³

The January events in Lithuania and in Latvia (on January 20 Soviet troops killed four people during an assault on the Latvian Ministry of the Interior)¹⁵⁴ demonstrated the failure of the Soviet policy of violence. The Supreme Council and the Cabinet of Ministers continued their activities and local and municipal councils kept the situation under control. The police remained loyal to the Lithuanian republic. Religious leaders, Catholic and Orthodox, condemned the Soviet Union’s actions.¹⁵⁵ The government’s prestige and support increased considerably. The use of violence against peaceful civilians produced a kind of “political jiu-jitsu,” that is, the use of violent force rebounded politically against the Soviets, stimulated further resistance and disobedience, created tensions within the Soviet ranks, and decreased their chances of defeating the resistance.¹⁵⁶ As British journalist Anatol Lieven has noted, Soviet “measures however only increased the determination and morale of ordinary Lithuanians. Those who, immediately after the declaration [of independence], had been critical of Landsbergis and Sajudis, became increasingly supportive, and popular demonstrations returned to their pre-independence dimensions.”¹⁵⁷ A public opinion survey conducted on January 14, 1991, confirmed this rebound effect. Compared with earlier data, the survey revealed a marked increase in support for independence among non-Lithuanians, and among Russian-speakers in particular: 98% of

¹⁵² *Lithuania, 1991.01.13*, p. 28.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹⁵⁴ See Olgerts Eglitis, *Nonviolent Action in the Liberation of Latvia*, (Cambridge, MA: The Albert Einstein Institution, Monograph Series No. 5, 1993), pp. 31–35.

¹⁵⁵ On January 13, Cardinal Vincentas Sladkevicius and Lithuanian Catholic Episcopate sent a telegram of protest to Gorbachev. See *Lithuania, 1991.01.13*, p. 29. The Archbishop of the Orthodox Church, Khrisostom, appealed to the Russian-speaking population, urging them “to live peacefully with your neighbors.” See *Lietuvos Aidas*, February 2, 1991.

¹⁵⁶ For the term “political jiu-jitsu,” see Gene Sharp, *Civilian-Based Defense: A Post-Military Weapons System* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 57–59.

¹⁵⁷ Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, p. 239.

Lithuanians, 75% of Russians, 66% of Poles, and 74% of other nationalities approved of the March 1990 declaration of independence. An analogous survey conducted six months earlier showed the following figures: 94% of Lithuanians, 47% of Russians, and 54% of Poles.¹⁵⁸

International Reaction

The January events in the Baltic states aroused concern and indignation around the world. The presence of foreign journalists had a major impact. An impressive television report on the seizure of the press center by the Norwegian journalist H. W. Steinfeld was shown worldwide. Japanese journalists scrupulously recorded the events. CNN and the BBC beamed footage of the Soviet assault to all continents.

The stance taken by the Chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet, Boris Yeltsin, also contributed greatly to the failure of Soviet aggression. Yeltsin, who was locked in a power struggle with Gorbachev over the pace and scope of reform, formally appealed to Russian soldiers not to obey thoughtlessly those “who are inclined to solve political problems with the help of military troops.” The appeal continued: “Before attacking civil objects on Baltic soil, remember your native land, think about your own republic and the present and future of your own nation. Violence against justice and the Baltic nations will cause new and serious crises in Russia itself, and will worsen the status of Russians residing in other republics.”¹⁵⁹

On January 13, Yeltsin and the leaders of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania mutually recognized the sovereignty of the Baltic states and strongly denounced the use of Soviet military force. Governments, non-governmental organizations, and individuals registered their support: the reception bureau of the Supreme Council counted 25,400 letters and telegrams in support of Lithuanian independence by the end of January.¹⁶⁰ Large rallies of support were held in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Minsk, Kishinev, and Tbilisi. The Moscow City Council of People’s Deputies adopted a resolution “to denounce the anti-constitutional use of military force against civilians and the legally elected government” in Lithuania.¹⁶¹ Municipal deputies in Leningrad appealed to Gorbachev: “immediately cease the illegal use of military force in Lithuania,” “withdraw from all occupied buildings within 48 hours,” and “immediately begin negotiations with the Lithuanian government.”¹⁶²

Soviet aggression finally moved Western leaders to view “Baltic independence as an

¹⁵⁸ The survey was conducted by the Sociological Laboratory of Vilnius University and Public Opinion Research Center of the Academy of Sciences. See *Lietuvos Aidas*, January 23, 1991.

¹⁵⁹ *Lithuania*, 1991.01.13, p. 356.

¹⁶⁰ *Lietuvos Aidas*, January 29, 1991.

¹⁶¹ *Lithuania*, 1991.01.13, p. 353.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 354.

international problem and not just an internal domestic affair of the Soviet Union.”¹⁶³ Strong international protests ensued. On January 14 the prime ministers of Sweden, Iceland, Norway, Denmark, and Finland officially denounced the behavior of Soviet troops in Lithuania.¹⁶⁴ NATO officials in Brussels warned that Moscow’s actions in Vilnius could spoil the good will between NATO and Moscow. The European Parliament demanded “that all recently allocated troops be immediately withdrawn from the Baltics.”¹⁶⁵ Members of the European Community demanded “that the current actions of the Soviet Union towards Lithuania not be continued or carried over to the other Baltic states. Otherwise, they will have to react accordingly to this situation and break off relations with the Soviet Union.”¹⁶⁶ On January 16 the foreign minister of Denmark, Elleman Jensen, offered refuge to the Lithuanian government in case it would have to operate in exile. Denmark also offered to shelter prospective refugees from the Baltics. A radical resolution was adopted by the *Alting* (parliament) of Iceland: “there is no more appropriate way to solve the problems of the Baltic states than to fully and unconditionally recognize their independence.”¹⁶⁷ Indeed, Iceland was the first state to do so (on February 11, 1991). Numerous protest rallies and pickets at the embassies of the Soviet Union took place all over the world.

The ability of the Lithuanian people to remain calm in a most complicated situation, “to resist provocations of the foreign troops, to refrain from any acts of physical resistance so desired by the enemy” (see Appendix III), played a decisive role in turning world public opinion in favor of Lithuania’s independence. The image of resolute, defiant, yet nonviolent civilians asserting their independence in the face of ruthless Soviet brutality further undermined the remaining hold of the Soviets on the Baltics.

¹⁶³ V. Stanley Vardys and Judith B. Sedaitis, *Lithuania: The Rebel Nation* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), p. 182.

¹⁶⁴ *Lithuania*, 1991.01.13, p. 345.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 342.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 349.

Chapter 6

TOWARDS CIVILIAN-BASED DEFENSE

Your security will be guaranteed if you choose a position that cannot be attacked.

Sun Tzu

Resistance to the “Creeping Occupation”

Vytautas Landsbergis offered a precise definition of the period after the January events—a time of “creeping occupation,” characterized by incessant assaults by Soviet troops. Lithuanian police patrols were attacked, deserters from the Soviet army hunted and kidnapped, customs offices destroyed, driver training schools and aviation clubs invaded and occupied. Black Beret forces—the OMON special purpose militia units—mainly carried out the assaults.¹⁶⁸

Under these conditions the government and population of Lithuania defiantly continued to build-up their independence. The majority of Lithuania’s population boycotted the USSR referendum of March 17, 1991, on the preservation of the Soviet Union.¹⁶⁹ The Lithuanian Supreme Council and government used the Soviet referendum as another occasion to declare jointly that “laws and government decrees of the USSR are not valid in Lithuania and they are in no way binding for its population.”¹⁷⁰

After the seizure of the press center and the television tower, media personnel refused to collaborate with the invaders. Despite the seizure of printing facilities the main newspapers developed alternative publishing schemes, and new periodicals emerged. After several months national television resumed, using the Sitkunai aerial near Kaunas. In March a hunger strike of radio and television personnel began around the Soviet-occupied radio and TV center, supported by Sajudis (see Appendix VI). The strike continued for several months.

Civilians posted a watch at the buildings of the Supreme Council. The surrounding plaza

¹⁶⁸ The OMON units (*Otryad militsii osobovo naznacheniya* in Russian) were created in 1988 as anti-riot squads in case of public disturbances. At first the OMON were subordinate to republican ministries of the interior. However, in 1990 Latvia’s OMON came under direct control of the USSR Ministry of the Interior. In January 1991 a section of Lithuania’s OMON, some 150 men, defected and came under direct Soviet interior ministry control.

¹⁶⁹ The only exception was the local council of the Salcininkai region, inhabited mostly by Poles. The Council held an extraordinary session on March 8 in which it decided to create favorable conditions for the March 17 USSR referendum.

¹⁷⁰ *Lietuvos Aidas*, February 26, 1991.

became the site for continual protest and expressions of solidarity. On the barbed wire that encircled the buildings posters were hung condemning Gorbachev and “the red plague,” tokens of Communist organizations were mocked and discarded. Soviet passports, military cards, and other documents, so important just some months earlier, were nailed to a post and left to be battered by the wind.

Elements of Civilian-Based Defense

In contemporary studies an alternative to military forms of defense has been called social, civilian, or civilian-based defense. This is “defense by civilians (as distinct from military personnel), using civilian means of struggle (as distinct from military or paramilitary means).”¹⁷¹ These means include an array of social, psychological, and economic forms of nonviolent action. It is based on the planned and prepared combination of forms or methods of nonviolent action (symbolic protest and persuasion, noncooperation, and nonviolent disruption or intervention) by the population of a given nation against internal as well as against external forms of aggression.¹⁷² It is not a territorial defense, but “a defence of social values (i.e., freedom, democracy, peace, etc.) and the social structure (the way society is organized in its entirety).”¹⁷³

The central principle of civilian defense is the principle of non-cooperation with the aggressor, denying them control over social institutions. This principle is based on the notion of power being dependent upon the good will of people. In 1920 Gandhi wrote:

I believe, and everybody must grant, that no Government can exist for a single moment without the cooperation of the people, willing or forced, and if people suddenly withdraw their cooperation in every detail, the Government will come to a standstill.¹⁷⁴

Later, Hannah Arendt emphasized that real power always comes from people gathering together in movements, that the people lend their power and support to the government by agreeing to act according to its rules.¹⁷⁵ Gene Sharp has also stressed the idea that power is based on consent measured by cooperation and obedience.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷¹ Sharp, *Civilian-Based Defense*, p. 6.

¹⁷² For example, see Gustaaf Geeraerts, “Two Approaches to Civilian Defence,” in Gustaaf Geeraerts (ed.), *Possibilities of Civilian Defence in Western Europe* (Amsterdam: Sweets and Zeitlinger, 1976), p. 6.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Quotation from Sharp, *Gandhi*, p. 44

¹⁷⁵ See G.M. Presbey, “Hannah Arendt on Nonviolence and Political Action,” in Vinod K. Kool (ed.), *Nonviolence: Social and Psychological Issues* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1993), p. 249.

¹⁷⁶ See Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, 3 vols. (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973).

From Nonviolent Resistance to Organized Civilian-Based Defense

The January events provide a stunning example of the potential efficacy of non-military defense. Civilians had raised the stakes to such a level that Soviet leaders obviously calculated they could not afford another “January 13.” The solidarity of the people blocked the Soviet strategy of “divide and conquer.” Mass walls of people were able to defend (most importantly in a political sense) strategically important objects, such as the buildings of the Supreme Council and the Sitkunai aerial. It was no accident that after the January events public opinion and the new government supported the development of civilian forms of defense.

Lithuanian independence was supported by an overwhelming majority of the population, especially after the January events. In the February 9 plebiscite that posed the question “Do you approve of Lithuania becoming an independent democratic republic?,” 90.47% voted yes, 6.56% voted no, with 2.96% invalid answers (84.52% turnout).¹⁷⁷ Such strong popular support, even among non-Lithuanians, strengthened the conditions for civilian-based defense.¹⁷⁸

The government viewed nonviolent civilian defense as a matter of calculated organization, not merely as a spontaneous outburst of people power. This was due both to practical experience and to theoretical insights provided by Gene Sharp’s book *Civilian-Based Defense*. The book was translated at the end of 1990 on the initiative of then Director General of National Defense, Audrius Butkevicius. The book was studied by the director, his personnel, and Sajudis activists.¹⁷⁹

On February 28 the Supreme Council adopted a resolution that read in part: “In the event a regime of active occupation is introduced, citizens of the Republic of Lithuania are asked to adhere to principles of disobedience, nonviolent resistance, and political and social noncooperation as the primary means of struggle for independence.” (See Appendix V.)

The “creeping occupation” could have turned at any time into mass military aggression. Thus the primary task of the Lithuanian government was deterrence. The leadership of the Soviet Union and its military had to be persuaded that the goal of subjecting Lithuania to central control was unrealistic and that the continuation of their aggression could only bring material and moral loss.

People remained mobilized to form human barricades around government buildings. Plans for long-term resistance were devised. At the same time, efforts were undertaken to

¹⁷⁷ Krakauskas and Volungeviciute (eds.), *The Road to Negotiations*, p. 249.

¹⁷⁸ At most 28% of the Russian- and Polish-speaking populations in Lithuania voted against independence. See the estimates for Lithuania and for referenda in Latvia and Estonia in Rein Taagepera, *Estonia: Return to Independence* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), p. 194.

¹⁷⁹ Butkevicius also photocopied the English manuscript version of the book and sent copies to democratic leaders in other parts of the Soviet Union. Private communication.

counteract Soviet propaganda and to encourage further support for Lithuanian independence among Russian-speakers. For example, in January the Lithuanian Department of National Defense began the publication of a Russian-language newspaper, *Doroga Litvy* (Lithuania's Way). The newspaper was distributed among Soviet troops in Lithuania and in the Soviet Union. Videotapes on the January events were also widely circulated.

Sajudis and the deputies of the Supreme Council maintained close relations with other movements of national liberation in the Soviet Union. Private relations were also widely utilized: people were urged to send letters to their friends and acquaintances throughout the USSR explaining the situation in Lithuania. Support was offered to democracy-building processes in other regions of the USSR. On the initiative of the Labour Union, for example, striking miners in the Donbass and Kuznetsky regions of the USSR were supplied with food. Lithuanian food transports through the territory of the Soviet Union carried the positive message of Lithuanian solidarity with the concerns of Russian and other citizens of the USSR.

Education of both civilians and the nascent Lithuanian military in the concept and "weaponry" of nonviolent resistance was critical. "This is a non-traditional system of weapons the use of which should be learnt. It requires much more knowledge, thought, and understanding of human nature than does the use of a rifle or a police baton," later wrote Minister of Defense Butkevicius (the Department of National Defense was upgraded to ministerial status in autumn 1991).¹⁸⁰ By government decree (February 20, 1991), a Commission for Psychological Defense and Civil Resistance was established at the Department of Defense.¹⁸¹ The decree envisaged "the preparation of a set of instructions on nonviolent resistance for the personnel of the defense department and for the Volunteers" and "the organization of Volunteers' training in the techniques of nonviolent resistance." (See Appendix IV)

Jonas Gecas, then chief of staff of the *Savanoriska Krasto Apsaugos Tarnyba* (the "Volunteers," roughly analogous to a national guard system, were the largest uniformed service in Lithuania), placed great emphasis on the training of Volunteers in civilian resistance. Excerpts from books and articles on nonviolent resistance in Finland, India, Norway, Philippines, and on Poland's "Solidarity" movement were translated. The Volunteer's Library Series published Gene Sharp's paper on "The Role of Power in Nonviolent Struggle."¹⁸² Popular Lithuanian newspapers, such as *Gimtasis Krastas*, *Soglasiye*, *Lietuvos Aidas*, and *Atgimimas*, published articles on the history and techniques of civilian resistance. Several television shows taught the basic principles of nonviolent resistance. In September 1991 the Center for Nonviolent Action was instituted in Vilnius for studies on nonviolent resistance in Lithuania and on applications of

¹⁸⁰ Audrius Butkevicius, "Introduction," to Gene Sharp, *Pilietine gynyba* (Vilnius: Mintis Press, 1992), p. 147. (Lithuanian edition of Sharp, *Civilian-Based Defense*.)

¹⁸¹ The author was appointed chair of the commission.

¹⁸² *Savanorio bibliotekė*, no. 3, Vilnius, 1991.

the techniques of nonviolent action in national defense. This was an independent educational institution that closely cooperated with the Ministry of Defense.¹⁸³

Spring 1991 witnessed another upswing in belligerency from Moscow hard-liners. At the end of May, Polish local authorities, with covert Soviet support, declared an “Autonomous Region” embracing all Polish-majority areas, complete with its own assembly, flag, police force, and army.¹⁸⁴ In June OMON forces destroyed Lithuania’s new border posts with Latvia. On June 26 they seized Vilnius’s telephone center. On July 31, several days before US President Bush and Gorbachev were to sign the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) agreement in Moscow, OMON troops attacked the Lithuanian border post near Medininkai (on the border with Byelorussia SSR) and brutally killed seven unarmed border guards. The murders caused widespread outrage both in and outside Lithuania.¹⁸⁵

Finally, late on August 18, a cabal of top hard-line Soviet leaders (including the Soviet vice-president, prime minister, defense minister, chairman of the KGB, and interior minister) attempted to depose Mikhail Gorbachev, halt democratic developments in the USSR, and reassert Moscow’s control over the Baltics. On August 19 the government of Lithuania declared that the main means of resistance to an attempted occupation would be non-military, nonviolent resistance. People were again asked to gather at the buildings of the Supreme Council. The Department of National Defense ordered the defense staff, in the event of a Soviet occupation of government buildings, “to organize civilian resistance on the whole territory of the Republic of Lithuania by using the techniques of nonviolent resistance.” (See Appendix VII.) However, the decree also included a clause enjoining “armed defense of the Supreme Council and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania.” The decision to combine nonviolent defense with military defense was most probably a reaction to the Medininkai border crossing slayings.

In Lithuania, putschist military forces seized the Kaunas television and radio center, severed links with the Sitkunai aerial, and blockaded the port of Klaipeda. Mass movements of Soviet troops throughout Lithuania escalated tensions. Shortly after 11 P.M. on August 19, approximately 80 tanks took up positions close to the Supreme Council buildings, but departed after about twenty minutes. The Supreme Council remained in session and issued a statement addressed to Boris Yeltsin, who was leading the anti-coup resistance in Russia, that declared solidarity with “all progressive Russian forces.”¹⁸⁶ The Supreme Council and Sajudis called for

¹⁸³ The author was appointed director of the Center. The Albert Einstein Institution provided a small grant to assist with the start-up of the center.

¹⁸⁴ See Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, p. 169.

¹⁸⁵ See Francis X. Clines, "Baltic Arena: Roadside Border Posts," *The New York Times*, June 28, 1991, p. A6; Strobe Talbott, "Goodfellas," *Time*, August 5, 1991, pp. 20-23; James Carney, "Agents of Intimidation," *Time*, August 26, 1991, pp. 30-31.

¹⁸⁶ Saulius Grinius, "Attempted Coup Leads to Recognition of Lithuania," in *Report on the USSR*, vol. 3, no. 36 (September 6, 1991), pp. 51-52.

political strikes in the event an attempt was made to overthrow the Lithuanian government. (See Appendices VIII and IX.)

The poorly organized coup attempt collapsed on August 22 in the face of massive nonviolent resistance by the Russian population and divisions and noncooperation within the ranks of the Soviet military. Hundreds of thousands of Russians in Moscow and Leningrad mobilized to block the consolidation of power by the putschists. Entire Soviet military units defected to support Yeltsin. The experience of civilian resistance in the 1991 January events in Lithuania was carried over to the defense of democracy in Russia.

After the collapse of the coup in Moscow, Lithuania was soon enjoying its new status as an internationally recognized independent state, as was Latvia and Estonia. In a speech delivered on September 17, 1991, at the ceremony of Lithuania's acceptance as a member of the United Nations, Lithuanian leader Vytautas Landsbergis stressed that "We rejected violence and resisted provocation, we have accumulated new political experience and we are ready to share it with others."¹⁸⁷ By the end of December 1991, the Soviet Union was dissolved.

The Development of Security and Defense Policy in Lithuania since 1992

After international recognition, Lithuania began to shape its foreign and security policies in accordance with the axiom of 'small state theory'¹⁸⁸ that "a small state's foreign policy must first of all deal with the potential threat posed by great powers in order to secure its own survival."¹⁸⁹ Perceiving unpredictable Russia as the main potential security threat, Lithuanian policymakers abandoned former visions of serving as a bridge between East and West. Lithuania moved swiftly towards greater integration with the West.¹⁹⁰ Lithuania quickly joined the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (September 1991), the World Bank and IMF (July 1992), and the Council of Europe (May 1993), among other international bodies, as steps towards Western integration. By 1995, after signing the Europe Agreement, Lithuania was on the path towards full membership in the European Union (EU).¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁷ Landsbergis, *Laisves byla*, p. 284.

¹⁸⁸ See David Vital, *The Survival of Small States: Studies in Small Power/Great Power Conflict* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).

¹⁸⁹ Olav F. Knudsen, "Baltic States' Foreign Policies," *Nordic Journal of International Studies*, vol. 28, no. 1, March 1993, p. 48.

¹⁹⁰ The Constitutional Amendment of June 8, 1992, "On the Non-Alignment of the Republic of Lithuania with Post-Soviet Eastern Alliances" prohibits the Republic of Lithuania from joining any new political, military, economic or any other state alliances or commonwealths formed on the basis of the former USSR.

¹⁹¹ The Europe Agreement, which came into force in early 1998, is designed to integrate the Lithuanian economy with those of the EU. In February 2000 Lithuania began ascension negotiations with the EU. Lithuania hopes to achieve full membership in 2004.

Lithuania has stated clearly that it will develop its system of national security and defense in the context of common European and transatlantic arrangements.¹⁹² A key element of Lithuania's security strategy is to obtain full membership in NATO and the Western European Union (WEU).¹⁹³ After the final withdrawal of Russia's troops in August 1993, Lithuanian leaders surprised Western governments with an application for full NATO membership (January 1994).

In January 1994 NATO established its "Partnership for Peace" (PfP) program to expand and intensify military cooperation throughout Europe as well as to provide an interim step towards potential NATO membership.¹⁹⁴ Lithuania quickly joined the program and has diligently participated in its activities. Lithuania is actively engaging NATO through intensive diplomacy, peace support operations, language training, and by adopting NATO standards as part of the Planning and Review Process (PARP) program. Lithuania has jointly established a peacekeeping Baltic Battalion (BALTBAT) with Latvia and Estonia and has provided troops to UN-mandated peacekeeping operations (such as the NATO-led IFOR and KFOR operations in the Balkans). Lithuania has joined NATO's Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and has enrolled in its Membership Action Plan.

At the NATO Madrid Summit on July 8, 1997, the leaders of NATO member states signaled their intention to launch the NATO enlargement process in 1999. Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia were referred to as aspiring members of the Alliance that had made much progress towards enhanced stability and cooperation.¹⁹⁵ An important further step in Lithuania's path towards joining NATO is the US-Baltic Charter signed on January 16, 1998. The Charter declares that the integration of the Baltic states into European and transatlantic political, economic, security, and defense institutions is a common goal for all signatories. At the 1999 NATO Summit in Washington (at which Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland were officially accepted into the alliance), Lithuania was referred to as one of nine further aspiring members. Lithuania's President V. Adamkus described the results of the summit as "very positive and a strong move forward."¹⁹⁶

Lithuania has placed membership in NATO at the center of its security strategy. The question that arises is whether this strategy leaves any room for the experience of nonviolent

¹⁹² For more on this see Grazina Miniotaite, "Lithuania", in Hans Mouritzen (ed.) *Bordering Russia: Theory and Prospects for Europe's Baltic Rim* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), pp. 165-194.

¹⁹³ Lithuania became an associate member of the WEU in 1994. The WEU is the long-embryonic defense alliance of Western Europe that is slated to become the defense arm of the EU.

¹⁹⁴ The Partnership for Peace program includes consultations, advice, military staff contacts, and joint manoeuvres, based on bilateral agreements between NATO and partner countries.

¹⁹⁵ In order to strengthen diplomatic efforts towards securing NATO membership, Lithuania established a mission to NATO on August 3, 1997. The mission has sought to create favorable conditions for intensified political dialogue and influence with NATO members.

¹⁹⁶ See Gintautas Alksninis "Lietuva prie NATO slenkscio", in *Lietuvos rytas*, April 26, 1999.

civilian defense that played such a vital role in the period from March 1990 to August 1991, from the declaration of independence to the defeat of the attempted hard-line Soviet coup. The question, interestingly enough, must be answered in the affirmative. Elements of civilian-based defense continue to find expression in Lithuanian security policy.

It must be noted that the Act of the Supreme Council of February 28, 1991, that enjoins the Lithuanian population to adhere to the principles of nonviolent resistance in case of military occupation remains in force (again, see Appendix V).

The idea of civilian defense is also still very much alive among Lithuanian politicians and scholars. Since 1992 the potential role of civilian-based defense in Lithuanian security policy has been the subject of intense discussion and debate. This discussion has centered around three separate projects on the structure of a Lithuanian security system, and had led to the official incorporation of civilian-based defense components into the country's security laws and defense structures.

In 1992 a group of scholars mapped out a potential security plan that envisioned "organized action of nonviolent resistance" parallel to military defense in the event of a crisis.¹⁹⁷ Civilian-based defense would be organized and led by a specific body, the Lithuanian Council for Civilian Defense. This body would also have the responsibility of preparing the population for organized mass nonviolent resistance to potential aggression, including public education, analytical work, the accumulation of material and technical resources, among other tasks.

A second project, prepared in 1993 by a group of experts from one of Lithuania's main political parties, the Christian Democratic Party, also sketched out a role for civilian-based defense. Entitled "The Main Principles of the Conception of Lithuanian National Security and Defense," the project conceived that the security of the nation and state rested on the idea of "total defense." Military resistance would be complemented by civilian "self-defense":

In case of military defeat, foreign occupation of the state or unconstitutional seizure of the government, citizens and their independent organizations should proceed to actions of mass self-defense: nonviolent resistance, defiance, disobedience and non-cooperation with the unlawful authorities.¹⁹⁸

According to "The Main Principles" plan, the system of civilian self-defense would rest on advance planning and organization, with regular public education and detailed instructions for the populace.

¹⁹⁷ Vacys Bagdonavicius (ed.), *Lietuvos nacionalinis saugumas: teorija ir realijos*, (Vilnius: Filosofijos, sociologijos ir teises institutas, 1994), p. 143.

¹⁹⁸ *Lietuvos aidas*, December 10, 1993.

In December 1996, the Lithuanian *Seimas* (parliament) made civilian-based defense an official element of Lithuanian security policy. The official legislation, “Law on the Basics of National Security of Lithuania,” (December 19, 1996, No. VIII–49, Vilnius) represents the third and most specific attempt at incorporating Lithuanian experience with nonviolent civilian resistance into that country’s post-independence security framework.

The Law on the Basics of National Security (henceforth, the Law; see Appendix X) sets forth the goals, principles and structures for the development of a national security system for Lithuania, incorporating elements of the two previous projects. Integration into the EU, WEU, and NATO is listed among the primary means for ensuring Lithuanian security, though defense efforts are not to be predicated on receiving international assistance. In the event of aggression, the Law states that “The defence of Lithuania shall be total and unconditional. Total defence means that Lithuania shall be defended with arms by the armed forces, that all resources of the State shall be employed in the defence effort and that each citizen and the Nation shall offer resistance by all means possible.” (Chapter 7, Section 1)

“The defence capability of Lithuania shall be based upon: determination and resolve of the Nation to resist any aggressor, general military service as established by law, preparedness of the armed forces and active reserves, preparedness of citizens for total armed and unarmed resistance and civil defense, mutual understanding and co-operation between the armed forces and the citizenry, [and] the State’s emergency reserves.” (7:2)

“In the event of assault or attempt to violate Lithuania’s territorial integrity or its constitutional order, the citizens and their self-activated structures shall undertake actions of civil defense—nonviolent resistance, disobedience and non-collaboration with the unlawful administration, as well as armed resistance. The acts of collaboration and liability shall be laid down by the law.” (7:4).

The preparation for mass resistance is to be organized by state institutions. The Law envisions the establishment of a “State Civil Resistance Training Center” and the implementation of a long-term program on “training and preparation of citizens for resistance and civil defense.” As is clear, the Law envisions civilian defense as comprising both militarily armed and nonviolent defense, that is, it foresees the combination of guerrilla warfare with nonviolent civilian resistance. Strategically, the viability of such a combination has been sharply called into question.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁹ To quote former Lithuanian Defense Minister Audrius Butkevicius, “Civilian-based defense generates its coercive power on the aggressor cumulatively through a different set of dynamics than that of violent struggle. Resistance violence could, for example, severely undermine the process of demoralizing the aggressor’s troops, or negate the objective of winning wider sympathy and support. After the state has shifted to a civilian-based mode of resistance, it would need to view the organizers of continued resistance violence as possible provocateurs serving the aggressor, for their actions would undermine the defense effort. The state must explicitly declare its defense policy during the occupation to be civilian-

Lithuania has taken some practical steps towards the implementation of the civilian resistance elements of the Law. In November 2000 the government issued a decree instituting the State Civil Resistance Training Center at the Ministry of Defense. The Center can be seen as an expression of Lithuania's attempt to operationalize its concept of total defense, a concept based on an appeal of solidarity between populace and state and on the combination of both militarily armed and nonviolent methods of resistance.

Among the main functions and tasks of the Center are the following:

- 5.1. In peace-time:
 - 5.1.1 Implementation of the state security policy by preparing the population for both individual and organized civil resistance;
 - 5.1.2 Organization of the population, the youth in particular, for the defence of the country and for civil resistance in case of aggression.
- 5.2 In case of aggression and occupation:
 - 5.2.1 Encouragement of resistance activities;
 - 5.2.1.1 Encouragement of nonviolent resistance;
 - 5.2.1.2. Encouragement of disobedience;
 - 5.2.1.3. Encouragement of non-collaboration with illegal administration;
 - 5.2.1.4. Encouragement of armed resistance.

In fulfilling its tasks, the State Civil Resistance Training Center is to cooperate closely with the Defense Staff, the Ministry of Education and other institutions of education, the Civil Security Department, the branches of the Lithuanian armed forces, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Riflemen's Union, and other public organizations. The Center is also to work with non-governmental organizations in educating and preparing the population for civilian resistance.²⁰⁰ The Center started its work in February 2001. In its first period it will employ ten people at two office locations.

Efforts to educate Lithuanian officials, military personnel, and civic leaders on the nature, methods, and dynamics of nonviolent civilian resistance actually predate the establishment of the

based defense." See Audrius Butkevicius, "Theses on the Defense Strategy of Small States," (Cambridge, MA: The Albert Einstein Institution, 1994, photocopy), p. 26. See also Sharp, *Civilian-Based Defense*, p. 39.

²⁰⁰ The Center "[c]oordinates the preparation and the selection of programs offered by non-governmental organizations that contribute to the preparation of the population for civilian resistance and total defence and supports their implementation in accordance with the rulings of the Minister of Defence within the accorded budgetary resources and oversees the implementation of the programs thus supported. (Section 7.5.7) "Nutarimas del valstybinio pilietinio pasipriesinimo rengimo centro prie Krasto apsaugos ministerijos isteigimo (20001107 Nr. 1359)" [Decree on the establishment of the State Civil Resistance Training Center at the Ministry of Defence], *Valstybes zinios*, No. 98, 2000, p. 73.

State Civil Resistance Training Center. In 1992 the educational unit of the Department of Civil Security instituted training courses on the subject. In 1995 the unit was expanded and reorganized into the Advanced Training Center for Military Personnel (*Adolfo Ramanausko kariu profesinio tobulinimosi centras*). This center included a course of instruction on nonviolent resistance that focused not only on the history of nonviolent resistance in Lithuania and other countries, but also involved a survey of the theoretical literature on nonviolence and nonviolent resistance. This center also provided a short introductory course on nonviolent resistance and civilian defense to municipal and local authorities and other officials.²⁰¹ The State Civil Resistance Training Center has superseded these efforts and will lead the civilian resistance educational and training functions of Lithuanian security policy.

A further important and promising effort in the development of civilian-based defense in the Baltic region is envisaged by a draft agreement between Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia on cooperation in civilian-based defense. The impetus for the treaty arose from a 1992 conference in Vilnius attended by representatives of the Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, and Swedish ministries of defense, together with international scholars. The conference on “The Relevance of Civilian-Based Defense for the Baltic States” concluded with a resolution that called for “the development of a Baltic Civilian-Based Defense Mutual Aid Treaty to state concrete ways in which international support would be supplied by signatory nations to any attacked member using civilian-based defense measures.”²⁰²

The draft treaty, developed in 1995 by former Lithuanian Minister of Defense Audrius Butkevicius and The Albert Einstein Institution, envisions that “[o]n the basis of extensive preparations and training, state organs, societal institutions, and individuals [will] resist aggression through coordinated campaigns of mass nonviolent noncooperation and defiance.” Parties to the treaty would “agree to offer nonmilitary aid and assistance to support the civilian-based defense measures of any Party whose sovereignty, constitutional system, national and cultural identity, territorial integrity, political independence, or security has been threatened. Nonmilitary aid and assistance to be offered under this Treaty will include, though is not limited to, the following types: (a) international political and diplomatic support, (b) cooperation in communications, (c) humanitarian relief, (d) logistical support, (e) provision of materiel, (f) financial assistance.” (See Appendix XI.)

The draft agreement was translated into Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian and discussed with political and defense officials in each country. Though a number of senior Baltic officials

²⁰¹ The manual on civil security (1996) includes a chapter on civilian resistance. See V. Mankevicius, “Nesmurtinis pasipriesinimas”, in K. Baikstys, M. Beinoravicius, K. Burneiko, R. Kisieliunas, V. Mankevicius ir kiti. *Civilines saugos pagrindai* (Vilnius: Merdas, 1996), pp. 318-33.

²⁰² The conference was sponsored by the Ministry of National Defense of the Republic of Lithuania and The Albert Einstein Institution.

reacted positively to the treaty, it has yet (mid-2001) to be included in official negotiations on security cooperation between the Baltic states.²⁰³

The adoption of the Law on the Basics of National Security, the establishment of the State Civil Resistance Training Center, and the ideas behind the draft Baltic mutual assistance treaty provide solid ground for the further development of civilian-based defense in Lithuania. However, one should not overestimate its role. Throughout the various efforts to incorporate civilian-based defense into Lithuanian security policy, it has only been accorded a secondary, back-up role—the role of a “safety belt” in case of failure of the military’s first line of defense.

Even though nonviolent civilian resistance proved its efficacy during the 1990–91 crises, one must also question whether it could be as effective in today’s Lithuania. Escalating social and political tensions, the emergence of significant income inequality, the increasing mistrust of state institutions, and the consequent political indifference of the population strike at the very roots of civilian-based defense, that is, at a presumption of some sort of unity of goals between government and civil society. Of course, growing social distance could potentially be overcome or at least reduced in the face of a future security crisis, but burgeoning inequity and distrust are causes of concern for future civilian-based defense efforts.

It is understandable that the Law on the Basics of National Security accords civilian-based defense only a supplementary role to military defense. Many types of security threats exist, and scholars and analysts have not articulated how civilian-based defense could effectively address this diversity of risk. Though theoreticians of civilian-based defense have forcefully argued that the combination of civilian and military forms of defense, particularly in the same geographic location and time frame, is extremely problematic,²⁰⁴ they have failed to convince the representatives of age-old military strategy and traditions. Therefore, further adoption of civilian-based defense requires a deeper theoretical grounding, more historical research, greater strategic development, and wider public understanding and recognition of the power of collective nonviolent resistance. The inclusion of civilian-based defense in the official security conception of Lithuania is but one step in the task ahead.

²⁰³ Of the three Baltic countries, only Lithuania appears to be moving forward with considering civilian-based defense at the state level. Neither “The National Defence Concept of the Republic of Latvia” (approved June 6, 1999) nor “The Security Concept of the Republic of Latvia” (approved May 1997) provide any role for civilian-based defense. “The National Security Concept of the Republic of Estonia” (approved March 6, 2001) also does not accord a role to civilian-based defense. However, the “Guidelines of the National Defence Policy of Estonia” (approved May 1996, and which remain operable) list “informing the society of the methods of resistance without violence” as one of the tasks of the country’s volunteer Defence League. The Guidelines also state “If the defence policy should fail to avert aggression, the enemy will be actively and passively resisted to the full territorial extent of the state by employing all available resources.”

²⁰⁴ See, for example, Johan Niezing, *Sociale verdediging als logisch alternatief. Van utopie naar optie* (Antwerpen-Assen/Maastricht, 1987), ch. 3.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

I do not ask that you place hands upon the tyrant to topple him over, but simply that you support him no longer; then you will behold him, like a great Colossus whose pedestal has been pulled away, fall of his own weight and break into pieces

Étienne de La Boétie

The tortuous history of modern Lithuania has been that of a continuous struggle for survival, for the preservation of the country's very existence and identity. Heroic violent uprisings have been brutally crushed by the superior force of an oppressor. Less spectacular, though more successful, have been the steady and recurrent nonviolent mass resistance movements to attempted ethnic, cultural, and religious assimilation. Through relentless nonviolent resistance, Lithuanian leaders and activists have helped to maintain the nation's self-confidence and have imparted to people the wisdom and determination they needed at critical historical turning points, particularly in 1990–91. Long ingrained experience with nonviolent resistance has invested in people the potential for power that may be activated when times are ripe for action.

This monograph's central concern is the story of nonviolent struggle for Lithuania's independence in 1987-1991. Lithuania was the first among the former Soviet republics to challenge Moscow's rule. By declaring its independence in 1990 a small, unarmed nation openly defied a huge military power—and won, setting an example for others. Independence was regained with minimum loss of life, with the economy more or less intact, and with little or no destruction of the country's resources. This was an amazing achievement. It is true that Gorbachev's reforms had already mitigated some of the harshness of the former totalitarian regime, and had created greater strategic opportunities for action. However, the 'Lithuanian contagion' could have precipitated a backlash and an immediate reversal to former totalitarian practices had it been different in character. The nonviolent character of the independence movement made all the difference. It brought international sympathy for the Lithuanian case and created support in Russia itself. It led to division within the Moscow power elite and, ultimately, it made the use of force appear preposterous.

Ironically, the twentieth century, with its sophisticated technology of violence, has also created the technological means for the use of the strategy of nonviolent action for political ends. Because of modern systems of mass communication all history unfolds here and now, before everybody's eyes, among shouts of protests or nods of approval. Global public opinion has

become a powerful agent that sets limits to the spread of brute force. Public opinion, however, both favorable and unfavorable, is mostly created by the actors themselves. Brute force against brute force leaves the onlooker baffled and confused as to who is in the wrong. It is only when the spiral of violence is broken by a resolute, yet nonviolent, stance that a clear ground for judgement and a new beginning is broached.

The experience of nonviolent resistance will surely remain a vitally important factor in the political life of Lithuania, for the people “will not forget the experience and in future crises may have to reenact some parts of it.”²⁰⁵

²⁰⁵ Adam Roberts, *Civil Resistance in the East European and Soviet Revolutions* (Cambridge, MA: The Albert Einstein Institution, Monograph Series No. 4, 1991) p. 37.

APPENDIX I

APPEAL TO LITHUANIAN YOUTH²⁰⁶

Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania

April 4, 1990

Vilnius

Having proclaimed for years its support for national self-determination Moscow would not now let Lithuania live in freedom and independence. We have on our side the world's recognition of our right, we have our own love for homeland, we have determination and will to resist.

The government of the USSR has announced the call for military service. What are we to do? This is the question that is asked by young men, by their parents, and by all of Lithuania. The Lithuanian parliament which you have democratically elected for the first time in half a century and which has restored our homeland's dignity and self-respect is convinced that by refusing conscription to a foreign army you will strengthen the case for Lithuania's independence.

Although the Lithuanian government does not possess the power to defend our young people from forcible recruitment, it assumes legal and moral responsibility for its citizens' refusal to serve a foreign power. It will defend you by all the means available. The Supreme Council has repudiated your duty of serving in the armed forces of the USSR and has dismantled the military commissariats. Lithuanian courts would not prosecute those who evade the conscription to a foreign army. The government is now seeking alternative ways to military service for fulfilling one's duty to one's country.

The Lithuanian authorities are determined to start negotiations with the Soviet Union, so that this important and painful issue is finally resolved. They have already appealed to the Red Cross and other human rights organizations for their help in case some conflicts arise.

The Supreme Council of Lithuania has recommended the draftees to register at the municipalities, so that their determination for nonviolent resistance be known. Each of you, if forcibly recruited to the armed forces of the USSR, will bring pain and distress both to your parents and to all of us.

V. Landsbergis

Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania

²⁰⁶ *Lietuvos Respublikos Auksciausios Tarybos ir Vyriausybes Zinios*, 1990, vol. 11, pp. 401-402.

APPENDIX II

REPUBLIC IN DANGER!²⁰⁷

Approved at a joint conference of the Supreme Council deputies, deputies of municipal councils, and the Sajudis *Seimas*.

December 22, 1990

In case the Soviet Union resorts to violence and forcibly terminates the legal operation of the Lithuanian state authorities, the people of the Republic are asked to:

1. Adhere to the principles of disobedience and noncooperation with the occupation authorities.
2. Give no support for the occupants' and their collaborators' efforts at creating a constitutional basis for their authority.
3. Take part in no referenda, rallies, demonstrations, meetings and celebrations organized by the occupation authorities.
4. Give no support to the occupants' and the collaborators' press.
5. Lend support to underground press.
6. By labor and enterprise help the country avoid chaos and hunger.
7. Help preserve the archives, of the resistance period in particular, that have national and historic value.
8. Resist all provocations and harbingers of misinformation.
9. All deputies and Sajudis activists are asked to give no testimony to the occupation authorities who have no right to administer justice.
10. Administrators of law and order are asked to give no support to the imposed legal order.
11. Let everyone remember that only Lithuanian laws are valid in Lithuania and that no citizen can be charged with offenses against Soviet law, such an act being an offense against the Lithuanian state.
12. Keep records of crimes committed by the occupation forces and the collaborators: acts of violence, arrests, plunder and destruction of state, cooperative, and personal property.
13. Lend moral and material support for the victims of repression by occupation authorities.
14. Lend assistance to people hurt by physical violence.
15. Resist the Sovietization of culture and education.
16. Use any opportunity to demand unconditional restoration of the activity of democratically elected state institutions.

²⁰⁷ Vytautas Landsbergis, *Laisves byla*, pp. 182-183.

17. Until independence is restored all political parties and organizations that have supported the Act of March 11 are asked to refrain from internal political strife and to pursue the common goal, the end of occupation.
18. Regional and municipal councils, Sajudis councils, and Sajudis groups are expected to prepare plans of action in case the "X" day arrives.

APPENDIX III

APPEAL TO THE PEOPLE OF LITHUANIA²⁰⁸

Government of the Republic of Lithuania

Printed February 2, 1991

The foreign aggression against the Lithuanian state and the Lithuanian nation continues. The behavior of Soviet troops may become more brazen, cruel, and provocative.

We are convinced that in this decisive period of trial Lithuania has only one effective and undefeatable weapon, expressive of our Baltic and Christian culture—that of nonviolent protest, of people's self-control and calm endurance. We appeal to all the people of the country, the youth in particular, who are most conscious of injustice, and we urge all to resist provocations of the foreign troops, to refrain from any acts of physical resistance so desired by the enemy. We shall win by maintaining the honor of the Lithuanian state in the face of the world community of nations.

²⁰⁸ *Lietuvos Aidas*, February 2, 1991.

APPENDIX IV

ON THE INSTITUTION AND ORGANIZATION OF ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION
OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DEFENCE AND CIVILIAN RESISTANCE AT THE DEPARTMENT
OF NATIONAL DEFENCE²⁰⁹

Department of National Defence

Decree No. 12

February 20, 1991

Vilnius

In order to neutralize the campaign of violence and disinformation by the military forces and the special agencies of the Soviet Union it is decreed:

- I. To create the Commission of Psychological Defence and Civilian Resistance at the Department of National Defence.
- II. To appoint candidate of sciences Grazina Miniotaite head of the Commission.
- III. The Head of the Commission shall:
 1. Prepare an Instruction on non-violent resistance for the staff of the Department of National Defence and for the volunteers of the Volunteers' National Defence Service (till 12 March this year).
 2. Prepare the programme of the activities of the Commission (till 28 February this year).
 3. Propose the budget for the activities of the Commission.
 4. Contact the officers of the Department of National Defence and other agencies of the Government of the Republic for the necessary information and other resources.
 5. Prepare, together with the Laboratory of Sociological Research at Vilnius University, a programme of the necessary sociological research, and propose its budget.
 6. Together with the State Commission on the Problems of Eastern Lithuania begin the preparation of programmes for a better integration of the region into the Republic of Lithuania; coordinate the activities in question with A. Merkys, officer of the 2nd division of the Department of National Defence.
 7. Together with heads of the 1st and the 5th division of the Department of National

²⁰⁹ Author's archive.

Defence and of the Volunteer National Defence organize the training of the staff and of the volunteers.

- IV. The Head of the Volunteers' National Defence Service shall:
 - 1. Provide the Commission with the necessary assistance.
 - 2. Organize the training of the volunteers in accordance with the programmes of non-violent resistance.
- V. The Head of the Information Division shall provide the Commission with the necessary information.
- VI. The Head of Finance and Accounting Office shall:
 - 1. Calculate the financial resources necessary for the activities of the Commission.
 - 2. Finance the Commission from the Defence Fund resources.
- VII. Heads of the 1st division of the Department of National Defence and of the Border Defence division shall:
 - 1. Inform the staff of the zones and the districts of the Department and of the border control units on the creation of the Commission.
 - 2. Make them responsible for the necessary assistance in the activities of the Commission.

A. Butkevicius
Director General

APPENDIX V

GUIDELINES FOR THE BEHAVIOR OF GOVERNING INSTITUTIONS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA AND CITIZENS OF LITHUANIA IN CASE OF AN ACTIVE
OCCUPATION BY THE USSR²¹⁰

Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania
No 1–1114
February 28, 1991
Vilnius

With the Soviet Union continuing its acts of aggression against the Republic of Lithuania and with the danger of active occupation remaining real, the Supreme Council of Lithuania, noting that only those laws are valid in Lithuania that have been approved by the Supreme Council, has adopted the following resolution:

1. To consider illegal all governing structures created in Lithuania by the USSR or its collaborators, and invalid all laws, decrees or other acts, court decisions and administrative orders issued by them and directed at Lithuania.

2. All government institutions of the Republic of Lithuania and their officials are obligated not to cooperate with the occupying forces and the individuals who serve their regime.

3. In the event a regime of active occupation is introduced, citizens of the Republic of Lithuania are asked to adhere to principles of disobedience, nonviolent resistance, and political and social noncooperation as the primary means of struggle for independence.

4. The citizens of the Republic of Lithuania have the right to use all available methods and means to defend themselves, to defend others and to defend property of Lithuania from violent and otherwise illegal acts on the part of the occupying regime.

5. The commencement of active occupation and the time for political resistance is to be marked by the situation when the legally elected Supreme Council of Lithuania is forcibly made inactive as the governing body. The commencement of organized resistance, if necessary, will be announced by the provisional defence agency of the Republic of Lithuania.

V. Landsbergis
Chairman of the Supreme Council of Lithuania

²¹⁰ *Lietuvos Respublikos Auksciausios Tarybos ir Vyriausybes Zinios*, 1991, vol. 8, pp. 324–325.

APPENDIX VI

SAJUDIS OF LITHUANIA SUPPORTS PROTEST ACTIONS²¹¹

Secretariat of Sajudis

Printed March 3, 1991

The *Seimas* of Sajudis has given unconditional support for popular indignation against the naked aggression of the Soviet army and its seizure of Lithuanian property, the offices of Radio and TV stations, the television tower and other vitally important objects.

The *Seimas* of Sajudis:

- is urging the whole country to lend support to the protest action undertaken by the personnel of the Radio and Television Committee;
- is suggesting a widening of the protest action and its continuation until all seized property is returned and Lithuania is compensated for the losses inflicted by the army and the faction of the Soviet Communist party
- is urging all political movements and organizations to voice their protest against the continuing violations of human rights by the aggressors and to send their protests to the relevant international commissions.

Sajudis of Lithuania supports the protest action undertaken by the personnel of the Radio and Television Committee and invites the Lithuanian people to a continual picket of the Committee offices. The following schedule is proposed:

Until March 13, 12 P.M. – Vilnius
 March 13, 12 P.M. to March 14, 12 P.M. – Kaunas
 March 14, 12 P.M. to March 15, 12 P.M. – Panevezys
 March 15, 12 P.M. to March 16, 12 P.M. – Siauliai
 March 16, 12 P.M. to March 17, 12 P.M. – Alytus
 March 17, 12 P.M. to March 18, 12 P.M. – Marijampole
 March 18, 12 P.M. to March 19, 12 P.M. – Ukmerge
 March 19, 12 P.M. to March 20, 12 P.M. – Utena
 March 20, 12 P.M. to March 21, 12 P.M. – Anyksciai

²¹¹ *Lietuvos Aidas*, March 3, 1991.

APPENDIX VII

DECREE ON THE ACTIONS OF DEFENCE UNITS UNDER EXTRAORDINARY
CONDITIONS²¹²

Department of National Defence

August 19, 1991

Vilnius

Under conditions of the extraordinary political situation in Lithuania the following is ordered:

1. The Voluntary Defence Service, The Defence Training Unit, and The Border Control Service are to provide armed defence of the Supreme Council and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania.

2. The Staff of the Voluntary Defence Service, The Defence Training Unit, The Border Control Service, and The Chiefs of Combat Units, in case of the Soviet occupation of the buildings of the Supreme Council and the Government, are to organize civilian resistance on the whole territory of the Republic of Lithuania by using the techniques of nonviolent resistance.

A. Butkevicius

Director General

²¹² Author's archive.

APPENDIX VIII

APPEAL TO THE PEOPLE OF LITHUANIA²¹³

Sajudis of Lithuania

August 19, 1991

In this grave hour for our homeland we urge all the people of Lithuania to get ready for the defence of our freedom, independence, and democracy.

If after tonight's coup in Moscow an attempt would be made to overthrow the legally elected parliament and the government of Lithuania, we are immediately to start a general political strike, to assemble at central squares in the cities and at the buildings of the parliament and the government in Vilnius.

Let us be prepared for action under conditions of military rule and be ready for passing on of truthful information.

Let God help us!

²¹³ *Lietuvos Aidas*, August 19, 1991.

APPENDIX IX

RESOLUTION ON PREPARATION FOR A POLITICAL STRIKE²¹⁴

Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania
No 1-1684
August 20, 1991
Vilnius

In protesting against the armed Soviet aggression in Lithuania and in solidarity with the democratic forces of Russia the Supreme Council of Lithuania has resolved:

To urge the Lithuanian people at the factories and organizations to start an interminable political strike in case the Supreme Council and the Government of Lithuania are not able to carry out their duties. Let this be the commencement of universal civil disobedience to the occupying forces.

Those employed in health care, communications, power plants, food production, trade and transportation are urged to continue supplying the people of Lithuania with the vital products.

If the Supreme Council and the Government of Lithuania are not impeded in the performance of their duties, we will support democratic Russia with rallies and manifestations at our working places.

Vytautas Landsbergis
Chairman of the Supreme Council of Lithuania

²¹⁴ *Lietuvos Aidas*, August 20, 1991.

APPENDIX X

REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA
LAW ON THE BASICS OF NATIONAL SECURITY (EXCERPTS)²¹⁵

No. VIII–49

Adopted December 19, 1996

Vilnius

Chapter 7

Fourth section

Civil Resistance

The power of civil resistance is determined by the will of the Nation and self-determination to fight for its own freedom, by each citizen's resolve, irrespective of age and profession, to resist the assailant or invader by all possible means and to contribute to Lithuania's defence.

The system of citizens' preparedness for civil resistance shall be raised to the national level. Its functioning shall be organized by the Government.

The citizens shall be trained on a regular basis in different means of resistance and civil defence. The state shall provide them with the necessary technical means.

Fostering of patriotism, instruction in the means of resistance and training in the skills of resistance shall be a constituent part of compulsory school education programme.

The State shall support self-activated public organisations, which shall contribute to the preparations for civil resistance and the strengthening of defence capability.

In the event of assault or attempt to violate Lithuania's territorial integrity or its constitutional order, the citizens and their self-activated structures shall undertake actions of civil defence—non-violent resistance, disobedience and non-collaboration with the unlawful administration, as well as armed resistance.

The acts of collaboration and liability thereof shall be laid down by the law.

Chapter 14

Third section

The State Civil Resistance Training Centre

²¹⁵ "Lietuvos respublikos nacionalinio saugumo pagrindu istatymas," *Valstybes ziniuos*, 1997, No. 2, pp. 2-20.

The State Civil Resistance Training Centre shall be established by the Government. The purpose of the Centre shall be to train and prepare the citizens for individual and organised civil resistance and civilian defence directly and through co-ordination of the activities of other institutions.

APPENDIX XI

PROPOSED

TREATY ON COOPERATION IN CIVILIAN-BASED DEFENSE
BETWEEN LITHUANIA, LATVIA, AND ESTONIA²¹⁶

Working Draft
April 24, 1995

The Parties to this treaty,

Desiring to strengthen their bonds of peace and friendship and to uphold the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law,

Recognizing that the protection and promotion of fundamental freedoms and human rights and the maintenance of free and democratic societies free from coercion and intimidation are prerequisites for lasting peace and security,

Reaffirming their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all Governments,

Recalling their commitment to refrain from the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State and to settle disputes by peaceful means,

Recognizing that they have the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense as affirmed in the Charter of the United Nations,

Expressing their will to improve and intensify relations and to contribute to peace, security, justice, and cooperation in the Baltic region and Europe,

Recalling their willingness and desire to participate in European and North Atlantic organizations and structures to enhance peace and security in Europe,

Reaffirming their commitments to the Helsinki Final Act and all subsequent OSCE documents,

Considering that they have a common concern in the maintenance of peace and security in the Baltic region,

Recognizing the vital role of organized nonviolent resistance in the defense and security of their societies,

Mindful of the important contributions of international nonmilitary assistance in strengthening each country's defense system,

²¹⁶ Drafted by Audrius Butkevicius, former Minister of Defense of the Republic of Lithuania, and Bruce Jenkins, formerly of the Albert Einstein Institution, January-April, 1995. Gene Sharp of the Albert Einstein Institution also contributed to the drafting process.

Having concluded to cooperate in the implementation of civilian-based defense measures, Therefore agree as follows:

ARTICLE 1

The Parties undertake, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, to settle any international disputes in which they may be involved by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

ARTICLE 2

1. The Parties, as part of their individual and collective efforts to maintain and develop their capacity to resist military attack and internal aggression, agree to adopt civilian-based defense measures as integral elements of their defense systems.

2. In this treaty, civilian-based defense measures shall mean the planned and organized use of social, economic, political, and psychological methods of defense by state organs, societal institutions, and the general population in order to block political control by foreign aggressors and internal usurpers. On the basis of extensive preparations and training, state organs, societal institutions, and individuals are to resist aggression through coordinated campaigns of mass nonviolent noncooperation and defiance.

3. The Parties agree to devote the resources necessary for the development and implementation of civilian-based defense measures. The Parties agree to designate the specific resource requirements of this Treaty in a separate protocol.

ARTICLE 3

For the purposes of this Treaty, the Parties agree to coordinate their defense and security planning in the following areas:

- a. monitoring and evaluation of security threats to one or more of the Parties;
- b. development and implementation of civilian-based defense measures;
- c. analysis and procurement of resources necessary for the implementation of civilian-based defense measures.

ARTICLE 4

1. The Parties agree to offer nonmilitary aid and assistance to support the civilian-based defense measures of any Party whose sovereignty, constitutional system, national and cultural identity, territorial integrity, political independence, or security has been threatened.

2. Nonmilitary aid and assistance to be offered under this Treaty will include, though is not limited to, the following types:

- a. international political and diplomatic support,
- b. cooperation in communications,
- c. humanitarian relief,
- d. logistical support,
- e. provision of materiel,
- f. financial assistance.

3. The specific forms of nonmilitary assistance and the framework for coordinating this assistance are to be specified in a separate protocol.

ARTICLE 5

For the purposes of Article Four a threat to the sovereignty, constitutional system, national and cultural identity, territorial integrity, political independence, or security of one or more of the Parties is deemed to include military attacks on the territory of any of the Parties or on their vessels or aircraft, attempted coups d'état, organized terrorist attacks, unconstitutional changes in government, economic or political coercion by other governments, and other circumstances to be defined by the Parties.

ARTICLE 6

1. The Parties hereby establish a civilian-based defense coordinating council, on which each Party will be equally represented, to consider matters concerning the implementation of this Treaty.

2. The civilian-based defense coordinating council (hereinafter "the Council") will be the main body responsible for the implementation of this Treaty. The Council is responsible for strategic planning, resource development, and inter-state coordination of civilian-based defense measures of the Parties. The plans developed by the Council are to be approved by consensus of the Presidents of the Parties. Once approved, the plans of the Council are binding on the Parties.

3. The Council will be directed by a Chairperson appointed for a one year period by consensus of the Presidents of the Parties. The position of Chairperson will rotate on an annual basis between the Parties.

4. The Chairperson will direct three Deputy Chairpersons, one from each of the Parties. Each Deputy Chairperson will direct a subsidiary committee of the Council, as listed below. Each Deputy Chairperson will serve as director of the respective committee for a four month period, rotating the directorships of the subsidiary committees three times a year.

5. The Council will consist of three subsidiary committees, each comprised of equal numbers of representatives from each Party:

- a. Situation Analysts Committee will be responsible for developing a system of indicators to identify all possible threats to the Parties and for constantly monitoring the level of risk to the security of the Parties.

b. Resource Preparation Committee will be responsible for analyzing the resource requirements for the civilian-based defense measures of the Parties.

c. Resource Control Group will be responsible for overseeing the compliance of each Party in procuring and allocating the resources designated by this Treaty and its protocols for the implementation of the civilian-based defense measures of the Parties.

4. The Joint Staff of the Council will be comprised of the members of all three subsidiary committees, the Deputy Chairpersons, and the Chairperson. The Joint Staff will be the main coordinating body for strategic planning and implementation of civilian-based defense measures of the Parties. The Joint Staff will be directed by the Chairperson. The Chief of the Joint Staff will manage the work of the Joint Staff under the guidance of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairpersons. The Chief of the Joint Staff will be appointed by consensus of the Presidents of the Parties. The position of Chief of the Joint Staff will rotate among the Parties every four years.

5. The rules of procedure for the Council are to be developed by the Chairperson, the three Deputy Chairpersons, and the Chief of Joint Staff and are to be approved by consensus by the Presidents of the Parties.

ARTICLE 7

1. To further the purposes of this Treaty, the Parties agree to support and coordinate national and international programs of research, education, and training in civilian-based defense.

2. The Parties agree to support separate and collaborative research programs in the following areas:

- a. research on the strategy, tactics, and methods of civilian-based defense;
- b. research on internal and external factors that influence the conduct of civilian-based defense;
- c. research on national and international legal foundations of civilian-based defense;
- d. research on resource requirements for the conduct of civilian-based defense;
- e. research on forms of international assistance to aid civilian-based defense measures.

3. The Parties agree to support educational and training programs to prepare state representatives and employees, members of the military forces, societal institutions and groups, and the general population to undertake civilian-based defense measures during a security crisis.

4. The scope and content of these programs are to be specified in a separate protocol.

ARTICLE 8

This Treaty does not affect, and shall not be interpreted as affecting, in any way the rights and obligations of the Parties under the Charter of the United Nations or the responsibility of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security.

ARTICLE 9

This Treaty shall be ratified and its provisions carried out by the Parties in accordance with their respective constitutional processes. The instruments of ratification shall be deposited as soon as possible with the Government of Lithuania, which will notify all the other signatories of each deposit. The Treaty shall enter into force as soon as the ratifications of the signatories have been deposited.

ARTICLE 10

This Treaty will remain in force indefinitely. After the treaty has been in force for ten years, any Party may cease to be a Party one year after its notice of denunciation has been given to the Government of Lithuania, which will inform the Governments of the other Parties of the deposit of each notice of denunciation.

ARTICLE 11

This Treaty, of which the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited in the archives of the Government of Lithuania. Duly certified copies thereof will be transmitted by that Government to the Governments of the other signatories.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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