

LITHUANIA AND THE PROBLEMS OF EASTERN EUROPE

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LACK OF OBJECTIVE INFORMATION

After World War II Lithuania, as a result of the Bolshevik occupation, became well known in the international arena; nevertheless, many solve the problems of Lithuania either erroneously or subjectively. A close friend of the Lithuanians, Professor C. A. Manning of Columbia University, said that ignorance is the source of various political errors. And ignorance, due to lack of objective information about Lithuania and Eastern Europe, is widely diffused among responsible political and opinion leaders. It is obvious that a great many Americans may not know about Lithuania and the other nations of Eastern Europe; however, historians, journalists, commentators, and opinion leaders should know that Lithuania did exist and, in the past, created its own European history. A minimum of objective information is necessary for correct presentation, discussion, and solution of Eastern European problems. It is very unfortunate that information about Eastern Europe is hard to obtain. Various sources of information treat Eastern Europe inadequately and frequently erroneously. This is especially true as far as the Baltic States are concerned. Some time ago there appeared on the book stands **Today, The 1956 Pocket Almanac**, edited by George H. Gallup of the American Institute of Public Opinion. The Almanac contains brief data about all countries, including such midgets as the Guianas (28,000 inhabitants), Luxemburg (295,000 people), and others; however, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, with their combined population of approximately nine million people, are not mentioned even though the Government of the United States does not recognize the annexation of these states by the Soviet Union. The Almanac fails to provide answers to such important and basic questions as: what is the size and the number of inhabitants of each of the Baltic States, when did they become independent, and what is their present international status? It seems that Mr. Gallup's Almanac has completely eliminated the Baltic States from history and the map.

The only consolation for such an unfortunate situation in the field of objective information is the fact that there are living in the United States many honorable statesmen, senators, and representatives, who not only recognize the existence of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, but who sometimes also know as much about these countries as most of the Lithuanians. Every year on February 16th (Lithuania's Independence Day) I read the statements of the members of Congress, of a number of state governors, and of mayors of larger cities with the greatest of pleasure. For example, the honorable Thomas J. Dodd (D-Conn.) accurately and extensively related the occupation of Lithuania with many details which are not even known by every Lithuanian. In these statements the reader sees and feels not only a deep condolence for Lithuania but also an accurate understanding of Lithuanian affairs and extensive knowledge about Lithuania and its political problems.

LITHUANIA AND THE BALTIC PROBLEM

Today the fact that Lithuania is no longer one of the powerful European states (although it was an important Eurasian power during the 13th and 14th centuries) is no longer a matter for discussion. Furthermore, whether or not Lithuania will be a nation of three or five million people will not be a decisive factor; however, it is understandable that the healthier and larger a nation is, the more possibilities it has for political, economic, and cultural development.

The political problems will still not be solved even if a Federation of the Baltic States is created. No matter how large a nation is — whether of three or of nine millions of people — it still cannot sustain the pressure of imperialistic Russia. No

doubt, the three Baltic States — Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia — would have more political weight if they pursued the same political and economic policies. A union of the Baltic States in a federation or in some other form is a basic condition for their further existence as independent states. Since the Baltic States alone cannot sustain the pressure of imperialistic Russia, they must search for a wider political support in Eastern Europe. During a visit to Sweden in 1938, I proposed the idea of Balto-Scandia in the "Review Baltic". The proposal was warmly accepted by the Swedes; however, the lack of a common language posed a problem and hindered a complete acceptance. I proposed English as the official language of the Balto-Scandia nations. The Swedes, however, insisted on Swedish. I tried to convince them that Swedish is too remote and too difficult for Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians. It would be more practical for English to be dominant in the relations between the Baltic States. Today the idea of Balto-Scandia is even more problematical because the Swedes are very much afraid of Bolshevism and, therefore, want to ride on its coat-tails. Without doubt, when Bolshevism perishes the Swedes and other Scandinavians will change their ideas; nevertheless, only the gods know whether they will support the Baltic States in their fight against Russian imperialism.

Security of the Baltic States also depends upon another important consideration. Political balance in Eastern Europe can be achieved in only one way: Russia's geographical limits must be determined by ethnographic considerations. Otherwise Russia will always be a preponderous state in Eastern Europe. In some American circles it is still a common and erroneous view that Russia is a country which is united, unusual, and indivisible. These circles are still frightened by mathematical figures. To them it still seems better to have economic trade relations with Russia, which has a population of 200 million, than with many nations which were incorporated into the Soviet Union by force. Such views prevent the correct solution to the problems of Lithuania and Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, let us take a look at how these problems are being solved by those who have a greater knowledge of Russia.

LITHUANIA AND RUSSIA

For several centuries in the past Lithuania was a large and dangerous political and military rival of Russia. "Der litauische Staat war lange Zeit maechtiger gewesen als das Grossfuerstentum Mos-kau, und Iwan hatte damit Schwierigkeiten genug" (8, p. 42). Today, in this age of modern weapons, Lithuania, from a military point of view, is no longer a rival of Russia. Lithuania, whose statesmen of the past fought for peace and unity in Europe, now seeks freedom for all European nations and permanent (or if possible eternal) peace with complete national independence and freedom from any oppressor's yoke.

Meanwhile imperialistic Russia, now wearing a Red mask thanks to the Communist expansion policy, was able to crush its old rival and, if it could, would gladly deal a death blow.

What is Russia? Some call it a prison of nations. We don't like to criticize, but objective evaluation forces us to say that contemporary Russia is a creation of the West. Russia was allowed to occupy Europe as far as Berlin. And why shouldn't anybody take anything that is given free? Today Russia is still dissatisfied with the world it controls. Thomas Preston is right when he says that Russia is our long-term danger. Many Europeans and Americans still cannot imagine the terrible danger that is Russia. Therefore again: what is Russia? Let us see how this question is answered by the above mentioned Thomas Preston who, for a long time, lived in Russia and who knows the Russians perhaps better than his own Englishmen.

"Scratch a Russian and you find a Tartar" has lost its meaning. There is now no need to scratch. The Bolsheviks have done away with Russian susceptibilities on account of their Eurasian percentage. The Europeanization of Russia, the ideals of Teuton court and aristocratic oligarchy, of a French bureaucracy, all of which have found their adherents in Russia at one time or another in the past, have all gone to the winds — Bolshevik methods are drastic and realistic if nothing else. Their place has been taken by Asiatic realism, which coincides with the aspirations of Russian Pan-Slav imperialism of the Tsars (7, p. 296).

The Pan-Slav imperialism is further elaborated by Mr. Preston. He says:

Pan-Slav-Messianism, or a belief by Soviet Russia that she has a mission to reform the world on her own pattern, is another reason for her ruthless aggression. This is nothing new. It is specifically Russian. Indeed, there is an old tradition in Russia that one day Moscow may be the third Rome (7).

There can be no double-talk about Russian imperialism which, hidden by the universal mask of Communism, seeks to realize the Pan-Slavic mission — rule of the whole world. Those who still do not see or do not understand this danger are truly naive babes who have to learn the lesson the hard way.

Lithuania lived under Russian and all its cruelties for 123 years during the era of the Tsars. Today Lithuania is under more ruthless occupation than during the rule of the Tsars. Congressman T. J. Dodd tells what happened:

Then, step by step, the Soviet system was introduced in Lithuania. Land, industry, business enterprises, and private property were nationalized, people's rights subverted, the standard of living reduced. Lithuania was entirely shut off from western civilization and culture. Arrests and deportations gradually took on such dimensions that there was no doubt but that Lithuania was doomed by the Kremlin masters to total physical destruction (9, p. 9).

Without regard for a possible total annihilation, Lithuanians all over the world — here in exile and in enslaved Lithuania — are determined to continue the fight for the right of free and independent national existence.

LITHUANIA AND EASTERN EUROPEAN NATIONS

A well-known English historian, Bernard Pares, who was a professor in the universities of England, Canada, and the United States, and who is well known specialist in Russian history, states that present Soviet Russia is composed of more than a hundred different nationalities. On the other hand, a Ukrainian journalist Oleh R. Martovych, who is doing a research study on these nationalities, is of the opinion that there are considerably more than a hundred. But we are not so much concerned with the latest and precise data as with the fact that the contemporary Russian Empire is a military power, a conglomeration of coerced nations.

The Russian propagandist vehemently attacks the colonialism of the West. This is to hide the fact that Russia is not only a colonialistic nation but also engages in genocide. After World War II the major colonial powers — England, France, and quite recently Spain — bestowed independence upon many colonial countries of Asia and Africa. In contrast the Soviet Union completely dissolved, annihilated, or starved numerous small nations like Chechen, Ingush, Karachai, Kalmyk, Buryat-Mongol, Crimean Tatar. The Bolsheviks murdered approximately ten million Ukrainians, thousands of Balts, and millions of people of other nations within the Soviet Union. Actually the contemptuous cruelty of Russian Tsars did not destroy as many people as the present Soviet commissars do now. Stalin is being blamed by his successors for the brutalities and murders in the Soviet Union; yet, at the same time, Stalin's successors are continuing the policy of genocide.

According to American statistical data, the population of Soviet Russia is 202 million, 91 million of whom are Russians and the rest, or 112 million, non-Russians. However, a Ukrainian demographer, U. R. Martovych, insists that native Russians make up only 70 million people and that the rest, or 132 million, consist of various other nationalities. He argues that Kasakstan and Siberia are not part of Russia (so considered by the Americans! but are separate nations fighting for their sovereignty and independence. However, it is evident, even from the American statistical data, that the Soviet Union is ruled by a minority of the population. In order to say that Russia is the greatest master of colonialism we have only to recall the fact that Soviet Russia has under its power Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Albania, and that it indirectly influences Yugoslavia, China, North Korea, and other Asiatic nations.

John F. Stewart, Chairman of the Scottish League for European Freedom, a man of action wherever the freedom of nations is concerned, and a dear friend of the Lithuanians, describes the relationship of the various nations in Russia in this manner:

The vital fact is that it shows, beyond any possibility of doubt, that there are not 200 millions of Russians in the whole world. The U.S.S.R. has a population of 200 millions, and of these 70 millions are Russians, while the remaining 130 millions are not only non-Russian but are violently anti-Russian, a result brought about by centuries of oppression by Moscow. Many of the nations of which this balance is composed had of their own free and independent Governments, their own advanced civilization, their own religion, their own culture, centuries before any Russia existed. They have never, in all these centuries, ceased to fight Russia for the restoration of their independence. All of these are our potential allies of to-day (5, p. VII).

Many American and Lithuanian political observers have the idea that in the future it will suffice to liberate the nations that were enslaved by Soviet Russia during World War II, i.e., nations like Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, etc. According to my deepest beliefs this kind of attitude is false because of the great wrong it would do to those other nations that are struggling and are ready for their independence but that were enslaved by the colonialistic Russian regime in the years prior to World War II. Therefore, if we want the freedom of our own nation recognized by others, we have to fight for, and recognize, the freedom of all nations.

Congressman Michael A. Feighan (D-Ohio) has most precisely expressed the policy of liberation of Lithuania and the other enslaved nations by the Soviet Union:

The cause of Lithuania is tied to the cause of all the other non-Russian nations enslaved by the Russian Communists. I speak not only of Estonia and Latvia, but I mean Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Eeyorussia, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkestan, and all the other non-Russian nations now within the tyrannical grip of the Russian autocrats. It is inconceivable to me that we, the people of the free world, can turn our backs on the terrible inhumanities that are now taking place within the modern-day empire of the Russian Communists. If we do make the terrible error of deserting these people to a fate which is worse than death itself, we shall surely be punished and would eventually have to face up to the strong possibility that we, as a Nation, ourselves would be very shortly in the chains of Moscow. I am sure that we, as practical-minded Americans, as well as being free people, motivated by the highest moral and political principles, will never be contended until all the nations enslaved by communism regain their national independence and their complete sovereignty (9, p. 44).

At this point it must be emphasized that the diplomatic policy of Mr. George F. Kennan, formerly the United States Ambassador in Moscow, is absolutely false. Ukraine, Bello-Russia, Kasakstan, Turkestan, Armenia, Siberia, Idel-Ural, and

some other countries are different nations and once were sovereign states. Many American politicians do not make any distinctions between Slavic nations. To them it seems that a Slav and a Russian are one and the same. Following is a description of the differences between Slavic nations by O. R. Mar-tobych:

In fact, there is no Slavic unity at all. The Slavs are a group of people distinguished only by linguistic similarity. Besides, the Slavic peoples are sharply divided, and the Russians differ from the Poles, the Ukrainians from both, the Slavs of Central Europe and the Balkans from entirely different groups. The history of various Slavic peoples has been different, their environment has been different, and hence their traditions, customs, cultures and religions have been different.

For more than two centuries the Ukrainians and the Cossacks, for more than one century the Belorussians, have groaned in the grip of the "elder Russian brother", as did the Poland from the final Partition of Poland in 1795 until 1918, and as do all the Slavic peoples today (5).

In years past, Lithuanians have had squables with Poles, Bello-Russians, Cossacks. We Lithuanians can reject the pretexts of these nations as unjust and even hate them for their insistence that they are right, but we cannot reject their right to independence within their own ethnographic area. Let us take a look at the Cossack nation. They have their own history of struggles against imperialistic Moscow, their own dialectic language, and their own national traditions. In 1918, after enormous hardships and many battles, they declared their independence. Even now they have, on this side of the Iron Curtain, a strong movement which is working towards their goal of freedom and sovereignty.

As the Hon. M. A. Feighan remarked earlier, the destiny and the future of Lithuania is tied in with the rest of the enslaved nations; and as long as East Germany, Poland, Bello-Russia, Ukraine, and all the other nations remain enslaved, so will Lithuania. There is no need for us to be naive and speculate that Russia will permit the union of the two Germanies or that she will restore independence to the Baltic Nations as some political compensation. Wherever Russia sets foot, she will remain; and, even if she were to depart for one day, the next day she would return to swallow a bigger chunk. Russia returned the capital city of Vilnius to Lithuania, but the next day she occupied all of Lithuania.

I want to conclude this article by quoting Mayor-General J. F. C. Fuller, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O.:

As Abraham Lincoln said in his day, that the Government of his country could not "endure half slave and half free," it will become all one thing or all the other," so today the world cannot permanently remain divided between slavery and liberty, and which is to be its destiny rests on whether the Western peoples continue to be browsed by the lie or awaken to the truth (5).

And this great truth is that the world must be freed once and for all from the tyrannical grip of the Bolsheviks and that this regained freedom must not favor either Europe, Asia, Africa, Russia, or America. Therefore, let us hope that destiny will be kind to us all and that all nations will be free and that they will never again have to fear imperialistic Russia. In order to gain such favorable world conditions, Russia must be reborn as a free and democratic nation within its own ethnographic borders and must never again attempt to dominate other nations.

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