

Editorial

** * * "We shall find means to help the leaders of American politics make mistakes, when these mistakes will be to our advantage. Therefore, their entrance into the war does not worry us in the slightest. All those who put their faith in them will be greatly disillusioned."****

Molotov 1940

The Eleventh Session of the United Nations has adjourned without tackling one of the major causes of the global tension—the prolonged captivity of the Central and Eastern European nations. Any hopes that the Lithuanian people might have placed in the processes of the organization of international justice, were again destroyed.

Lithuania's name was mentioned several times—during the debates of the recent U. N. session, but only as an illustrative point or as a warning to the non-committed nations. However welcome and well-intentioned, these mentions unpleasantly remind one of the use of dead states and civilizations for a classroom illustration of contemporary events. Yet Lithuania is more than a symbol. It is a living nation which is being threatened with extinction under a blueprint of slow annihilation.

Moreover, in spite of the oblivion by the West and its hermetic seclusion by the Soviets, Lithuania remains spiritually a part of Western Europe. The political ferment in to-day's Lithuania is radically different from that in the Soviet Union proper. It comprises the entire nation, is opposed to any form of communism and has as its aim the complete independence of Lithuania from the U.S.S.R.

Consequently, the Soviet way of handling this ferment—slight concessions in minor matters and "re-stalinization" in vital areas—are the same as used in so-called satellite states. However, due to Lithuania's complete isolation the Soviets are freer to use terror in that country. And some ominous signs have appeared recently that the Lithuanian people might be again exposed to even greater suffering. Letters coming from Lithuania indicate fears of hardened Soviet repressive measures, particularly deportations.

Foreign aggression, permanent interference, economic exploitation, political subjugation, genocide—this is the history of Soviet-Lithuanian relations since 1940. It is a classic case of the violation of the U. N. Charter. A case which is still passed by the U. N. as if it did not exist although the World Organization had pledged itself to examine any situation "likely to endanger world peace".

But when we speak about the United Nations we mean the Great Powers. Raising the question of Soviet aggression and interference in the U. N. depends entirely on them, especially the United States. Some recent statements by the U. S. President and Secretary of State—to the effect that United Nations will have to be used to a greater extent in establishing peace with justice have raised such hopes. Why, then, does the free world refrain from acting through the U. N. in order to save Lithuania?

There are answers to that (and we heard them many times): the Soviet veto; the impossibility of getting the votes of the "neutralist" bloc; the danger of increasing the international tension by such a move, etc.

How valid are they? The Hungarian tragedy has shown once and for all that it is exactly the failure to solve or even look for solutions for explosive situations that lie at the root of the world tension and inevitably lead to war. Should the Soviet Union veto a move to aid Lithuanian freedom in the Security Council, it would be a loser before the eyes of the world. Should the General Assembly fail to give enough votes to a resolution asking for Soviet withdrawal and free elections, the World Organization would still gain greatly by this because it would act at last in the spirit of its Charter and put an end to eleven years of double standards and myopia. The very airing of the Lithuanian case would be a big step toward the restoration of her freedom and independence by peaceful means.

And when we think about the letters from Lithuania, wrought with anxiety, we can say this: whatever criminal designs the Soviets might have now or in the future, placing Lithuania's plight before the International Forum and focusing the world attention on it, would constrain the Khrushchevs and Serovs to a considerable extent. That in itself is enough reason for putting the case of Lithuania on the agenda of the Twelfth Session of the United Nations.