



Online Publication
April 2009

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**New forms of anti-Soviet movement in Lithuania
and challenges to KGB after Prague spring**

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New forms of anti-Soviet movement in Lithuania and challenges to KGB after Prague spring

Prague spring did not have a similar response to nor impact on the Lithuanian Anti-Soviet movement as events in Hungary in 1956, but in Lithuanian historiography, it is also considered a very important event. New tendencies of the Lithuanian Anti-Soviet movement appeared before these events and were not connected with it. Prague spring simply catalysed, stimulated, activated and encouraged Lithuanian dissidents. These events had more of an impact on the activity of KGB. It's struggle with such dissidents became more active and tightened. KGB pressure encouraged Lithuanian dissidents to activate their activity. New forms of Anti-Soviet movements and their new methods forced KGB to react to such tendencies and also change its methods. The aim of this report is to present new tendencies of the Lithuanian Anti-Soviet movements in the 1960s. The report will describe its various forms, while simultaneously evaluating the impacts of Prague spring on Lithuanian dissidents and KGB activity.

New forms of the Lithuanian Anti-Soviet resistance appeared in the sixth decade. These changes were connected with changes in the policy of the Soviet regime. N. Khrushchev gave more sovereignty rights to local governments with regard to cultural policy, and as a result, Lithuanians had more opportunities to cherish local culture. This is why nationalism was seen in literature and theatre. The new policy of L. Brezhnev forced the Soviet government to take stricter measures. Throughout the 1960s, the condition of Catholic churches became worse. For example, between 1959 – 1964, this was witnessed through the declining situation of churches, the priesthood, deliberate decline in living conditions of priests, which in turn created obstacles in the scope of their activities, and the intensified oppression against the priests. All of these elements threatened the existence of the priesthood and the Catholic church as an institution. This

is why religious resistance first appeared and was gradually strengthened. Besides this, a new generation of young and brave priests appeared, and the old generation started to return from their previous deportation. They didn't expect anything positive from the Soviet regime. The secret meetings of these priests between 1965 and 1966 is considered the beginning of the religious resistance. They decided to use publicity against the Soviet policy. They started to send letters to various Soviet institutions and others in the international community. The first letter was dated on the 7th of August in 1968. Between 1968 and 1974, twenty-one collective petitions were sent. These petitions leaked information to the international community regarding the persecution of priests and believers. Such information was inconvenient to the Soviets, due to the fact that they were striving to show the world that the Soviet Union was a democratic state. Such petitions, therefore, contradicted their image. Fighting against Western influence was one of the main tasks of KGB. The influence of the Western way of life, its ideology, when compared with KGB and Soviet thought, could affect the outlook of Soviet intelligentsia and youth. KGB also related intensified Anti-Soviet activity inside the USSR with the intensified influence of the West on Soviet people, especially on young people. Events in Czechoslovakia were also treated as an expression of a so called ideological diversion (negative Western influence and activity). Contacts with Western countries became more intensified through tourism, personal correspondence, and the listening of illegal radio stations. KGB and the Soviet government treated this as a danger for the socialist system and ideology. KGB noticed that Lithuanian emigrants tried to make contact with Lithuanian intelligentsia and youth particularly. KGB treated Lithuanian emigrant organisations as collaborators with American secret services in a struggle against the Soviet Union. Such a KGB position influenced its actions against political activity of the Lithuanian emigrant organisations. KGB envisaged connection between activated Lithuanian dissident actions from 1967 and more active actions of Lithuania emigrants from 1966. From this point, KGB started to pay more attention to political activity of Lithuanian emigrants. The 1960s was a very important period in the emigrants' struggle for regaining Lithuania independence. In 1961, their activity was a bit stagnate because of the Western countries' indifference towards the problem of occupation of Baltic countries. This stagnation was temporal, however. In 1962, they

started to write petitions to various political institutions in the USA. Lithuanian emigrants understood that by writing petitions requesting the USA to take some action they would not gain a lot. They had to prove to the world that the situation in Soviet Lithuania was very difficult. The activities of Lithuanian emigrants were quite successful. In 1962, American President John F. Kennedy met with representatives of emigrant organisations. In 1965 and 1966, the US Congress and House of representatives accepted resolutions that condemned occupation of Baltic countries. In 1967, emigrants organisation decided to proclaim the year of 1968 as the year of fighting for freedom. This data is connected with the 50th anniversary of independent Lithuania. Lithuanian emigrants paid most attention to formulating the international community's public opinion in order to gain their support in the struggle for the independence of Baltic countries. They sent various documents, including facts relating to the difficult situation in Lithuania, to various international organisations. They wanted to provide updated material regarding the question of occupation of Baltic countries, so it would not disappear from the political agenda. In addition, they wanted to inform the world about Soviet crimes. When relationships (personal, cultural) with the soviet Lithuania became more intensive, the question about the emigrants position towards the soviet Lithuania and relationship with her appeared in the agenda of emigrant organisation from 1965. From 1967, this question became more actual and broadly discussed. Part of them were linked to change their tactic in fighting and demand for independence. They didn't believe that Western countries would take a determined step in raising the question of the occupation of Baltic countries, putting pressure on the Soviet Union. This was because the relationship between Eastern and Western countries were improving. So, they wanted to change their tactics from direct fight for freedom, to a tactic of „small steps“. First of all they wanted to keep Lithuanian nationality in Lithuania. A theory of „one way“ became very popular. The main idea of it was that national interest should be the most important for Lithuanians in soviet Lithuanian and emigration and ideological difference shouldn't be obstacle for the cooperation. Young and liberal emigrants supported this tactics. The old generation was more conservative and categorical against the cooperation with soviet Lithuania, because they treated this cooperation as the recognition of the occupation. So the young emigrants started to look for the new forms to fight with the communist

systems and to help Lithuanians in occupied Lithuania. They supported more intensive personal and cultural contact, so they could present to Lithuanians advantages of Western democracy and western way of life. In this way, they would try to alter the Soviet system from the inside. They also intensified travels to Lithuania to search for people who could collect information about Lithuania, Soviet crimes, Russification, and in turn bring this information to Western countries. In addition, emigrants could publish such information and show it to the world. That is why KGB paid great attention to the tourism sphere.

There was an atmosphere of decreased fear in the beginning of N. Khrushchev rule, when the time of mass repression was over. This also encouraged resistance. Forthright, political persecution and political trials in this period were not very beneficent for the Soviet regime because of publicity. The trials made defendant as martyrs. The Soviet regime used arrest and trials as the least measures, when other means had already been used. Activity of KGB and persecution also was laden by particularity of Lithuanian dissident activity. KGB noticed that former Lithuanian personae, intelligentsia, and youth became more accurate, and so it became more difficult to punish them according to the penal code. In conclusion, it can be said that a more severe Soviet policy, which disregarded national needs, difficulties of domestic situation, and changes in the international situation, stimulated the formation of unarmed Lithuanian Anti-Soviet movement.

People who weren't satisfied with the soviet policy and situation in Lithuania started to use less obvious means of resistance. Such means were not against the Soviets indirectly, but KGB treated it as Anti-Soviet activity. This was cultural activity (manifestation of nationalism in literature, theatre). KGB also noticed that former personae of independent Lithuania, most of them being former deportees and political prisoners, approximately from 1965 started to write their memoir. They were not directly against the Soviet, but KGB thought that their memories relating to independent Lithuania could spur nationalistic mood, particularly among young people. In the position of formation of unarmed Anti-Soviet movements met the year of 1968 and Prague spring. "Socialism with human face" in Czechoslovakia gave some hopes about possible changes in Lithuania too. But after soviet intervention in 1968, Lithuanians

understood that to change the legal forms of the Soviet regime seemed virtually impossible.

The Soviets anxiously waited for a disturbance in Lithuania after the intervention in Czechoslovakia. Although an increased number of Anti-Soviet actions was apparent, Lithuania avoided serious disorder. Such acts were primarily local, or individual acts of disturbance. The second secretary of Central Committee of Lithuanian Communist party, V. Charazovas, said that the political situation in Lithuania was stable, although some Anti-Soviet actions were recorded. The Soviet secret police envisaged interconnections between more a intensified Lithuanian resistance movement and Anti-Soviet actions in other socialistic countries, like the events in 1956 Poland, Hungary, and after soviet invasion in Czechoslovakia. A much bigger number of Anti-Soviet actions led them to make such links and predictions. For example, KGB division in Alytus recorded 54 signs of hostile actions in 1968, when in the second part of 1968 - 37 events. KGB also noticed that after events in Czechoslovakia, societal groups belonging to so called "negative surrounding", such as youth, intelligentsia, former political prisoners and deportees, intensified their activity. And as KGB expressed, their activity intensified Anti-Soviet moods and actions in society.

People expressed their disapproval about actions of SSRS in Czechoslovakia in various ways. Anti-Soviet inscriptions on the wall, anonymous leaflets, and stripped soviet flags - were most common forms of protest. The youth was the most active group of society. For example in 1966, 43,2 % of persons who were unmasked for the Anti-Soviet activity were young people up to the age of 25, which in 1968 reached 61,4 %. They were writing and distributing poems, leaflets, running up flags, founding underground groups, but they were temporary. KGB was looking for authors of anonymous leaflets, linked to events in Czechoslovakia very intensively. For example, KGB detected an underground organisation of pupils, called the "Union of Christian democratic", which was established in 1967. It had nine members. In 1968 they distributed one hundred leaflets. The KGB also found a leaflet titled "Attention". They discovered that his author was a pupil from the eighth grade, A. Jankauskas. During the prophylactic conversation with him, KGB found out, that the broadcasting of "American voices", where events in Czechoslovakia had been mentioned, influenced him. KGB

started to pay more attention to the observation and analysis of societal moods to avoid bigger disturbances and an intensification of the Anti-Soviet movement. They paid quite a lot of attention to how people reacted to the events in Czechoslovakia and the intervention. Reports from agents led KGB to make some conclusions about public opinion of various societal groups. KGB noticed that after Soviet intervention nationalistic tendencies were intensified among the youth and intelligentsia. After Prague Spring, Lithuanian dissidents started to use a new tactic “organisation without organisation”, when people were connected by the same target, ideas, but their activity wasn't institutionalised. Semi legal meetings of intelligentsia, regional, tourists, discussion and cognitive clubs started to appear. Their activity balanced on the bounds of legality. For example in 1969, the ethnography club “Romuva“ and a section of marchers near the Vilnius tourist club were established. Their activity wasn't political, but their cultural, ethnography, and historical activity encouraged people to become more interested in history. Such activity also helped foster the idea of a Lithuanian heritage, culture, and in this way it helped to develop a stronger national consciousness. Such activity contradicted Russification and cosmopolitan Soviet policy as well. People started to join such clubs on a mass scale. Soviets were frightened by such tendencies and therefore forbade them in 1971.

Both domestic and international events had an impact on the activity and policy of the communist party and KGB. After 1968, KGB activity became more tight, aggressive, and repressive. Events in Czechoslovakia and new forms of resistance forced KGB to change their methods and way of fighting with the Lithuanian dissidents. Prague Spring and more active actions of Lithuanian dissidents showed how poorly Soviet governments and KGB knew about the general moods of society. It means that the analytic works of the Soviet secret police was weak. In the report of Kaunas, about KGB and their activity in 1968, the critique of the head of KGB is obvious. In one of these reports it was said that the “events in Czechoslovakia showed the shortage of KGB activity”. Some agents weren't timely informed about some processes in society, nor did they properly evaluate situations and react to events. KGB was also criticized by the first secretary of the Lithuanian communist party, Antanas Sniečkus. He said “KGB didn't give us proper analysis about society moods, that was why it should pay more attention to

analytical work.” Such critique forced KGB to take more determined steps. In this period they paid more attention to agent work. They tried especially to gain more agents among the youth, intellectual, former deportees and political prisoners, tourists who were coming to Lithuania, and politically active emigrants. This way they could monitor their moods and block their actions against the Soviet regime, neutralising their political influence. Agents among the emigrants also had to implement propaganda actions to weaken and destroy emigrant organisation from the inside. During this period from 1968, a lot of plans appeared on how to improve counter-intelligence, agentural and operational work. For example, the letter of the 12th of September in 1968 spoke about the usages of active measures against the emigrants organisation. KGB units were prompted to activate agent work, to gather information about emigrants organisations and most active personae, and to organise actions of propaganda and discredit based on gathered information. In other KGB documents they were ordered to intensify work with the former political prisoners and deportees, to gather information about their public and personal life, their moods, and potential influence on their surroundings. Enlarged attention also should be paid to famous personae of former independent Lithuania. Reports about KGB agentural - operational work from 1967 - 1970 reflects tendencies of KGB work, also the changes in the intensiveness of the Anti-Soviet manifestation. (*table nr. 1*) (*Table nr.2*) It should be pointed out that the aspects of KGB activity, as they started to use more often from this time, was prophylactic talks. From the sixth decade it became one of the main tools used by KGB to neutralise and prevent Anti-Soviet actions. Mostly it was applied to youth. It shows that KGB was not only the repression institution, but also an institution of ideological influence and education.

KGB used not only traditional means like agent, operational works, but also unconventional means, because, as the first secretary of Lithuanian communist party A. Sniečkus pointed out, “the enemy changed its forms and actions, it acts less open and public.” So, KGB also started to use less overt means. The usages of such measures were connected with the character of Lithuanian dissidents and emigre activity. By sending various documents regarding Soviet crimes, attempting to update the question of the occupation of Baltic countries, they generated negative international opinion about the Soviet Union and its policy. Physical repressions in this case would not be effective, and

so they used propaganda to form positive public opinion about soviet policy and to discredit political activity of Lithuanian emigrants, reducing the number of their supporters and neutralising the influence of their ideas. Fighting for public opinion became a new challenge to KGB. KGB struggled with other minds transferred in the public sphere. So KGB started to pay more attention to so called „active measures“, such as propaganda, discredit, rumours, and disinformation. KGB was searching for negative information about the most active emigrants, priests, fighters for human rights, and dissidents. The information that they were searching for was mostly connected with persons of the past, and their activity in independent Lithuania, during Nazi occupation (especially it was used against the emigrants), and in post war Lithuania (former partisans, political prisoners, deportees). This information was to be leaked to society. Various documents (true, falsified, tendentious collected), articles, and books were sent to the press, international organisations, and institutions. This way, they would stop supporting emigrants and their fighting for Lithuania freedom. Also in this way KGB sought to discredit their struggle for independence. But propaganda and discredit actions weren't as efficient or effective as KGB wanted.

The sixth decade is a new period in the Lithuanian resistance movement against the Soviets. Prague spring in 1968 accelerated and gave background to such resistance forms in the 1970s. Examples include an increase in the dissident, human right and religious movement. In this period, new forms of resistance appeared, when legal and illegal forms were used to express dissatisfaction with Soviet politics. Those forms were: open letters, petitions, resolutions to the soviet institution and international organisation and appeal to public opinion, cultural activity, ethnography and historical meetings. From the beginning of the 1960s, KGB also changed tactics and methods. Ideological influence and educational means, such as prophylactics, propaganda, and discredit, became very important among others KGB means. Fighting for the public opinion became one of the primary aspects of the struggle between KGB and dissidents, emigrants. This was because repressions, imprisonment, and isolation were no longer effective in such a struggle.

Table nr.1. Antisoviet actions (1967 - 1970)

| Year | 1967 | 1968 | 1969 | 1970 |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | | | | |

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| Anonymous letters, documents | 29 | 40 | 31 | 52 |
| Strip of soviet flags | - | 62 | 41 | 13 |
| Youth illegal organisations | 15 | 13 | 46 | 73 |

Table Nr. 2 KGB Operational and agent work (1967-1970)

| Year | 1967 | 1968 | 1969 | 1970 |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Recruitment of agents | 24 | 27 | 23 | 44 |
| Special task of agents | 43 | 30 | 29 | 30 |
| DOR | 4 | 4 | 5 | 11 |
| DOP | 17 | 79 | 109 | 98 |
| Criminal cases | 32 | 22 | 30 | 30 |
| Prophylaxis talks | 234 | 444 | 285 | 467 |