



SENATOR THE HON. GARETH EVANS Q.C.

MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE  
PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
CANBERRA A.C.T. 2600

22 MAR 1990

Mr A Mednis  
Chairman  
Baltic Council of Australia  
32 Parnell Street  
STRATHFIELD NSW 2135

Dear Mr Mednis

I thought I should write to reassure the Council of the Government's continuing close interest in developments in Lithuania.

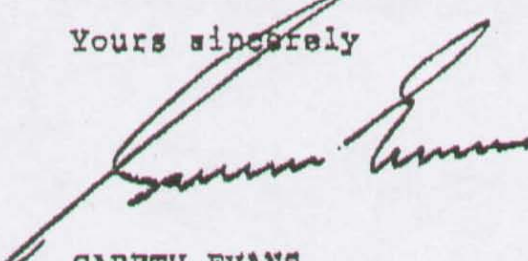
Following a telephone conversation I had with Dr Kunca of the Australian Lithuanian Community in Melbourne on 17 March, I sent instructions to the Australian Ambassador in Moscow to make representations at a senior level in the Soviet Foreign Ministry to reinforce the Australian position on Lithuania, as set out in my statement of 12 March. In addition to reiterating the main elements of the statement, I instructed the Ambassador to convey to the Soviet authorities the deep and continuing interest in the evolving situation of the Australian Government, people and, in particular, the significant Baltic community in Australia, and to convey our hope that the response of the Soviet authorities, as this complex situation evolves, will be moderate and cautious.

I can also tell you that two Embassy officials have met President Landsbergis and other senior officials. President Landsbergis expressed appreciation for Australia's message of support.

I can assure you that we are watching the situation very closely indeed. In this context, I note repeated assurances by senior Soviet leaders ruling out the use of force, and the establishment of a Commission by the Soviet Government to study the specific issue of those Republics wishing to secede and to meet with their representatives.

Soviet assurances about not using force and their apparent readiness to settle the issue peacefully has been matched by the Lithuanian Parliament's stated willingness to address all legitimate Soviet concerns through negotiations. This seems to reflect the moderate and cautious approach we have been urging on all sides.

Yours sincerely



GARETH EVANS

cc Dr J Kunca  
Vice President  
Australian Lithuanian Community  
PO Box 128  
NORTH MELBOURNE VIC 3051

Lietuvos valstybės naujasis archyvas

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