



LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS AUKŠČIAUSIOJI TARYBA

The Honourable Robert J.L. Hawke
Prime Minister of Australia
Parliament House
Canberra
ACT Australia

April 16, 1990

Sir:

On February 24, 1990 after a fairly-contested, multi-party election campaign, the people of Lithuania went to the polls to elect national representatives for the first time since the Lithuanian nation came under foreign occupation in 1940. With the completion of the final run-off elections on March 10, 1990, the demand of the people of Lithuania was clear and overwhelming - immediate restoration of the Republic of Lithuania first recognized by Australia in 1921, and the entry into force on Lithuanian territory of the fundamental human, economic and political rights proclaimed in the first Lithuanian Constitution of May 15, 1920.

On March 11, 1990, the representatives of the Lithuanian people met in the Assembly Hall of the State Council in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius and expressing the will of the nation solemnly proclaimed the restoration of the Republic of Lithuania on the basis of its *de jure* continuity since 1940. The Lithuanian Supreme Soviet was reestablished as the Supreme Council of the Republic and the 1977 U.S.S.R. Constitution and other Soviet laws were annulled, insofar as they applied to Lithuania. Only those Soviet laws which did not conflict with the Temporary Fundamental Law of the Republic of Lithuania were permitted to remain *en vigueur*. These laws will be examined and replaced with Lithuanian laws after future legislative review and debate.

I have been asked by the Supreme Council of Lithuania to convey to you and the people of Australia the most significant legislative documents enacted on March 11, 1990. In particular, you will observe that the Lithuanian state emphasizes its adherence to universally accepted principles of international law, recognizes the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act with respect to international frontiers, and guarantees the rights of all peoples and ethnic communities living in Lithuania.

Mr. Prime Minister, it has been nearly five decades since oppression and darkness descended upon the land and people of Lithuania as a result of an illegal and morally reprehensible Non-Aggression Pact with secret protocols entered into by Adolf Hitler and Josef Stalin on August 23, 1939. During this period, Lithuanian people were denied nearly every fundamental human right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Commencing in June, 1940, hundreds of thousands of Lithuanians of all ages, professions and backgrounds were deported to the U.S.S.R.; our schools and churches closed, our farms and property laid waste; our environment poisoned by industries over which we had little control; and our sons laid to rest on battlefields far beyond our frontiers.

In spite of these heavy burdens, and an unrelenting effort by an alien political system to destroy the religious and moral values of the Lithuanian people, the Lithuanian nation endured. In every Lithuanian heart burned a desire for freedom, justice and peace.

Many of our people have taken great hope and courage from the fact that Australia, like many other nations, has repeatedly stressed its non-recognition of the 1940 annexation and occupation of Lithuania by the U.S.S.R. Today, with increasing freedoms and liberties a reality for most Lithuanians, the people of Lithuania are hoping for your nation's support in the process of political, economic and environmental renewal now sweeping across our nation.

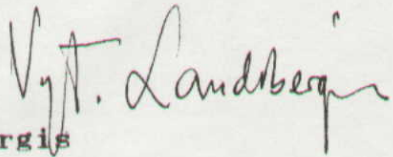
As the freely and democratically elected Government of the Republic of Lithuania we ask you to extend full recognition to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. In our peaceful quest for independence we rely on our moral rights and the support of the democratic governments of other nations of the world.

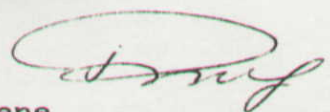
Especially at this point, we need your concrete help; use of Soviet military force, and political pressure on other countries to not recognize Lithuania continue, and now there is the threat of an economic blockade as a new Iron Curtain is drawn around Lithuania on the Baltic Sea and the Polish border. This aggression must be recognized for what it is, and labeled as such by the West.

Mr. Prime Minister, the people of Lithuania, the Supreme Council and the Government have asked us to convey to you and to the people of Australia their warmest greetings and best wishes. To all the peoples of the Soviet Union and Europe our nation extends only the hand of friendship. We sincerely hope that the people of Australia will continue to reaffirm and support the right of the people of Lithuania to freedom, dignity, and the right to take their own path in building an independent democratic state.

We would also like to use this opportunity to advise you that we have asked Prof. A.P. Kabaila, the representative in Australia of the Lithuanian Reform Movement "Sajudis" to act as liason to the Australian government on matters related to the Republic of Lithuania.

Very truly yours,


Vytautas Landsbergis
President
Supreme Council of the
Republic of Lithuania


Kazimiera Prunskiene
Prime Minister
Republic of Lithuania