

Criminal Occupational Politics System: the Role of Military Structures and Collaboration with Them

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Occupation of Lithuania. June 1940. The Government of Lithuania was summoned into an urgent late night sitting on 15 June 1940 after being issued an ultimatum. Out of the three items on the Moscow's Ultimatum, the most important and decisive was the requirement to guarantee the additional Soviet Union army units a free entry into the territory of Lithuania.¹ It did not specify their number, which meant that the Soviet Union reserved to itself the right to decide this to its full discretion and in view of its interests.

There is a widespread opinion that the Cabinet summoned by the President of the Republic Antanas Smetona in its last sitting made the decision to show no resistance. However, that is a much too categorical conclusion. The information available allows to conclude that the Cabinet did consider whether resistance was possible, and that all participants of the sitting took floor on this issue. Critical opinion was expressed by the military – the Army's Commander General of Division Vincas Vitkauskas, Military Commander of Staff General of Division Stasys Pundzevičius and General of Division Stasys Raštikis summoned to the sitting later – who all maintained that the resistance was impossible given the deployment of soviet garrisons throughout the country, and that the Lithuanian Army was not prepared for that. From the military point of view, their arguments were valid in every respect.

The Lithuanian Army. On 1 June 1940 the Lithuanian Army consisted of 28,005 servicemen, among them 1,728 were officers, 2,091 – re-enlistees (372 warrant officers, 985 NCOs, 393 - junior NCOs, and 341 NCO cadets), 22,265 – soldiers (1,114 – junior NCOs, 2,031 – first class privates, and 18,850 – privates. In total – 26,084 servicemen and 2,031 civilian staff (among them – 110 holding the rank of officers.)² (*Annex 1*)

The Lithuanian Army consisted of three infantry divisions (nine infantry regiments, four artillery regiments and five anti-aircraft motor companies), cavalry (three cavalry regiments and three cavalrymen batteries), military aviation (three aviation units, comprising eight squadrons, three airport defence companies and the School of Military Aviation), engineering corps (armoured unit, two engineering battalions, motor transport unit, signal battalion and *The President Smetona* warship), anti-aircraft squad, and the Military School. A more detailed structure of the army, its composition and the armament are presented in *Annexes 2 and 3*. In addition, the Lithuanian National Guard (*Šaulių Sajunga* – a national volunteer guard), comprising over 62 thousand members (among them 15 thousand women-members and 5 thousand supporters), enhanced the army's

¹ ELTA pranešimas, Kaunas, 1940 VI 15 d. – [Report by ELTA news agency, Kaunas, 15 June 1940] J. Audėnas "Paskutinis posėdis". "Mintis", V.: 1990, p. 232-233

² Kariuomenės štabo III skyriaus viršininko 1940 06 17 raštas Nr. 14104 Kariuomenės tiekimo viršininkui [Letter No 14104 by the Chief of Military Staff 3rd Division to the Chief of Army Ordnance] - LCVA, Doc.fund 930, Inventory schedule 7, File 7910, P. 80

defence capabilities significantly, and served to form 22 squads on county basis and 1 railwaymen squad. There was a total of 1,200 guards detachments.³ Army warehouses stored reserves, which in the event of mobilisation, would enable to call up some 12,400 reservists. With the stock of ammunition and munitions available the Lithuanian Army could continue combat without breaks for two weeks.⁴

The army, despite representing considerable military might, was scattered, separate units of the army were operating in the rhythm of a peace time situation and the army was not mobilised.

Red Army troops in Lithuania. In contrast to the Lithuanian Army, the soviet army troops, deployed on the territory of Lithuania, were concentrated in four garrisons and ready to act when the orders came. Its composition and might was no secret to the President of Lithuania and the leadership of national defence. As early as 13 November 1939 the Commander of the Lithuanian Army received a certificate on the composition of the Red Army troops being brought into Lithuania, and comprising 17,412 men⁵ (*Annex 4*). Obviously, certain changes had occurred in terms of its composition by June 1940, however, its concentration had not been reduced, since it could be up to 20 thousand-strong even if the Soviet Union complied with the terms of the USSR-Lithuania Mutual Assistance Agreement. It is evident that it was a threatening military might, in concentration and armament almost equal to the Lithuanian Army, which, most importantly, in case of need, could rely on the powerful support from outside commanded by the Red Army's leadership.

The Government of Lithuania did not intend to confront the occupation. Thereby, holding out against the military invasion of the Soviet Union was a complicated issue, which is why it was unsurprising that members of the Cabinet came up with dissenting opinions in the sitting called to decide whether to resist or not.

However, certain circumstances of this sitting look strange. The President had asked his generals whether the resistance was possible only a few hours away from the deadline specified by the Kremlin and the attack of the Red Army. President Smetona himself and the Minister of National Defence Brigadier General Kazys Musteikis were against resisting. However, even though being against the resistance, up till that moment they did not take any steps to prepare for it. They both were informed about the concentration of the Red Army troops in Belarus, alongside the Lithuanian border. The Chief of 2nd Military Staff Department Staff Colonel General Kostas Dulksnys apparently had reliable sources of information, since on 7 June 1940, after Yeremenka's corps had been put on alert and sent to the Lithuanian border, he instantly dispatched a secret circular No 6568

³ A.Liekis "Lietuvos šaulių sąjungos likvidacija (1938-1940 m.) – [A.Liekis "Liquidation of the Lithuanian National Guard (1938-1940)"] "Lietuvos šaulių sąjungos istorija". LŠS Centro valdyba V.: 1992, p. 243-244

⁴ Ekspertų grupės vardu E.Nazelskis, G.Surgailis, E.Jovaiša "Lietuvos kariuomenės nuostoliai" [On behalf of the expert group – E.Nazelskis, G. Surgailis and E. Jovaiša "Losses Suffered by the Lithuanian Army] (dokumentas parengtas pagal LCVA saugomus dokumentus - fondai 1, 3, 4, 384, 506, 508, 510-514, 516-522, 524-530, 532-524, 536, 538, 766, 812, 817, 828, 832, 836, 929, 1324, 1326, 1364, 1373). KAM leidinys, 1992

⁵ LCVA [The Lithuanian Central State Archive, hereinafter referred to as the LCVA], Doc.fund 384, Inventory schedule 4, File 1., P. 1-3

intended for the chiefs of districts and unit commanders personally and asking them to immediately destroy the secret pieces of news released by the 2nd Military Staff Department, starting with 17 November 1939, and, once the task was performed, to report about it by 15 June 1940.⁶

This circular names surprisingly precisely all three dates – 7 June 1940 (the start of the Red Army troops concentration at the Lithuanian frontier for the ultimate invasion), 17 November 1939 (on that day the Red Army launched an attack against Poland) and 15 June 1940 (projected or known exact date of the Red Army's attack against Lithuania). The President and the national defence leadership did not react to the news supplied by the 2nd Military Staff Department, and there are no indications that the army was being readied to act in the face of real danger. Once again, when the decisive hour came, the Government was urgently summoned to decide a vital issue for the state – whether to resist – however, neither the president, who was the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, neither the minister of national defence even bother to put the army on alert or at least inform divisions and units commanders that the army should be ready to follow the course of action ensuing from the government's decisions. It looks like the option of no resistance had been naturally chosen earlier, although nobody dared to admit that openly.

It was Moscow itself who solved the issue of guarantees that the Red Army did not confront armed resistance. During the sitting a report sent by J. Urbšys from Moscow was brought from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, saying that the Army Commander General of Division V. Vitkauskas must at a specified hour meet the Red Army General Pavlov at the Gudagoj station on the Russian frontier to clarify the details of an untroubled soviet army's march into Lithuania. General of Division V. Vitkauskas and the Chief of Military Staff General of Division S. Pundzevičius rose without waiting for the sitting to end and left. Formally the sitting had not been concluded.⁷

15 June 1940 marked the start of Lithuania's occupation. On that day the only clear instruction for the army was the Order No 107⁸ issued by the Army Commander General of Division V. Vitkauskas and the Chief of Military Staff General of Division S. Pundzevičius. It explained the existing state of affairs in a brief and laconic manner: "*After the Government of Lithuania accepted the requirement of the USSR government to open new soviet army garrisons on the territory of Lithuania, on 15 June of this year at 15 hours the soviet army troops started marching through the border into the country.*" The divisions commanders were ordered to organise a welcome of soviet army files within their territories, to send people to welcome the approaching troops and introduce themselves to unit commanders, and on the routes of greater importance to do that themselves. The marching army was to be treated with due respect of all rules of courtesy and friendly relations, as in case with troops introduced earlier. The commanders had to undertake all available measures to protect the soviet army against any manifestations of disgrace. The Kremlin's goal that the Lithuanian Army does not take to the arms in the face of military invasion was achieved.

⁶ LCVA[*The Lithuanian Central State Archive*], Doc.fund 532, Inventory schedule 1., File 179, P. 98

⁷ S.Raštikis. *Kovose dėl Lietuvos. [S.Raštikis, Amidst the Fights for Lithuania]* Vilnius, 1990, p. 25

⁸ A.Martinionis. *Klasta ir smurtu (1940-1941). [A. Martinionis By Perfidy and Violence]* Vilnius, 1995, p. 65-66

Kremlin's Special Representative to Lithuania appointed by Stalin, Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Dekanozov, once in Lithuania, opened his headquarters in Moscow's embassy in Kaunas, and started to act immediately. His first and most important task was the recruitment of the new government. General of Division V. Vitkauskas became the Minister of National Defence⁹, who also was acting as the Army Commander for the time being. J. Paleckis, who took over the office of the Prime Minister from Antanas Merkys, began to act as the provisional President of the Republic, at the same time becoming the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces.¹⁰

Neutralising the Lithuanian Army

The fact that the Lithuanian Army was not ordered to confront the marching Red Army meant a great achievement for the Kremlin. **Moscow's most important task with respect to the army was to neutralise** it prior to Lithuania's incorporation into the USSR. The army represented an organised and armed might, which had been trained, fostered and educated in the spirit of defence of national independence, and the potential threat that it might choose to resist with arms could not be excluded. Even the individual hotbeds of organised resistance were undesirable, since that could hamper the course of Lithuania's pre-scheduled incorporation into the USSR.

“Purging of the reactionary elements” and replacement of commanders. It was much too dangerous to disband the army, since in this case several thousand officers, re-enlistees and the civilian staff who served in the army and among whom included many reserve officers and NCOs, would be left uncontrolled. Besides, it was not clear how many arms would remain in their possession. Unlike in the Security Department, there was no replacement not even for the most important commanders and chiefs. Massive arrests of officers was an unacceptable option too, since they could lead to the army's resistance. Apparently, as an outcome of such considerations it was decided a part of potentially dangerous officers to discharge, in particular some commanders and commissioned officers, and the ones remaining in service to transfer to other positions. Discharge of officers from the army in the Russian embassy was interpreted as the purging of “reactionary elements, unable to agree with or accept the revolutionary changes in Lithuania.”¹¹ It can also be understood as an attempt to create certain chaos in the established relations among commanders, and thereby to obstruct at least partly the possible organisation of underground resistance.

This part of the army neutralisation plan drafted by Moscow emissaries was launched on 19 June, on discharging the Commander of National the Guard Colonel Pranas Saladžius, Commander of 9th Infantry regiment Colonel of Staff General Antanas Gaušas, Commander of the Military Staff 2nd Intelligence and Counter-intelligence Section Lieutenant Colonel Petras Kirlys¹². 25 June marked the start of a massive discharge of

⁹ Minister of National Defence K. Musteikis escaped to Germany.

¹⁰ President A. Smetona escaped to Germany.

¹¹ A.Martinionis. “Prievarta ir smurtu”. [A. Martinionis By Perfidy and Violence]“Kardas”, V.:1998, p. 26

¹² [sakymas kariuomenei Nr. 61, 1940 m. birželio 20 d.[Order to the Army No61, 20 June 1940] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 1, File3, P. 112

officers and their demotion. Commenced among the senior officers, the process soon spread to the lower ranks.

Liquidation of the Lithuanian Army started at the end of August 1940. As many as 188 officers had been discharged by that time already: that many were announced in the army orders (army orders are attached in the *Annex*). This figure also includes 26 arrested officers (*Annex 6*), but the arrests will be discussed separately. During the given period every fourth officer had been transferred into a new position. Transfer of officers to different places of service was carried out without any account of the service interests. Discharge or appointment of officers to new position was decided in the Russian embassy, without even consulting the opinion of the National Defence Minister General of Division V. Vitkauskas. Under Dekanozov's and Pozdniakov's request, late June – early August almost all commanders of divisions, regiments, squads, separate battalions and chiefs of boards had been discharged or appointed to new positions, only a few still occupied their original offices (*Annex 7*).

The occupants must have been convinced that the Military Staff was overpopulated with “reactionary elements”, since it was treated with special attention. On 15 June 1940 there were 140 officers in the Ministry of National Defence, among them: 6 generals, 20 colonels, 22 lieutenant colonels, 36 majors, 34 captains, 18 lieutenants and 4 junior lieutenants (*Annex 7*). Work done by the Soviet Union embassy and the “people's” government produced the following results: in the period leading to the end of August 1940, some 21 officers (among them 5 arrested) had been discharged from the Ministry of National Defence and the Military Staff – one ninth of all discharged officers; 19 officers transferred to other units [of the army] and institutions; 22 officers transferred to the Military Staff from other units and institutions of the army (one of them will soon be transferred again). Thereby, among officers discharged or transferred to other units (institution's) of the army were: 2 generals, 7 colonels, 9 lieutenant colonels, 10 majors, 8 captains and 4 lieutenants. To these should be added 7 officers, who deserted the army or did not return from business visits or service abroad. Thus, out of 170 officers as many as 47, i.e. a third, left the Ministry of National Defence and the army.

Introduction of political control in the army. To prevent the army's armed resistance, it must be placed in the state of chaos. To that end, the Lithuanian Communist party was charged with the task of organising political control. Since the undersized Lithuanian Communist party could not boast established reputation with the Lithuanian public and did not dare declare itself the ruling force (as in the Soviet Union) having just come out of the underground, such efforts had been disguised under the army restructuring. The first official communication about the restructuring of the army underway came in the way of Order to the Army No70 of 28 June 1940.¹³ However, this order was rather vague, containing only a reference to “the new creative forces being involved in the work and committed to work with the new government and make sacrifices for the sake of Lithuania's better future”. Things did not become clearer after the Order of 3 July on the Restructuring of the Lithuanian Army¹⁴, which, however, stressed in particular that the

¹³ LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 1, File 3, P. 91

¹⁴ “Vyriausybės žinios”, [*Official Gazette*] Nr. 714, Kaunas, 1940 m. liepos 4 d., p. 456

Lithuanian Army was being modelled after the Red Army. The order announced that the army was undergoing a fundamental reform and was renamed the Lithuanian People's Army, that it would [soon] embrace the institute of political instructors, also a propaganda division, and that the soldiers were allowed to take part in the political activities at their free time. It did not specify the contents of such announcements, and was therefore of great use to the new leadership in the way that any reforms could be carried out in the army under its cover. Such conditions were created by the provision in that order, proclaiming that all laws or regulations, contradicting this act of law shall be abolished. It entered into force on 2 July. On that day all army chaplains were discharged and the institution of the army chaplain abolished. It was to be replaced by the institute of political instructors, formation of which was started on 4 July.¹⁵ Soon after, on 6 July a Political corps was created in the Army embracing two divisions: Agitation, Propaganda and Press Division and the Division of Political Instructors Organisation¹⁶ (*Annex 8*¹⁷). At the start political instructors for divisions, regiments, separate units and districts as well as various districts and institutions were appointed, who, in their turn, selected candidates from among the NCOs and soldiers serving in the army to political instructors of companies and units equal to them. In a short time as many as 306 political instructors were appointed (*Annex 9*) who had to control the activities of commanders at least partially and infiltrate the Communist ideas in the army.¹⁸ The principal task for political instructors was to derail the army to the extent where it showed no armed resistance.¹⁹ Political leaders enjoyed the status and rights of officers and were immediately involved in the process of army "purging". Political instructors of divisions, units and districts had an exceptionally broad mandate. They had to submit proposals on which officers and re-enlisted NCOs were to be discharged, transferred or appointed to new positions.²⁰ Although such motions had to be submitted upon the agreement of unit commander and political instructor, however, almost always opinion of the latter was decisive. Thereby, the LCP (B) (the Lithuanian Communist Party (Bolshevik)) took over the political control of the army into its hands.

As prior to the occupation in Lithuania activities of the Communist party and Komsomol League were forbidden, there practically were no communists or Komsomol League members operating in the army illegally, thus from among the appointed political instructors very few were members of these organisations. In general, they were young men who seemed reliable because of their social standing, i.e. came from families of workers and less well-off farmers, even though some were practically illiterate²¹ (*Annex 10*).

¹⁵ [sakymas liaudies kariuomenei Nr 82, 1940 m. liepos 8 d. [*Order to the People's Army No82 of 8 July 1940*] LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, ap 1, File 1, P. 82

¹⁶ [sakymas kariuomenei Nr. 81, 1940 m. liepos 6 d. [*Order to the Army No81 of 6 July 1940*] - LVCA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 1, File 3, P. 76

¹⁷ LVOA, Doc.fund 1771, Inventory schedule 1, File 330, P. 1-3

¹⁸ [sakymas liaudies kariuomenei Nr. 92, 1940 m. liepos 15 d. [*Order to the People's Army No92 of 15 July 1940*] - LVCA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 1, File 3, P.59-60

¹⁹ Iš Pribovo Politinio darbo valdybos viršininko diviziono komisaro Šamanino pranešimo LKP(b) CK biuro posėdyje, 1940 10 25 [*From the Report of the Division Commissar Chief of Pribov Political Activities Bureau Šamanin delivered during the CC LCP (B) Bureau meeting, 25 September 1940*] - LVOA, Doc.fund 1771, Inventory schedule 2, File 530, P. 34-40

²⁰ Kariuomenės štabo slapta aplikraštis Nr. 29088 sP., 1940 m. liepos mėn. [*Secret circular of the army No29088, July 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund 528, Inventory schedule 1, File 549, P. 120

²¹ LVOA, Doc.fund 1771, Inventory schedule 1, File 332, P. 111

Some of the appointees turned out to be completely unfit political instructors and were soon discharged. It should be noted that the corps of political instructors embraced few officers – 3 lieutenants and 11 second lieutenants, who almost all were recruited from the reserve, and only three officers actually serving in the army were appointed political instructors.

Army commanding transferred into the hands of Moscow proteges. Creation of political corps in the army also was one of the key factors in the consolidation of communist regime. However, Moscow sought to take over commanding of the army because this was another important aspect to the neutralisation of the army. For that purpose two Lithuanian communists were sent from Moscow. One of them, the Red Army General Major Feliksas Baltušis-Žemaitis on 12 July was appointed the Commander of the People's Army and was commissioned as the Brigadier General of the Lithuanian Army.²² The second one, Jonas Macijauskas one day before was appointed the Political Commander of the People's Army²³ after the discharge from this position of Antanas Petrauskas. Division General Vitkauskas who until then was the National defence minister and the Commander of the Army remained in the office of the National Defence Minister albeit with very limited mandate. Orders to the army were valid only if they were signed by the national defence minister, commander of the army and army's political commander. In terms of authority the latter was a vice-minister Deputy commander of the army in the political field.²⁴ Because all the important issues (in political field: reorganisation of the army, appointments and discharge as well as transfers) had to be decided by the national defence minister and army commander together with army's political commander, and two out of the three were sent from Moscow, it in fact meant that commanding of the army [was in the hands of Moscow?].

Terror. The described factors in the context of army's neutralisation were complemented by terror. For some time arrests in the army were being avoided. Even during the first massive arrests carried out on 10-14 July pursuant to the Plan of preparatory works for the liquidation of the leadership corps of anti-state parties and operative liquidation there were no servicemen among the arrested. However, such assessment is conditional, because many reserve officers, members of the National Guard were arrested, and in addition preparations were underway to arrest some officers who had been discharged after the occupation of Lithuania (e.g. Colonel Vladas Braziulis whose arrest warrant No119 was signed by A. Sniečkus on 11 July, and the arrest made on 21 July²⁵).

The official gazette *Valstybės žinios* of 4 July announced amendments to Par 14 of the Military Tribunal Law. From then on anyone who incited soldiers, guards or other officials of the army and the National Guard to disobey laws of the state or orders of public authorities, to set up organisations hostile to the Republic of Lithuania or operating

²² [sakymas liaudies kariuomenei Nr. 88, 1940 m. liepos 12 d. [Order to the People's Army No88 of 12 July 1940] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 1, File 3

²³ [sakymas liaudies kariuomenei Nr 87, 1940 m. liepos 12 d. [Order to the People's Army No87 of 12 July 1940] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 1, File 3, P. 69

²⁴ [sakymas liaudies kariuomenei Nr. 92, 1940 m. liepos 15 d. [Order to the People's Army No92 of 15 July 1940] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 1, File 3, P. 59

²⁵ LYA, V.Braziulio baudžiamoji byla Nr. 37570/3 [The Lithuanian Special Archive, V. Braziulis' case No 37570/3]

in the underground, or take part in such organisations, to revolt against the state bodies or otherwise demonstrate resistance to them, to overturn the existing regime or act in the interests of states hostile towards the Republic of Lithuania, was to be sentenced to death or to the imprisonment in the strict regime prison from 2 years to life sentence.²⁶ This allegedly established the legal basis for terror, however, it rather was a warning to soldiers and guards deterring from any actions against the soviet regime that was being consolidated. As we know, arrests in the army were started for different reasons and on the basis of another legal act.

Eighteenth July should be considered the day when arrests in the army started. On that day the chiefs of the 2nd General Staff Section (intelligence and counter-intelligence) were arrested: Chief of Section General Colonel of Staff Kostas Dulksnys, his deputy Lieutenant Colonel Juozas Matusaitis and the Chief of Intelligence and Counter-intelligence sub-section Lieutenant Colonel Petras Kirlys. These officers were taken to Moscow's prisons under emergency procedure, interrogated there and later executed.²⁷ Other officers serving in the 2nd General Staff Section were arrested. Following the order from Moscow on 25 July, the Chief of Press of this section General Colonel of Staff Kazys Pranckonis is arrested, on 26 July – former officer of this section Major Zigmas Šalkauskas²⁸, intelligence officer Lieutenant Kazys Truškauskas, on 11 September – former 2nd Section officer, Major of Staff General Antanas Impulevičius²⁹ and others.

The LCP (B), too, submitted its reports. Former Secretary of the underground Communist party A. Sniečkus, now the Director of Security Department made sure that the former military commandants Colonel V. Braziulis, General Colonel of Staff P. Saladžius³⁰, Lieutenant Colonel Jonas Bužėnas³¹, and military prosecutor Brigadier General Emilis Vimeris³² be arrested for being active against the anti-state underground of Lithuania. This marked the start of a wave of arrests among officers who had been active members of the National Guard (Colonel of Staff Lieutenant General Petras Žukas, Major of Staff General Lionginas Leknickas, Captain Česlovas Meškauskas). Certainly, other charges were also brought against them, such as participation in the fights against Bolsheviks in 1919-1920.

On the night from 23 to 24 July on Švenčionėliai training ground in the 9th Infantry Regiment 24 privates, NCOs and first sergeants were arrested (after interrogations 14 NCOs and privates were released, 5 sentenced, out of which 3 perished on Russia's camps, and the fate of another three arrested servicemen is yet unknown) and 8 officers (4 were sentenced and taken to Russia's prisons and camps, where 3 of them perished; three officers were later released on the grounds of lack of incriminating evidence against them and 1 escaped from the prison when the war broke out). They were arrested for refusing to vote in favour of Lithuania's *Annexation* to the USSR in the meetings organised by the

²⁶ V. Vaitiekūnas "Vidurnakčio dokumentai", [*Documents of the Midnight*] t. 3, "Katalikų pasaulis", V: 1996, p. 174-175

²⁷ A. Anušauskas "Sovietinis genocidas ir jo padariniai" [*Soviet genocide and its Repercussions*] - "Lietuvos gyventojų genocidas", I tomas (1939-1941), LGGRTC, V.: 1999, p. 7

²⁸ LYA, Z. Šalkausko baudžiamoji byla Nr. P-14452 [*The LYA, Z. Šalkauskis's case No P-14452*]

²⁹ LYA, baudžiamoji byla Nr. 47386/3 [*The LYA, case No 47386/3*]

³⁰ LYA, P. Saladžiaus baudžiamoji byla Nr. P-10851 [*The LYA, P. Saladžius's case No P-10851*]

³¹ LYA, J. Bužėno baudžiamoji byla Nr. P-13482 [*The LYA, J. Bužėnas's case No P-13482*]

³² LYA, E. Vimerio baudžiamoji byla Nr 41235/3 [*The LYA, E. Vimeris' case No 41235/3*]

political instructors newly infiltrated in the regiment. Since majority of the regiment's men expressed resistance towards *Annexation* to the USSR, the regiment was urgently disbanded and its two battalions integrated into other regiments, and from these regiments other battalions sent to it.³³ This thereby was a demonstration that the slightest resistance will be brutally repressed.

During the period of the People's Army's existence until late August 1940 a total of 26 officers who were in service prior to the start of occupation and about 40-50 privates and NCOs were arrested. Specific information on the number of reserve officers placed under arrest is unavailable, however, this figure could be around 50-60 persons.

LIQUIDATION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD

Moscow's embassy and the LCP (B) both were of the opinion that the National Guard was underground counter-revolutionary and reactionary organisation and its urgent liquidation was an absolute necessity. Because time was needed to fulfil such goal, in the beginning efforts were taken to disrupt the army's links with the National Guard which required immediate replacement of county commandants, who also were commanders of the guards squads. And the Order to the Army No 71 announced on 28 June 1940 concerned only the commandants exclusively.³⁴ This order renamed commandant's office the office of military chief, commandants were renamed military chiefs, 9 of them dismissed from their offices and later discharged, 6 – dismissed and appointed military chiefs of other counties, 11 officers appointed military chiefs to the vacant positions (two commandants dismissed earlier). Some commandants were dismissed from their office prior to the announcement on their discharge in or appointment to other positions by the acts of the President. By the end of July out of 23 former commandants 12 had been discharged, 7 appointed commandants of other counties, and 3 appointed to other offices. Only the Commandant of Kėdainiai county Lieutenant Colonel Motiejus Karaša remained in his original position. (*Annex 11*)

Reform of commandant's offices and replacement of commandants had to serve another purpose. It was the second step in the preparation for the liquidation of the National Guard (the first step was discharge of the National Guard Commander Colonel P. Saladžius. On 11 July by the Act of the President No 1048a operation of the National Guards was suspended, and on 13 July its liquidations started.³⁵ Before that the National Guard force was disarmed. At the outset a request was laid down to complete disarmament in 24 hours, however, later the USSR embassy agreed to extend that period to up to 3 days, although in practice it took almost a week. The USSR mission in the beginning even conveyed a request through the National defence minister that the reports on the surrender of arms must be submitted three times a day. Since for technical reasons neither the commanders of guard squads nor the General Staff could satisfy this requirement, it was lessened and one report transmitted per 24 hours sufficed. Although

³³ S.Knezys "9-asis pėstininkų Lietuvos kunigaikščio Vytenio pulkas" [*9th Infantry Regiment of the Lithuanian Duke Vytenis*] - "Kardas, 2000, Nr. 3 p. 24-31

³⁴ LCVA, f, R-222, Inventory schedule 1, File 3, P. 90

³⁵ [sakymas liaudies kariuomėnei Nr. 97, 1940 m. liepos 13 d. [*Order to the Army No 97 of 13 July 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 1, File 1, P. 42

the order was carried out, the guards nevertheless managed to conceal a certain amount of arms.³⁶

Despite the urgency of efforts, liquidation of the National Guard was delayed until 15 September.³⁷

MORAL COERCION IN THE ARMY

Another aspect should be discussed. It concerns moral coercion. Among the most outstanding examples of moral coercion could be the Army's involvement in the Kremlin-rigged process of Lithuania's entry into the Soviet Union and the assessment of qualifications of officers, re-enlisted NCOs and civilian staff.

The army commander and its political commander appointed from outside took effort to lay down a set of orders and instructions concerning soldiers' participation in political activities. According to them, the Red Army soldier was the best example to be followed by Lithuanian servicemen. The army was ordered to attend the election to the Seimas in an organised and orderly manner and in observance of the code of discipline.³⁸ It meant that all men had to vote for the candidates selected in the CC LCP (B) (Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party (Bolshevik)) Staff.

In the Moscow-rigged elections of 14 July 1942 to the Seimas 79 members were elected, who included 5 representatives of the army: 4 of them were soldiers drafted into the military service and 1 officer, almost all of them – political instructors. The elected officer Second Lieutenant Vladas Biržietis, too, was a political instructor in a regiment, mobilised to serve from the active reserve. It must be pointed out that all servicemen elected to the Seimas served the soviet authorities loyally, and occupied high-ranking positions in Lithuania after the war, except for Second Lieutenant Biržietis who remained in Lithuania after the war broke out and whose further fate is unknown, save for a trace left by him: an article titled "What is left to us is to support...", publicised in the "Lithuanian Archive" publication of the German occupation period.³⁹

As soon as the elections to the Seimas were over, another organised campaign was launched, in the course of which in various meetings, manifestations and assemblies Communist party-appointed speakers were expressing "the will of the people" to demand the newly elected Seimas to take the decision to join the USSR. As before, the army was forced to take part in this show on a massive scale. Among the 20-member delegation which travelled to Moscow and was authorised to ask for Lithuania's acceptance into the

³⁶ O.Žadvydas. Mirtininkų gretose. [*On the Death Row*] "Karys", 1976, Nr.4, p. 131-132

³⁷ Įsakymas Šaulių Sąjungos likvidacijai Nr. 3, 1940 m. rugsėjo 15 d. [*Order No3 on the Liquidation of the National Guard, 15 September 1940*] - S.Raštikis. Lietuvos Šaulių sąjungos likvidavimas [*Liquidation of the National Guard*] // Lietuvių archyvas. Bolševizmo metai. IV tomas. [*The Lithuanian Archive, the Years of Bolshevism, VoP. IV*] Kaunas, 1944, p. 32

³⁸ Liaudies kariuomenės vado įsakymas Nr. 28, 1940 m. liepos 13 d. [*Order No 28 of the Peoples' Army's Commander, 13 July 1940*]

³⁹ "Lietuvių archyvas. Bolševizmo metai", [*The Lithuanian Archive. The Years of Bolshevism*] t. III, Kaunas, 1942, p. 67-69

Soviet Union were two army representatives: Minister of National defence General of Division V. Vitkauskas and private Viktoras Ditkevičius, political instructor.

The paragraph of the Law on the Reform of the Lithuanian Army providing for the servicemen's participation in political activities, was designed, as it turned out, to serve a covert goal. It is paradoxical **that the army whose principal function was to resist the occupational army, was coerced to glorify the Red Army, to take part in the elections to the Seimas destined to perpetrate the will of occupants, to speak out in favour of the joining of the USSR and welcome the decisions of the puppet authority disastrous for Lithuania.** (*Annexes 12, 13*).

Such was the overall background and atmosphere in which the Lithuanian soldiers found themselves [living]. Although concentrating on separate individuals and clarifying their positions is a complex task given the totality of [servicemen], even this issue was not neglected. On 17 July 1940 the Commander of the People's Army issued a secret order No 29 with attached instruction to carry out an immediate assessment of qualifications among officers, NCOs and the civilian staff.⁴⁰ (*Annex 14*). The chief goal of this assessment surely was to initiate the selection among officers, NCOs and the civilian staff to identify those who could be left for service in the Red Army. Such interpretation makes reasonable the instruction to convey in the performance assessment [a conclusion as to] whether the person under assessment "has the intention and how strong to defend the interests of the people and whether he is committed to pursue the aspirations of the new people's government" (the text of performance assessment had to be signed by the assessing commanders and the respective political instructors). And the individuals under assessment themselves were forced to give an answer to this question. Everyone was being forced to put down "I am fully committed to the defence of the people's interests" and "I am dedicated to the implementation of the goals of the new people's government" in the secret data file that had to be filled in by everyone undergoing an assessment, and sign under it.⁴¹ It was not just a mere formality, in essence, it **was a pledge of allegiance to the new authorities into which the individual under assessment had been coerced.**

In the discussion of moral coercion, **the Communist indoctrination commenced among soldiers** should be noted. No sooner had J. Macijauskas become the army's Political Commander than he introduced the political training of soldiers on the Red Army example. The soldiers had political training according to the political training programme approved by him, but this had not been enough, because on 15 July he signed Order No 1, instructing political commanders of all divisions and units to introduce in each company daily political information [briefings] for privates, 1st class privates and NCOs, and placing a duty on political commanders of companies to deliver during them reports on the most relevant and topical issues. There was a list of topics: "on the achievements of the

⁴⁰ Liaudies kariuomenės vado slaptašakymas Nr. 29, 1940 m. liepos 17 d. [*Secret Order of the People's Army Commander No 29, 17 July 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund 384, Inventory schedule 7, File 343, P. 55

⁴¹ Kpt. Jono Jociaus žinių lapas, pasirašytas 1940 m. rugpjūčio 5 d. [*Data file of Cp. Jonas Jocius signed on 15 August 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund 513, Inventory schedule 1, File 408, P. 42

Soviet Union, its invincible Red Army, the friendship between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of Lithuania'' etc.⁴² (*Annexes 15,16*).

REFORMS IN THE ARMY

Against the background of significant political changes in Lithuania, the army was undergoing other reforms simultaneously with the described changes,. In the first place all names, titles and references which could bear testimony to the former status of the army of an independent state were changed:

The army was named the Lithuanian People's Army;

All titles containing reference to the former Lithuanian President Antanas Smetona were abolished, e.g. The Military School of the 1st President of Lithuania was officially named the "Military School"⁴³,

All titles of different units of the army and its institutions, containing names of Lithuanian dukes and other personalities were abolished and the instruction was issued to stop using these titles and instead refer to different units of the army and its institutions only by numbers or on the basis of their designation⁴⁴;

Articles of the Internal Service Statute were amended, and instruction was issued that the trumpet will not be sounded to signal the hour of prayer and that during the evening roll-call the prayer will not be offered⁴⁵.

Probably the most manifest reforms in the army came with Moscow-sent Lithuanians taking over commanding of the army. As from 13 July shoulder-straps were abolished, and the badges of rank were to be worn on the collar.⁴⁶ This was an obvious sign of the Lithuanian Army being reformed on the Red Army standards.

All reforms and restructuring implemented in the army had political background. Unclear in this respect was disbanding of the cavalry as a combat force. The Staff of Cavalry was disbanded, and from 23 July turned into the Cavalry Inspection within the General Staff⁴⁷, and the cavalry regiments integrated into infantry divisions.

One element, which was a matter of principle, was still lacking to turn the army into a Red Army twin – a repressive structure in the army, reminiscent of the NKVD special

⁴² Visiems Lietuvos liaudies kariuomenės divizijų ir dalių politiniams vadovams įsakymas Nr. 1, 1940 m. liepos 15 d. [*Order No1 to all Political Commanders of Divisions and Units of the People's Army of Lithuania, 15 July 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund 284, Inventory schedule 7, File 363, P. 112

⁴³ Įsakymas kariuomenei Nr. 61, 1940 m. birželio 20 d. [*Order to the Army No 61, 20 June 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund 222, Inventory schedule 1, File 3, P. 112

⁴⁴ Įsakymas kariuomenei Nr. 98, 1940 m. liepos 25 d [*Order to the Army No 98, 25 July 1940*] . - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule1, File3, P.52

⁴⁵ Įsakymas kariuomenei Nr. 73, 1940 m. liepos 1 d. [*Order to the Army No 73, 1 July 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule1, File3, P.85

⁴⁶ Įsakymas kariuomenei Nr.91, 1940 m. liepos 13 d. [*Order to the Army No 91, 13 July 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule1, File3, P. 61

⁴⁷ LCVA, Doc.fund 524, Inventory schedule 1, File 491, P. 362

divisions. And even this problem was taken up. On 1 August the Army Commander signed a secret Order on the Reorganisation of the 2nd General Staff Section (intelligence and counter-intelligence)⁴⁸ (*Annex 5.37*). The order pointed out that the present “structure of the 2nd General Staff Section fails to ensure strong reporting on the occurring irregularities in the politico-moral life of the Lithuanian People’s Army, which is an imperative of today, and is unable to protect it against the detrimental hostile influences contravening the people’s aspirations”, and thus the section was being restructured and adjusted to the new requirements. The 2nd staff section commanders of divisions and military aviation became immediately subordinate to the Chief of the 2nd General Staff Section, and the intelligence officers in regiments – to the commanders of relevant formations and units, although they, too, were instructed to provide information to relevant commanders and political instructors on any irregularities manifesting themselves in the politico-moral standing of the army. Certainly, all the former officers of the 2nd section structure were replaced. Nevertheless, this plan was not realised in full, because briefly after this the liquidation of the Lithuanian Army was launched.

Reforming of the Lithuanian Army became irrelevant after Lithuania’s *Annexation* to the Soviet Union was formally registered in the Resolution of the USSR Supreme Council.

INCORPORATION OF THE LITHUANIAN ARMY INTO THE RED ARMY

After the *Annexation* of the Baltic States Moscow, unrestricted by any formalities, found itself free to manage the armies of these countries as it wished.

Decisions on the liquidation of the Lithuanian Army. On 11 July 1940 the People’s Defence Commissar of the USSR Marshal V. Timošenka signed Order No 0141 announcing the establishment of the Baltics Special Military Command with staff in Riga. Organisation of the Red Army’s contingent and the system of army commandments had to be reorganised by 1 August by merging into one grouping units and bodies deployed on the territories of Latvia and Lithuania and the 12 districts of Kalinin region⁴⁹. Although the order was only addressed to the Soviet army, it did not take long for the Lithuanian army to realise what it meant.

On 14 August the Political Bureau of CC AUCP (B) (Central Committee of the All-union Communist Party (Bolshevik)) adopted a secret Resolution On the Restructuring of Armies of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian SSR⁵⁰. This resolution was specified in the Directive No 0/2/105022 of the USSR People’s Defence Commissar of 17 August 1940, and addressed to the Military Council of the Baltics Special Military Command: the armies of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian SSR must be preserved for one year, purged of

⁴⁸ Liaudies kariuomenės vado įsakymas Nr. 30, slapta, 1940 m. rugpjūčio 1 d. [*Secret Order of the People’s Army Commander No 30, 1 August 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund 384, Inventory schedule 7, File 343, P. 4

⁴⁹ A.Martinionis. Prievara ir smurtu. [*By Coercion and Violence*] P. 73

⁵⁰ N.Lebedeva “VKP(b) CK Politbiuras ir 1939-1941 m. prijungtų prie SSRS teritorijų sovietizavimas” [*The Political Bureau of the CC AUCP (B) and Sovietisation of Territories Annexed to the USSR in 1939-1941*] - “Genocidas ir rezistencija”, 2000, Nr. 1(7), p. 93-94

unreliable elements and each army reorganised into the Territorial Corps. In the given period the corps of commanders was to master the Russian language and undergo military training. Later the territorial corps was to be replaced by an ex-territorial corps, raised on the common grounds.⁵¹

The same directive accorded titles to the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian corps, indicated the composition and size of corps. The Lithuanian People's Army, reformed into the 29th Territorial Corps, was to be reduced to 15,142 men. Although according to the list of positions sent by the Red Army's General Staff the corps was to comprise 16,326 men.⁵² (*Annex 17*)

Composition of the corps was as follows: the Staff, two infantry divisions and the so-called units of the corps (two artillery regiments, cavalry regiment, separate signal and sappers battalions, separate anti-aircraft artillery division and a separate air force squadron). Each division consisted of: staff of division, three infantry regiments, two artillery regiments and separate reconnaissance, signal and sappers battalions, anti-tank and anti-aircraft artillery divisions).

The news about the pending changes in the army came on 20 August, when upon the Lithuanian delegation's return from Moscow a meeting of officers was convened to hear the delegation's report on their visit to Moscow. The National Defence Minister Division General V. Vitkauskas told in it that "Stalin himself "has granted this special privilege" and "honour" to Lithuanians to serve in the Red Army and even permitted the Lithuanians to have their own separate territorial corps in it".⁵³

Following the order laid down by Moscow, the government of the no-longer-independent Lithuania, titled the Council of People's Commissars of the Lithuanian SSR, on 27 August 1940 adopted a resolution to liquidate the National Defence Ministry "in connection with re-organising of the Lithuanian People's Army into the Lithuanian Corps", setting up for that purpose the Chief Liquidation Commission. Division General V. Vitkauskas was appointed Chairman of Commission, Brigadier General A. Čepas and the Red Army representative General Major Šlemin – Commission members. The last order to the army No 136 was signed on the same day. It promulgated the aforementioned resolution of the Council of People's Commissars of the Lithuanian SSR and set forth that from that day Division General V. Vitkauskas discontinued to serve as the National Defence Minister⁵⁴. These acts initiated liquidation of the Lithuanian Army and on 30 August the reorganisation started.

⁵¹ A.Martinionis. Lietuvos kariuomenės tragedija.[*The Tragedy of the Lithuanian Army*] V.: Mintis, 1993, p. 43

⁵² 29 šaulių teritorinio korpuso organizacijos planas, priedas Nr. 1 prie 29 Korpuso štabo 1940 09 01 slapto rašto Nr. 1 [*Plan of Organisation of the 29th Territorial Corps, Annex 1 to the secret letter of the 29th Corps Staff, 1 September 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule1, File15, P. 23-25

⁵³ S.Raštikis. "Kovose dėl Lietuvos", [*Amidst the Fights for Lithuania*] AB "LITUANUS", V: 1990, p. 75

⁵⁴ [sakymas liaudies kariuomenei Nr. 136, 1940 m. rugpjūčio 27 d. [*Order to the People's Army No 136, 27 August 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule1, File3, P.12

On 30 August 1940 the Council of People's Commissars of the Lithuanian SSR adopted another resolution that, in essence, announced liquidation of the Lithuanian Army. It was formulated in the following way: "To reorganise the Lithuanian People's Army into the Territorial Infantry Corps of the Red Army and include it in the Baltics Special Military Command Army". This resolution transferred to the competence of the Baltic Special Military Command all armament, buildings and other assets, institutions subordinate to the National Defence Ministry with all its records and archives; it closed down the Military school and provided for the establishment of the Red Army Vilnius Infantry military school. The Military Commandment's Office had to be restructured into the military commissariats, also subordinate to the military command of the region.⁵⁵

Lithuanian Army's Re-organisation into the 29th Territorial Infantry Corps. On the same 30 August the first order was issued concerning the newly formed 29th Territorial Infantry Corps (TIC)⁵⁶ (*Annex 18.1*). The order stipulated that pursuant to the Resolution of the Baltics Military Command of 30 August the Lithuanian People's Army would be reformed into the 29th TIC of the USSR Red Army. There was no mention of the aforementioned resolution of the Council of People's Commissars of the Lithuanian SSR. The document also spelt out the corps' leadership and set forth that the 1st Infantry Division should be renamed the 179th Infantry Division, and the 2nd Infantry Division – the 184th Infantry Division. Orders on the reorganisation of other units and institutions of the army were to be issued at a later stage.

From 30 August the General Staff of the Lithuanian People's Army was reorganised into the Staff of the Corps⁵⁷ (*Annex 20.1*). It was achieved in a very simplistic way, i.e. by changing the title of the Staff. And as of 2 September the political leadership of the People's Army was to be called the Political Propaganda Section of the Corps, with the former Army's Chief Political Commander J. Macijauskas appointed the Acting Chief of this section.⁵⁸ (*Annex 18.2*)

In terms of subordination the 29th TIC was a unit of the 11th army of the Baltics Military Command, whose headquarters were located in Kaunas. The leadership of this army was quick to take over the control into its hands. In the first place they took care of the Lithuanian army's archives, operative plans, its top secret and secret documents. Therefore, as early as on 30 August Commander of the 11th army issued Secret Order No 0149 on the take-over of the said documents and assets from the General Staff, the

⁵⁵ S.Knezys. "Lietuvos kariuomenės inkorporavimas į Raudonosios armijos sudėtį. 29-jo šaulių teritorinio korpuso formavimas (1940 m. birželio 15 d. - 1940 m. gruodžio 31 d.)" [*Lithuanian Army's Incorporation into the Red Army: Formation of the 29th Territorial Infantry Corps*] (15 June 1940 – 31 December 1940) - "Lietuvos archyvai" Nr. 12, 1999, p. 135

⁵⁶ [sakymas 29 šaulių teritoriniam korpusui Nr.1, 1940 m. rugpjūčio 30 d. [*Order No 1 to the Territorial Infantry Corps, 30 August 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2, File 9, P.13

⁵⁷ [sakymas 29 š.t. korpuso štabui Nr. 01, 1940 m. rugsėjo 3 d. [*Order No 29 to the TIC Staff No1, 3September 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2, File 9, P. 1

⁵⁸ [sakymas 29. Šaulių teritoriniam korpusui Nr. 2, 1940 09 02 [*Order No29 to the Territorial Infantry Corps, 2 September 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2, File 9, P. 14

National defence ministry and central boards of the Lithuanian People's Army by 10 September.⁵⁹ (*Annex 21*)

The said resolution, orders and other instructions had placed the former Lithuanian Army into the hands of the Red Army's leadership in one day: during 30 August. On 1 September 1940 the 'freshly' formed Staff of the 29th TIC announced the plan on the manning of the corps.⁶⁰ Two parts can be identified in it: units of the former Lithuanian Army serving as the basis for the newly raised corps and the design of their distribution among the units of the corps (*Annexes 22-24*). The army's structures not addressed in the plan, except for the Military school, had to be liquidated.

Order No 3 to the Corps Staff (12 October 1940) evidences that as early as 24 August, order No 03889 of the USSR People's Defence Commissar was signed appointing military commissars and chiefs of political sections of the corps and its divisions.⁶¹ (*Annex 20.3*) On 27 and 29 August military commissars and political instructors of regiments and separate battalions as well as divisions were appointed. All of them left for the places of their appointment immediately. This meant that efforts were taken to ensure political control of corps' manning since its very first days and even hours. By that time the institute of commissar no longer existed in the Red Army, however, by a special resolution of the Political Bureau of the CC AUCP (B) this institute was introduced in the national corps being raised from the former armies of the Baltic States. It meant that activities of the Lithuanian commanders would be subjected to tight control, and they would not be allowed to take decisions of importance without the approval of commissars.

Apparently, candidates to commanders of the corps and division staffs, also regiments and separate units had been selected simultaneously, since as early as on 2 September appointments of 28 officers were announced⁶² (*Annex 18.2*). This day should be considered the start of manning of the corps' units.

In addition, drafting of the plan on the manning of the corps was commenced as soon as the Military Council of the Baltics Military Command received the Directive on the liquidation of the Baltic states' armies. The General Staff of the Lithuanian People's Army, following the order of the commanding staff, ordered already on 19 August commanders of units, separate units, and chiefs of boards and military institutions to

⁵⁹ [sakymo Nr. 0149 Pabaltijo karinės apygardos 11-ajai armijai "Dėl krašto apsaugos ministerijos, kariuomenės štabo ir Lietuvos liaudies kariuomenės centrinių valdybų archyvų, operatyvinio plano, ypatingos slaptos ir slaptų bylų bei turto perėmimo" nuorašo nuorašas [*Copy of a copy of Order No 0149 addressed to the Baltics Military Region's 11th army: "On the take-over of archives, operative plans, top secret and secret documents of the General Staff, the National defence ministry and central boards of the Lithuanian People's Army"*] - LCVA, Doc.fund 930, Inventory schedule 7, File 8057, P. 170

⁶⁰ 29 korpuso štabo slaptas aplinkraštis Nr.1, 1940 m. rugsėjo 1 d. [*Secret circular of the 29th Corps Staff No 1, 1 September 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule1, File15, P. 22-25

⁶¹ [sakymas 29 š.t. korpuso štabui Nr.03, 1940 m. spalio 12 d. [*Order No 3 to the 29th Corps Staff, 12 October 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2, File 9, P. 3

⁶² [sakymas Nr.2 29 šaulių teritoriniam korpusui – [*Order No 2 to the 29th territorial Infantry Corps*] LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2, File 9, P.14

urgently submit reviewed data on the personal composition and officers lists.⁶³ The data was required to draft the plan on the raising of the 29th TIC. It was submitted on 21 August.

Manning of the 29th Infantry Territorial Corps. In the manning of the corps, re-enlistees, soldiers and the civilian staff were recruited in accordance with the plan on the organisation of the corps' separate units. However, it was only at the start that officers were being appointed in line with the plan. Later they were redistributed pursuant to the orders of the military command.⁶⁴ Thereby, continuity of the line of redistribution of officers and change of commanders was being followed since the very start of occupation.

By the Order No 038 of 11 September 1940 staff officers of units of army, chiefs of bodies, commanders of battalions, divisions and squadrons were appointed in the Baltics Special Military Command army.⁶⁵ (*Annex 19.2*)

The order No 067 of 24 September appointed officers to vacant positions of staff, detachments, battalions and divisions commanders and approved the majority of appointments to positions of commanders of companies, batteries and units equal to them, appointments to commanders of detachments started.⁶⁶ (*Annex 25*)

Selection of officers to service in the Red Army was almost completed with order No 084 of 3 October on the appointment of detachment commanders and commanders of units equal to them.⁶⁷

Order of 15 November No 0202 appointed among the various command's units cadets of the 22nd graduates' course of the Military School commissioned as second lieutenants of the Red Army.

USSR People's Defence Commissar's Order No05061 of 15 November 1940 approved decisions of the Military Council of the Baltics Special Military Command concerning appointment of Lithuanian officers, and the appointees in the corps were commissioned as the Red Army officers.⁶⁸

⁶³ Kariuomenės štabo III skyriaus viršininko 1940 08 19 telefonograma Nr. 25164 [*Telephonogram No 25164 of the Army Staff 3rd Section Commander of 19 August 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 1, File 19, P. 29

⁶⁴ S.Knezys. "Lietuvos kariuomenės inkorporavimas į Raudonosios armijos sudėtį. 29-jo šaulių teritorinio korpuso formavimas (1940 m. birželio 15 d. - 1940 m. gruodžio 31 d.)" [*"Lithuanian Army's Incorporation into the Red Army. Raising of the 29th Territorial Infantry Corps (15 June 1940 – 31 December 1940)"*] - "Lietuvos archyvai" Nr. 12, 1999, p. 144

⁶⁵ Įsakymas 29. Šaulių teritoriniam korpusui Nr. 03, slaptas, 1940 09 19 [*Secret order No 3 to the 29th territorial Infantry Corps, 19 September 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2, File 6, P. 22-23

⁶⁶ Išrašas iš Pabaltijo ypatingosios karinės apygardos 1940 09 24 slapto įsakymo Nr. 067 [*Excerpt from the Secret Order No 067 of the Baltics Special Military Command of 24 September 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2, File 7, P. 18-22

⁶⁷ Įsakymas Nr. 35 294-ajam šaulių pulkui, 1940 10 21 [*Order No 35 to the 294th Infantry Regiment, 21 October 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2, File 78, P. 124

⁶⁸ Įsakymas Nr. 72 294-ajam šaulių pulkui, 1940 12 02 [*Order No 72 to the 294th Infantry regiment, 2 December 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2, File 78, P. 44-45

Late November – early December decisions concerning the officers pending appointment to the corps were taken. The Command's Order No 0307 of 19 December 1940 appointed officers who were left in service, reshuffled a certain number of officers or transferred them to other units. Thereby, manning of the corps was completed. Discharge of officers who had not been appointed was ordered by 1 January 1941. In total, more than 500 officers were discharged from the start of occupation until January 1941. (*Annexes 6,26*).

Redeployment of army units. On 4 September 1940 the units were ordered to move to new locations of deployment.⁶⁹ (*Annex27*) The corps organisation plan announced on 1 September instructed the units to move to the new locations of deployment in 10 days.

It was the second redeployment of units. The first redeployment was launched in less than a week from the start of occupation. It was carried out with the occupational army demanding to surrender a share of barracks, administrative and ancillary premises to its staff, its various services and units. In this case the redeployment stemmed from distrust of Lithuanian units, and sought to move them as far away as possible from the German border.

As a result of redeployment, the staff of the corps and of both divisions and many units of the corps had been deployed in and around Vilnius, save for 26th cavalry regiment (Kaunas), air squadron (Ukmergė), 215th infantry regiment (Rokiškis, Obeliai), 618th artillery regiment (Kupiškis), 616th artillery regiment (Švenčionys), 616th artillery regiment (Pabradė) and 617th artillery regiment (Lentvaris, Vokė, Trakai).

Some units were forced to settle in locations completely unsuited to that purpose. For example, the 262nd infantry regiment had to be deployed throughout several locations: regiment's staff and its detachments – in Trakai town, regiment's training company – in Valkininkai railway station, 1st battalion – in Trakai town, 2nd battalion – in Valkininkai town, 3rd battalion – on Tiškevičius' estate in Trakai. Regiment's units had to be placed in free spaces available, because only one battalion could be stationed on Tiškevičius' estate.⁷⁰

LIQUIDATION OF THE LITHUANIAN ARMY

As mentioned already, for the purpose of liquidation of the Lithuanian Army, the Chief Liquidation Commission was set up. Its main task was not liquidation of the army, since it had already been liquidated and integrated into the Red Army. Rather, it had to settle the issues of transfer of army's assets. All former units of the Lithuanian Army, which served as the basis for raising units of the corps, were ordered to surrender all their assets, including mobilisation reserves, to the newly raised units⁷¹ (*Annex 28.1*). This was the task for liquidation commissions, set up in each individual unit, corps or body after the raising of the 29th TIC units was started. Certainly, there was a lot of confusion, because

⁶⁹ LCVA, Doc.fund 532, Inventory schedule 1, File 179, P. 113-115

⁷⁰ J.Listopadskis. *Laisvės ir vergijos metai. [The Years of Freedom and Slavery]* V.: Mintis, 1993, p. 88

⁷¹ KAM vyr. likvidacinės komisijos pirmininko įsakymas Nr. 1 [*Order No1 of the MoD Chief Liquidation Commission's Chairman*] - LCVA, Doc.fund 384, Inventory schedule 7, File 340, P. 13

certain units were disbanded rather than reorganised by distributing people among several units. The assets owned previously by such units were transferred following the orders of the Corps Staff.

In the Lithuanian Army all issues concerning its assets and ordnance were handled by its Ordnance Corps who had at its disposal central warehouses, various factories and plants. Now all this property had to be handed over to the Red Army, and those items which were not useful had to be disposed of and a report submitted to the state control. Besides, the newly raised 29th TIC until the end of 1940 had to be funded from the state budget of Lithuania and supplied by the Lithuanian procurement services, which means that the Ordnance Corps had to continue its operation, although of reduced composition. The Liquidation Commission appointed by the Council of People's Commissars of the Lithuanian SSR and led by the Division General V. Vitkauskas was busy with the task of corps raising and could not simultaneously engage itself in the liquidation of the former Lithuanian Army, therefore, on 26 September by the Resolution No 148 of the Council of People's Commissars of the Lithuanian SSR its size was enlarged. Division General S. Raštikis was appointed Deputy Chairman of the Chief Liquidation Commission and authorised to act within the mandate granted to the commission's chairman, and Colonel Leonas Rajeckas and Lieutenant Colonel Antanas Urbelis together with the representative of the People's Commissariat of State Control⁷² engineer Mašiotas were appointed commission's members (*Annex 28.17*)

Although in the beginning it was expected that the liquidation commission would largely handle property issues, make inventories of records and documents, however, later it had to take up the issues that were not addressed by the Staff of the Baltics Military Command and the corps command. In the first place, it had to handle liquidation of and discharge of personnel from those institutions and units which had not been addressed in the corps raising plan. For example, on 13 September the Order of Chairman of the MoD Chief Liquidation Commission announced that the Military People's Tribunal was disbanded and the Tribunal's activities were suspended on 2 September, and instructed all the tribunal's property and all files to be handed over to the Prosecutor's Office of the 11th army.⁷³ (*Annex 28.9*) Pursuant to the instruction of the Red Army's General Staff, officers of the Military Tribunal and the Prosecutor's Office were discharged for the reasons of the institution's liquidation pursuant to the orders of 16 and 24 October.⁷⁴ (*Annex 28*)

Documents surviving in the archives evidence that the work of liquidation commissions was in particular complex because of lack of definite and comprehensive instructions who

⁷² KAM vyr. likvidacinės komisijos pirmininko įsakymas Nr. 17, 1940 m. spalio 2 d. [*Order No17 of the MoD Chief Liquidation Commission's Chairman, 2 October 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund 384, Inventory schedule 7, File 362, P. 63

⁷³ KAM vyr. likvidacinės komisijos pirmininko įsakymas Nr. 9, 1940 m. rugsėjo 13 d. [*Order of the Chairman of the MoD Chief Liquidation Commission No 9, 13 September 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund 384, Inventory schedule 7, File 362, P. 74

⁷⁴ KAM vyr. likvidacinės komisijos pirmininko įsakymai Nr. 24, 1940 m. spalio 16 d., Nr. 26, 1940 m. spalio 24 d. [*Order of the Chairman of the MoD Chief Liquidation Commission No 24, 16 October 1940, No 26, 24 October 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund 384, Inventory schedule 7, File 362, P. 51, 48

should take over the property. It frequently was the case that even if the body taking over the property was designated, there was nobody to take it over. The commanding staffs were flooded with letters, telegrams and other documents from units under liquidation inquiring how to handle the assets, to whom submit the records and other documents.

However, Moscow was urging to press ahead with the liquidation of units and institutions of the former Lithuanian Army. The supreme bodies wished to hear the report that the Lithuanian Army had been disposed of. Thereby, on 17 October 1940 leadership of the corps received the Order of the Baltics Special Military Command Staff No OM/00590 to complete the disbanding of individual units, warehouses, workshops, hospitals, institutions, non-permanent staff and other entities of the former Lithuanian People's Army not included in the composition of the 29th corps. The 11th Army Staff Commander was charged with the immediate supervision of and commandment over liquidation.

Pursuant to these instructions, on 24 October 1940 Commander of the Corps issued the order No 018 addressed to the corps and all formations, units and institutions of the former Lithuanian People's Army requesting all the liquidation activities to be finalised by 27 October.⁷⁵ (*Annex 29*) The following facilities and institutions were not disbanded and left pending special order: gas-mask factory in Linkaičiai, artillery factory and warehouse in Kaunas, quartermaster warehouse in Kaunas and artillery factory in Linkaičiai. An order was laid down to discharge from the units being liquidated and the liquidation commissions of institutions all civilian staff and re-enlistees who had not been appointed to units of the Corps. The order did not apply to the institutions of military chiefs, their civilian staff and the re-enlistees. The exception was made due to the fact that the LSSR military commissariats were being formed at the time and these institutions were needed to arrange the registration of people. In addition, the order No 19 of 7 October by the Chairman of the Chief Liquidation Commission under the Ministry of National Defence said that the town and district offices of military chiefs shall be liquidated and given over to the jurisdiction military commissariat of the Republic.⁷⁶ (*Annex 28.19*)

Generally speaking, it was impossible to accomplish all that was required in such a short time, but the Chief Liquidation Commission had no other choice than to announce the completion of its work. The pressure on it was so hard that on 27 October 1940 the Chairman of the Chief Liquidation Commission issued his last Order No 29 saying that all the constituent parts of the Ministry of National Defence and of the Lithuanian People's Army, as well as its offices and enterprises, with the exception of those included in the order No 018 to the corps, shall be considered disbanded as of 28 October. The Chief Liquidation Commission shall cease its work and its functions shall be given over to the governing body of the 29th Territorial Infantry Corps. The Chief Liquidation Commission

⁷⁵ 29. ŠT korpusui ir buv. Lietuvos liaudies kariuomenės junginiams, dalims ir įstaigoms įsakymas Nr. 018, visai slaptas, 1940 10 24 [*Order No 018 to the 29th TI corps and formations, units and institutions of the former Lithuanian People's Army, top secret, 24 October 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2, File 3, P. 3-4

⁷⁶ KAM vyr. likvidacinės komisijos pirmininko įsakymas Nr. 1 9, 1940 m. spalio 7 d. [*Order of the Chairman of MoD Chief Liquidation Commission No 19, 7 October 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund 384, Inventory schedule 7, File 362, P. 60

was disbanded under the resolution No 310 of 4 November by the Council of People's Commissars of the Lithuanian SSR.⁷⁷ (*Annex 30*)

The last remains of the Lithuanian People's Army's sub-units and institutions, not included into the 29th Territorial Infantry Corps, were eliminated on 28 October 1940, although the liquidation was still being carried out. The Military Council of the Baltics Special Military Command passed a resolution No 021 of 19 December, stating that the liquidation had been ungroundedly delayed, with 243 persons still involved in the process of it in the 29th TIC only, 193 of whom had been dismissed by the command's orders, but were carrying out their duties nevertheless. The resolution gave instructions to complete the liquidation by the 1 January 1941, and to dismiss all the military officers who could not be used in the service⁷⁸. (*Annexes 31, 32*)

The army ceased to exist after its incorporation into the Red Army, but the liquidation remained unaccomplished. When a Group of experts for the damage resulting from the expropriation of the former Lithuanian Army property was formed in the Ministry of National Defence in 1992, it found in the archives statements of passed property that cover approximately only two thirds of the property the army possessed. According to the 1923-1940 allocations in the Lithuanian budget to defence needs, a property estimated at more than 240 million Litas of those times had been expropriated, which equals nearly 681.2 million US dollars in the exchange rate of 7 April 1992. The sum, however, does not include the price of the property acquired for non-budgetary assets, of the real estate, and of the property of the National Guard, officers' clubs and other patriotic organisations that functioned under the Ministry of National Defence.⁷⁹

ACTIVITIES OF REPRESSIVE STRUCTURES IN THE 29TH TERRITORIAL INFANTRY CORPS

The special NKVD department of the corps. When the 29th TIC was being formed, a repressive structure, an NKVD subunit called the Special NKVD Department, was created. The formation of the department began at the end of September. In the preparation to form the special NKVD Department in the corps, the NKVD Department of the Baltics Military Command ordered the Staff of the Corps by the letter No 1727 of 6 September, to hand over all the files and property of the disbanded former 2nd Section of the People's Army Staff to the Special Department of the 11th Army. The files and property of the 2nd Department were needed in the formation of the 29th TIC Special NKVD Department⁸⁰. The Special Department was interested only in the files and property of the 2nd Section, not in the people who worked there. As the documents of the Special NKVD Department of the Baltics Military Command show, it was most difficult to select Lithuanian candidates for the formation of the Special Department in the corps

⁷⁷ LCVA, Doc.fund 384, Inventory schedule 3, File 530, P. 95

⁷⁸ LCVA, Doc.fund 384, Inventory schedule 4, File 31, P. 38

⁷⁹ KAM ekspertų grupės ataskaita "Žala dėl 1940 metais nusavintos Lietuvos Respublikos ginkluotųjų pajėgų ginkluotės ir karinio turto", KAM, [*Report by the MoD Expert Group "On the Damage Resulting from the Nationalisation of Armament and Military Assets of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Lithuania in 1940"*] 1996

⁸⁰ 1940 m. rugsėjo 11 d. slaptas įsakymas Nr 1 29-ajam ŠTK [*Secret Order No1 of 11 September 1940 to the 29th TIC*] - LCVA, Doc.fund532, Inventory schedule1, File179, P.113-115

and in the divisions. The Command's Special Department had no Lithuanian among its staff, and the Lithuanian CP CC could not provide the required number of communists for the work in the department, therefore, the decision to employ several former People's Army's political instructors, including even non-party members, was taken.⁸¹ (*Annex 33*)

The formation of the Special Department of the corps was almost completed by the beginning of October.

The Special NKVD Department of the corps, headed by Colonel Juozas Bartašiūnas⁸², who had served in the Soviet Security Forces from 1921 to 1940, as well as in the NKVD, was subordinate to the Special NKVD Department of the 11th Army.

The Special NKVD Department of the corps was structured according to the corps structure. It comprised the Special Department and its two subunits in each of the divisions, the chiefs of which were the subordinates of Colonel Bartašiūnas. Vladas Krestjanovas was appointed the Chief of the Special NKVD Department of the 179th Infantry Division, whereas Lionginas Tumašovas was appointed as a Chief in the 184th Infantry Division. The Special Department of the corps also included operative agents for the corps subunits, while the Special Departments of the divisions had operation agents attached to the division subunits. Lithuanians formed only a part of the corps' structure, working mainly as operative agents in the subunits, while nearly all its regular staff were the NKVD agents, sent by the Red Army NKVD Board. As the former People's Army's political instructors had no experience of work in such a structure, the Red Army NKVD Board members were appointed to the posts of deputy chiefs of the special department within divisions. For instance, the Deputy Chief of the Special Department of the 184th Infantry Division was Borodavkin. It was the deputies who organised all the main NKVD activities; sometimes they would even give orders to their chiefs who had only begun to learn the NKVD work methods.

The NKVD structure in the corps was not big. Its main task was to spy on the soldiers, register all the cases of dissatisfaction with the new system and service in the Red Army, look for signs of underground activity in the corps, and search for the "traitors" – it means those planning to desert the army and flee to a foreign country, as well as persons maintaining contacts with underground organisations operating in Lithuania, with foreign countries, and similar.

The Special NKVD Department of the corps was not isolated in its activities. The Special NKVD Department of the 11th Army and of the Baltics Military Command were engaged in the same activity in the corps. They would take over the more important cases. They also maintained close relations with NKVD institutions of the Lithuanian SSR. (*Annexes 33, 34, 36-41*)

Formation of NKVD agency in the corps. The Special NKVD Department of the corps received part of the information from political bodies of the corps, but it was not restricted to that. Formation of a big network of secret informants began from the very beginning of the Special Department. As it has already been mentioned, formation of the

⁸¹ Pabaltijo karinės apygardos NKVD ypatingojo skyriaus viršininko saugumo majoro Babičiaus 1940 12 02 visiškai slaptai pranešimas Nr. 10024 Lietuvos SSR vidaus reikalų liaudies komisariui [*Top secret Report by the Chief of the NKVD Special department of the Baltics Military Command Security Major Babičius No 10024 of 2 December 1940 to the Commissar of the USSR People's Commissar of Internal Affairs*] - LYA, Doc.fund K-1, Inventory schedule19, File1, P.10

⁸² K.Ēringis "Lietuvos kariuomenės tragedija". [*The Tragedy of the Lithuanian Army*] V.: "Raštija", 1993, p. 86-87

special department began at the end of September, and as early as on 10 November 387 persons were employed in the agency, among them 68 military officers, 81 non-commissioned officers and 238 privates⁸³. Major Babičius, the Chief for State Security of the Special NKVD Department of the Baltics Military Command interpreted it as a considerable achievement in his letter No 10024 of 2 December 1940 to the People's Commissar of the Interior of the Lithuanian SSR, but expressed dissatisfaction at the fact that the agency, despite the big number of its workers, allegedly did not perform well, as the young operative agents were unable to screen and recruit people in the selection process, neither could they work with the recruited professionally. Besides, the agencies had not been established in all the separate sub-units yet. Babičius noted it as a big flaw that the fixed-post spies (residents) were not established yet, and informants in the environment around the military sub-units, i.e. among the local people, had not been found. There were cases when the recruited would refuse to work for the NKVD, on grounds of an earlier oath to serve the people of Lithuania. (*Translation of this report from Russian is attached in the Annex 33a*)

It was only the beginning. In the Red Army, communists and members of the Comsomol League comprised a large number of servicemen, which created favourable circumstances for the formation of the NKVD agency. The situation in the newly formed corps was the opposite, with as few as several Lithuanians among the communists and young communists. The Military Commissar of the Corps Cariovas was forced to ascertain this in the meeting of the CC LCP (B) Bureau considering the political-moral situation of the corps, and acknowledge that although every subunit had a party-organisation, their members were not Lithuanian citizens, and men of the corps were not yet accepted into the party and young communist organisations.⁸⁴ The Political Departments and political instructors were responsible for the training of communists and young communists, while the NKVD had its own separate tasks to be carried out, therefore, they had to abandon the traditional methods and recruit non-party people, training them to become residents.

The NKVD was active in its work and the agency's network expanded. For instance, on 10 November the NKVD Agency of the 184th Infantry Division had 137 people, while on 1 February 1941 it already had 217 people, and 8 residencies were established. 63 persons out of 217 recruited were handed over to the central registry. (*Annex 34*) The situation was similar in the 179th Infantry Division: the number of the recruited increased from 184 till 284 in the period between 10 November 1940 and 1 February 1941. In January 1941, 71 persons were recruited, among them 21 residents, and the formation of the agency started: 13 residents had 42 informants to ensure the contacts⁸⁵. (*Annex 38*) Although the figures are impressively high, the NKVD chiefs had

⁸³ Pabaltijo karinės apygardos NKVD ypatingojo skyriaus viršininko saugumo majoro Babičiaus 1940 12 02 visiškai slaptai pranešimas Nr. 10024 Lietuvos SSR vidaus reikalų liaudies komisariui – [*Top secret Report by the Chief of the NKVD Special department of the Baltics Military Command Security Major Babičius No 10024 of 2 December 1940 to the USSR People's Commissar of Internal Affairs*] LYA, Doc.fund K-1, Inventory schedule19, File1, P.12

⁸⁴ LKP(b) CK biuro posėdžio protokolo ištrauka, - 1940 m. spalio 25 d. [*Excerpt from the minutes of the CC LCP (B) Bureau meeting, 25 October 1940*] - A.Martinionis "Prievara ir smurtu", "Kardas", V: 1998, p 82

⁸⁵ 179-os šaulių divizijos NKVD YS viršininko Krestjanovo 1941 02 03 visiškai slaptas pranešimas Lietuvos TSR vidaus reikalų liaudies komisariui drg. Gudzevičiui [*Top secret report of the 179th Infantry Division NKVD Special*

to acknowledge that very little has been achieved in the attempts to recruit officers, who most of all interested the NKVD, secret informants were being recruited slowly, and those recruited performed their tasks unwillingly, supplying not valuable information. (*Annexes* 33, 38)

The agency employed various methods to recruit people, and more often than not took every opportunity it had to discredit the soldier. Vladas Baleckis, the NKVD agent of the 262nd Infantry Regiment, former private soldier and political instructor in the People's Army, obtained a written pledge from drunk Major Antanas Tamulevicius to inform him on a regular basis about the regiment officers' political views and sentiments. When the sober Major condemned his pledge himself and refused to keep his promise, Baleckis threatened him with arrest and deportation to Siberia. Major Tamulevicius saved himself from collaboration with the NKVD by repatriating to Germany, as his family and he himself already were on the German Embassy's list of repatriates.⁸⁶

Censorship of soldiers' letters. The Special Department of the corps worked in close co-operation with the NKVD of the Lithuanian SSR. The latter received all the information about discharged officers and re-enlistees for the purposed of future work. The NKVD of the Lithuanian SSR would in return "repay" the Special Department "for its services" by giving information about the possible connections of the corps soldiers with the Lithuanian underground organisations. The universal spying system scrutinised even private correspondence of soldiers with their family members and acquaintances. The NKVD of the Lithuanian SSR had established mail censorship posts that were earlier at the disposal of the 2nd Departments of the NKVD Board, and the Special Department of the corps would be immediately informed of anything that could be of interest to it.⁸⁷ (*Annex* 40) In the period from 15 January till 5 May 1941 alone, 3551 letters from the corps' soldiers to their relatives and acquaintances were confiscated at the mail censorship posts.⁸⁸ All the letters that included criticism of and dissatisfaction with the Red Army, as well as that of the soldier life in the Red Army, statements against giving the oath of allegiance, and similar, would not reach their addressees and would be enclosed in the NKVD files.

The Institute of Political Instructors in the corps. Although the institute of Political Instructors did not form a constituent part of the Red Army's repressive structures, the commissars and political instructors were rather important in the perpetration of violence and terror. The rights of political instructors of lower rank, the so-called "politruks", did not equal those of military commissars of divisions, regiments, separate divisions or battalions, and not all of them were fiercely hostile towards the Lithuanian soldiers. Officially, political instructors were responsible for the political-moral standing of soldiers in the separate subunits, as well as for their political training.

department Chief Krestjanov of 3 February 1941 to the Peoples Commissar of Internal Affairs of the LSSR comrade Gudzevičius] - LYA, Doc.fund K-1, Inventory schedule 19, File 1, P.

⁸⁶ J.Listopadskis. *Laisvės ir vergijos metai*. [The *Years of Freedom and Slavery*] V.: Mintis, 1993, p. 92-93

⁸⁷ NKVD Vilniaus valsybės viršininko pavadootojo v/s mjr. Bykovo visai slaptas specialialus pranešimas Lietuvos SSR vidaus reikalų liaudies komisaro pavadootojui v/s majorui Gladkovui, 1941 01 06 [Top secret report by the Deputy Chief of the NKVD Vilnius Area Major Bykov to the Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs Major Gladkov, 6 January 1941] - LYA, Doc.fund K-1, Inventory schedule 19, File 1, P. 39-42

⁸⁸ S.Raštikis. *Kovose dėl Lietuvos*. [*Amidst the Fights for Vilnius*] Vilnius.: AB LITUANUS, 1990, p. 103

However, the order of the Red Army established that the responsibility for the political-moral standing of soldiers involved the obligation to have as much as possible information about each soldier and to pass it over to the political instructors of higher rank. Thus, the information would “flow” into the Political Departments, and from there into the NKVD. Even the facts that the soldier himself supplied, such as that he came from a family of “exploiters”, could determine the inclusion of the soldier into the list of the “exploiter” class and naturally attach him to the anti-Soviet elements. The thoughts and statements of soldiers were also treated seriously, and the political instructors were creating a network of informants among soldiers, called the actives (most active members of the party). Although other soldiers knew about the existence of the actives, the number of its members and, consequently, the scope of information, increased gradually.

The commissars and political instructors had an important role to play in the corps in re-educating soldiers in the spirit of communist ideology, therefore, all of them were sent to Lithuania from the Red Army. Several of them had come to Lithuania before formation of the corps began. From 6 to 10 September, a rather large group of political instructors came to the units of the corps and were divided among the units and the Staff of the corps.⁸⁹ (*Annexes 18.3, 18.4*) In the period from October to September, the number of political instructors in the corps, continually increased later, was more than 300. Each subunit, starting with the company, battery, and other subunits equal to them, had a political instructor appointed. Their activity was co-ordinated by the Political Departments of the corps, the divisions and the units, the activity of which the Lithuanian commanders could not influence as they were directly subordinate to the respective commissars. Separate units did not embrace a Political Department.

Political instructors performed a special task in the Red Army for which they had been trained in specialised military-political schools. The former Lithuanian political instructors of the People’s Army had no skills for such tasks. Therefore, they were dismissed from the posts of political instructors as of 21 September, by discharging many of them into the reserve, after the Russian political instructors arrived.⁹⁰ (*Annex 26.13*)

Although the political instructors sent from Russia “had more political experience and were trained better theoretically”,⁹¹ they had absolutely no knowledge of the Lithuanian language and could not communicate with soldiers without interpreters. The way of thinking of the Lithuanian soldiers was alien to them, while the mechanically applied methods of work produced results opposite to the expected. Soon the Chief Political Board of the Red Army became conscious of that and ordered to establish an institute of deputy political instructors and to initiate the training of Lithuanian political personnel.⁹² The meeting of the Lithuanian CP (b) CC on 25 October 1940 ascertained in the discussion on the political-moral situation in the corps that the decision to dismiss Lithuanian political instructors was a mistake. On 29 December, the LCP (b) made the decision to send immediately 85 Lithuanian communists and young communists to work

⁸⁹ Įsakymai 29. Šaulių teritoriniam korpusui Nr. 5, [*Orders to the 29th TIC No5*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2., File 9, P. 4, 5-6

⁹⁰ KAM vyr. likvidacinės komisijos pirmininko įsakymas Nr. 13, 1940 09 21 [*Order of the Chairman of the MoD Chief Liquidation Commission No 13, 21 September 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund 384, Inventory schedule 7, File 362, P. 69

⁹¹ KAM vyr. likvidacinės komisijos pirmininko įsakymas Nr. 13, 1940 09 21 [*Order of the Chairman of the MoD Chief Liquidation Commission No 13, 21 September 1940*] - LCVA, Doc.fund 384, Inventory schedule 7, File 362, P. 69

⁹² LVOA, Doc.fund 1771, Inventory schedule 2, File 530, P. 25-27

with the corps soldiers. The County Party Committees were ordered to send 2-7 carefully selected communists for the task.⁹³

The Red Army officers in the corps. In the formation of the corps, Lithuanian officers were appointed to the posts of commanders. Although the commissars and the political instructors were supposed to secretly supervise the activity of commanders, they had various functions divided among them and the commanders. The commanders had the formal right to take decisions on purely military issues. However, the policy of distrust in Lithuanians was exercised in this sphere as well, by appointing regular Red Army officers to the posts of deputy commanders of certain departments in companies, the corps, and division staffs. Thus, the Lithuanian commanders were under double control, not including the control exerted by the Special Department of the corps. Later on, the number of Red Army officers increased in the corps. They were appointed to vacant positions vacated by the arrested and discharged Lithuanian officers serving in the Red Army. In the spring of 1941 the Red Army officers comprised a considerable share of the officers corps.

Because the plans provided for the shift to the extra-territorial principle in the formation of the corps in less than one year, there can be no doubt that another purpose of the Red Army officers' infiltration was to take over the posts from the Lithuanian officers at a later stage. Replacement of commanders in June 1941 is a prove to it.

The third task for the Red Army officers is evident too. They were sent to serve in a special corps, formed on the basis of a formerly independent country's army that was alien and hostile to the Red Army in its aims and ideology. They underwent a careful selection and, possibly, even a special training before being sent to Lithuania, as their infiltration in the corps started much later than that of political instructors. The orders to divisions, regiments and separate units show that few of them arrived to the corps in September and October, while in November and December the number increased considerably.

“The lists on the degree of contamination in the units“. Security agents, commissars and political instructors started compiling the lists of suspects, called “the lists on the degree of contamination in the units”, from the very beginning of the corps formation. This is how they looked at the beginning of January 1941.⁹⁴ (*Annex 35*) The Corps Staff and the units subordinate to the Corps Staff comprised 245 officers. The Special Department identified among them 107 members of the so-called counter-revolutionary, fascist and other anti-Soviet organisations: 32 members of the National Guard, 7 members of *Ateitis* organisation, 18 scouts, 7 members of the Young Lithuania, 20 active anti-Bolshevik fighters in the period 1918-1920, and others. 135 officers with such characteristics were included into the “lists of contamination” in the 179th Infantry Division.

The NKVD concluded that “the officers harbouring most hostile views towards the Red Army have gone underground and are preparing for more serious anti-Soviet attacks”.

⁹³ LVOA, Doc.fund 1771, Inventory schedule 2, File 530

⁹⁴ LSSR vidaus reikalų liaudies komisaro, valstybės saugumo vyr. majoro A.Guzevičiaus 1941 m. sausio mėn. visiškai slaptas pranešimas apie politinę ir moralinę padėtį 29 teritoriniame korpuse [*Top secret report by the LSSR people's Commissar of Internal Affairs, State Security Senior Major A. Guzevičius of January 1941 on the political and moral situation in the 29th Territorial Corps*] - Lietuvos archyvai, 1997, Nr. 9

The NKVD agents were no less worried by the junior commanders and soldiers. 416 persons, former members of various counter-revolutionary organisations (National Guard members, members of *Ateitis* organisation, Young Lithuania members, scouts, and other), were disclosed in the Corps Staff and the units subordinate to the Corps Staff.

Out of 4,875 junior commanders and soldiers in the 179th Infantry Division, 936 were included in the lists of suspects, while in the 184th Infantry Division 103 out of 682 younger commanders and 716 out of 4,165 privates were listed as suspects.

A total of approximately 2,600 officers, junior commanders and soldiers were included in the lists of suspects.

A separate list was compiled on those who could do harm to the Soviet authorities in the future. It included soldiers whose families had in one way or another suffered from the Soviet authorities. 472 junior commanders and privates, as well as 49 officers were listed (not including officers of the 184th Infantry Division, whose number was not specified).

It should be added that there were attempts to list soldiers who supported the Soviet authorities or were given land by it. The list was short: 96 privates and 11 junior commanders in the units subordinate to the corps received land from the Soviet authorities; not a single officer was put on the list.

The list of deserters, constantly expanding, should also be considered a list of suspects. In the period from 1 October to 10 December only, 29 persons deserted the corps, among them 2 officers, 5 junior commanders, 3 regiment school students, and 19 soldiers⁹⁵. (*Annex 39*) The NKVD concluded that deserters largely tried to flee to Germany (several of them got killed trying to cross the border), therefore, the environment of deserters were under close scrutiny.

Lacking sufficient grounds to make an arrest, the NKVD would discharge the unreliable officers, re-enlistees and even active service soldiers, and pass the data at their disposal to the territorial subunits of the NKVD for further control on the discharged. Thus, 13 officers of the 184th Infantry Division were dismissed in the period from December 1940 to April 1941, allegedly for political and moral reasons⁹⁶. (*Annex 43*) The purging was facilitated by the process of repatriation to Germany that started at the beginning of 1941. Most of those included into the lists of repatriates featured on the NKVD files, however, their discharge was even easier, as there can be no doubt about the fact that there were recruited persons among the repatriates. In the 297th Infantry Regiment alone, the list of discharged due to repatriation (*Annex 44*) comprised 27 soldiers⁹⁷ (*Annex 44*), whereas in the 184th Infantry Division as many as 66 persons were on the list, among them 17 officers⁹⁸. A total of 200 soldiers were dismissed due to repatriation.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Pabaltijo karinės apygardos NKVD ypatingojo skyriaus viršininko saugumo majoro Babičiaus 1941 01 03 visiškai slaptai pranešimas Nr. 158/5 Lietuvos SSR vidaus reikalų liaudies komisaro pavaduotojui valstybės saugumo majorui drg. Gladkovui - LYA, Doc.fund K-1, Inventory schedule 19, File 1, P. 89 [*Top secret report No 158/5 by the Baltics Military Command NKVD Special Department Chief Security Major Babičius of 3 January 1941 to the Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Lithuanian SSR State Security Major Comrade Gladkov*]

⁹⁶ LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2, File 58, P. 44

⁹⁷ LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2, File 59, P. 108

⁹⁸ LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2, File 59, P. 113

⁹⁹ Repatriation continued until the end of March 1941

Having collected sufficient, in their opinion, evidence, the NKVD agents arrested the soldiers and interrogated them. In the period of NKVD structure formation in the corps from 1 October to 10 December, 12 privates and NCOs, as well as 3 civilian persons¹⁰⁰ were arrested. Later, the non-confidential documents started referring to the arrested as the “withdrawn” (*išimtieji*). The arrested were released in very few cases. In the 184th Infantry Division alone, 54 soldiers, among them 7 officers, were arrested in the period from January to 15 May 1941¹⁰¹. (*Annex 45*) The situation was similar in the corps units and in the 179th Infantry Division.

The activities of Military Prosecutor’s Offices, Military Tribunals and the Special Meeting. The further fate of soldiers was decided by the military prosecutor’s office, military tribunals and the Special Meeting. Military prosecutor’s office and a military tribunal was established in each army and all larger units of the Red Army. A 2nd rank lawyer Zabijaka was appointed the Acting Military Prosecutor of the 29th TIC. By 15 September he had taken over the files, archive and assets of the Military Prosecutor’s Office of the former People’s Army¹⁰². Upon completion of the investigation, the files were referred to the Prosecutor’s Office that decided whether to send the files to the Military Tribunal or to the Military Prosecutor’s Office of the Baltics Military Command which, in its turn, would send them files to the County District Military Tribunal. The military tribunals of the corps usually “restricted” themselves to privates and non-commissioned officers, while the county military tribunal dealt with cases of officers. However, there were cases, when the army’s military tribunal heard the cases of officers, but lower-rank only. Material of the more important cases was presented to the Special Meeting, in which case there was no trial: the Special Meeting took decisions according to the documents presented, usually validating the sentence suggested.

The activity of the 11th Army Military Tribunal and the fact that it had sentenced Lithuanian soldiers is evidenced by the top secret file of this tribunal, discovered together with the copies of its sentences at the start of the war. The trial began on 2 January 1941. The first sentence was passed on 13-14 January, the last (No 0099) – on 20 June of the same year. The documents found reveal that the 11th Army Military Tribunal, also comprising the 29th TIC, heard the cases of 52 Lithuanian soldiers and 1 civilian person in its 16 sessions. 6 soldiers and 8 more were sentenced to execution, but 7 of them had their death sentence replaced by 10 years of imprisonment in correctional labour camp, 1 had the death sentence changed to 15 years of imprisonment in correctional labour camp. 16 soldiers were sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment in correctional labour camp, 1 was sentenced to 10 years, 3 were sentenced to 7 years, 6 were sentenced to 6 years, 9 were sentenced to 5 years, and 2 were sentenced to 3 years of imprisonment in correctional

¹⁰⁰ Pabaltijo karinės apygardos NKVD ypatingojo skyriaus viršininko saugumo majoro Babičiaus 1941 01 03 visiškai slaptai pranešimas Nr. 158/5 Lietuvos SSR vidaus reikalų liaudies komisaro pavaduotojui valstybės saugumo majorui drg. Gladkovui - LYA, Doc.fund K-1, Inventory schedule19, File1, P. 89 [*Top secret report No 158/5 by the Baltics Military Command NKVD Special Department Chief Security Major Babičius of 3 January 1941 to the Deputy People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Lithuanian SSR State Security Major Comrade Gladkov*]

¹⁰¹ Duomenys apie išimtų dėl politinių ir amoralinių motyvų iš 184-ios šd dalių raudonarniečių, jaun., vid. ir vyresniųjų vadų kiekį nuo 1941 metų sausio iki gegužės 15 d. - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2, File 59, P. 117 [*Data on the number of Red Army soldiers, junior and senior commanders for political and moral motives “withdrawn” from the units of the 184th Infantry Division from January to 15 May 1941*]

¹⁰² Įsakymas 29. Šaulių teritoriniam korpusui Nr. 5, 1940 09 11 - LCVA, Doc.fund. R-222, Inventory schedule, P. 5 [*Order No 5 to the 29th Territorial Infantry Ccorps, 11 September 1940*]

labour camp. The civilian was sentenced to 1 year and 6 months of imprisonment in a regular prison¹⁰³. (*Annex 42*)

The officers within the focus of the NKVD. Mass arrests that were a constituent element of the terror campaign carried out in the Baltic republics, were started in the corps on 14 June 1941. The NKVD had already achieved considerable results by that time.

Of those who served in the army, the following number was arrested:

From the beginning of September 1940 till the end of 1940 – 9 officers;

From the beginning of 1941 till the start of mass arrests – 23 officers;

Of those discharged to the reserve, the following number was arrested:

From the beginning of September 1940 till the end of 1940 – 4 officers;

From the beginning of 1941 till the start of mass arrests – 24 officers.

Till 14 June 1941, 87 officers, including those arrested till the end of August 1940, who had served in the Lithuanian Army at the start of occupation, were put into prison and interrogation cell. Only 7 of them were released, 1 (Junior Lieutenant Eidimtas) managed to escape. 30 officers were taken to the Russian labour camps and prisons, of whom only 5 returned (the fate of 2 is unknown). Out of those taken to the labour camps 23 were executed or perished in the camps. Junior Lieutenant Jonas Remeikis was executed on June 2 1941 in Lithuania, while 6 of the arrested officers were killed at the start of the war. 38 officers managed to release themselves from prison after the outbreak of war between Germany and the USSR (*Annexes 46, 47, 48*).

These figures are minimal and possibly inaccurate, but they are sufficiently grounded, as an exact list of the officers who served in the army at that time, is available. Unfortunately, it is a more complicated task to present a more exact number of victims among the privates and the non-commissioned officers as no comprehensive research has been yet carried out on the issue.

JUNE 1941. MASS ARRESTS

Mass arrests in the Corps and in the Military School. The remaining archive documents and the memories of the events of that time by the Lithuanian soldiers testify that the Special NKGB Department of the corps was already prepared for the mass arrests at the beginning of June.

The commissars were also preparing for arrests, pursuant to the Secret Directive of the Chief Board of Political Propaganda that ordering liquidation of the 29th TIC and demanding the commissars to secretly draw up a political characteristics of each Lithuanian officer and non-commissioned officer. The directive recommended to identify the officers suitable for further service in the Red Army and to discharge the rest.

Recommendations supplied by some of the units commissars are available. The list of the leadership of the 262nd Infantry Regiment, drawn up by the Regiment's Commissar Suchanov on 3 June 1941 comprises 110 persons¹⁰⁴, the commander of the regiment included, and lists 81 Lithuanian and 12 Russian officers, as well 16 re-enlistees and 1 civilian (conductor). The *note* column at each Lithuanian surname bears note: *to*

¹⁰³ A.Merkelis. Lietuviai kariai bolševikų teisme. [*A. Merkelis Lithuanian Soldiers in the Bolshevik Court*] - "Lietuvių archyvai. Bolševizmo metai.", IV tomas. V.: 1944

¹⁰⁴ The list of names is incomplete because its last page is missing.

leave, to discharge, or to train. 39 officers and 3 re-enlistees were designated *for discharge.* 23 of these officers were arrested on 14 June.

On June 20-22, all the Lithuanian units were transferred to summer camps: the Corps Staff, the units subordinate to the Corps Staff, and the 179th Infantry Division were moved to Pabrade military ground, while the 184th Infantry Division was transferred to Varena military ground. The soldiers had firearms, but no ammunition. The firearms had to be stored under strict supervision in the established shooting ranges. The soldiers were strictly forbidden to overstep the limits of the camps. The Soviet units were stationed around the Lithuanian ones. The Lithuanians found themselves under siege.

Only a minor part of the officers planned to be deported escaped the mass arrests, as they were not present in their posts at that time for a variety of reasons. Several officers succeeded in removing themselves from the service.

All the Lithuanian division and regiment commanders and their deputies, as well as Staff commanders were replaced by Russians on June 10-12, just before the mass arrests. The Lithuanian commanders were sent out to Riga, to attend a “qualification improvement course”. Another preparation measure was supplementing the Lithuanian units with soldiers from other Red Army units. For instance, 113 Red Army soldiers¹⁰⁵ were transferred from the 219th to the 234th Infantry Regiment and evenly distributed among the companies on 6 June. 32 junior commanders (sergeants)¹⁰⁶ were transferred from the 173rd Infantry Regiment to the 234th on 11 June. Before that, the corps units were replenished with officers and political instructors who had freshly graduated from military schools. Lithuanian officers who had to be on duty on the day of arrests were replaced by Russian officers.

236 officers were arrested during the mass arrests in the corps. 4 of them (aviation officers) were taken to Riešiotai, and the rest were loaded into railway freight cars that took them away in the direction of Moscow. (*Annex 48*) On 19 June they were landed in the Babinin railway station near Moscow and driven to the Juchnovka labour camp, together with approximately 40 non-commissioned officers, privates and even civil servants, arrested in the same way. 500 Latvian officers, 200 Estonian officers and soldiers of other military ranks were also put in Juchnovka. Apparently, Juchnovka had to be the place of final destination for all the soldiers deported from the Baltic countries, but the plan had been ruined by the outbreak of the German-Russian war. On 28 June the Balts were again driven to the Babinin station and on the next day loaded into the freight cars and taken to Siberia. On 15 July they were landed in Krasnojarsk and put in a labour camp for temporary stay. On 28 July they were driven into barge holds and floated down the Yeniseij River. On 9 August they stepped out onto the land of eternal frost, in Dudinka on the Tamyr Peninsular. A few days later they were taken to workers’ settlement that received the name of Norilsk as late as in 1953. Norilsk was the last point in their forced journey. The deportees were put on a labour camp without any investigation or trial.¹⁰⁷

Not all of the arrested were put into Norilsk. Another 17 arrested officers were taken to the Moscow and Gorkyj prisons. (*Annex 49*) These mostly were the officers

¹⁰⁵ 234-ajam šaulių pulkui įsakymas Nr. 209, 1941 06 10 [*Order to the 234th Infantry Regiment No 209, 10 June 1941*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2, File 72, P. 6

¹⁰⁶ 234-ajam šaulių pulkui įsakymas Nr. 215, 1941 06 13 [*Order to the 234th Infantry Regiment No 215, 10 June 1941*] - LCVA, Doc.fund R-222, Inventory schedule 2, File 72, P. 3

¹⁰⁷ Karininkų memorialas Norilске. [*Memorial to Officers in Norilsk*] Kaunas, 1996, p. 45-50

arrested for participation in the underground resistance movement (members of the LAF Vilnius Staff) or those suspected of anti-Soviet activity.

The NKVD was preparing a second wave of arrests in the corps, but was obstructed by the start of the war between Germany and the USSR. It was planned to deport nearly all the remaining officers, a bigger part of non-commissioned officers and a considerable number of privates. Evidently, the arrests had to be carried out on a really large scale. When the Red Army withdrew from Lithuania at the start of the war, a report of Colonel Vinogradov to a superior governing body was found among the record files left among the corps' documents, in which he asked for a permission to discharge from the army 617 Lithuanian Red Army servicemen and non-commissioned officers in active service, as well 13 re-enlistees who were, according to Vinogradov, "an element socially alien and hostile to us", not worth the service in the Red Army. The report had the lists attached.¹⁰⁸ And this is an example from only one division.

Mass arrests among discharged officers. These arrests were arranged by the NKGB of the LSSR. As the certificate by State Security Major Gladkov of 11 June 1941 shows, 74 former officers were planned to be arrested.¹⁰⁹ In the summary of 19 June 1941, also signed by Gladkov, it is indicated that 104 officers were arrested and 221 were deported: a total of 325 former officers¹¹⁰. The number includes former officers of the Polish Army as well, thus, the exact number of Lithuanians arrested is not specified in the summary. Only the exact number of officers who were discharged and later arrested can be identified so far. The lists of discharged indicate that 50 officers were subjected to repression on 14-16 June. The figure, however, may have been bigger in reality, as the data on the fate of some officers is still being verified. (*Annex 50*)

REPRESSION AFTER THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR BETWEEN GERMANY AND THE USSR

29th Territorial Infantry Corps liberates itself from the Red Army.¹¹¹ At the start of the war, the Soviets encircled all the division camps and blocked the roads. An order was issued prohibiting the soldiers to leave the camp without a special permission. Soldiers detained beyond the limits of the camp without permission would be handed over to the military tribunal and executed. In the evening of 22 June the divisions were announced that on the following day they would leave for faraway Russian territories and take the defence grounds somewhere near Moscow.

The march eastwards started around 12 a.m. on 23 June. The Lithuanian soldiers, however, were unwilling to retreat to Russia and most of them had been firmly determined to stay in Lithuania at any price.

The first units of the German troops were rather quick to reach the 184th Infantry Division on Varena military ground. Taking advantage of the confusion among the

¹⁰⁸ S.Raštikis. Kovose dėl Lietuvos. [*Amidst the Fights for Vilnius*] Vilnius.: AB LITUANUS, 1990, p. 101

¹⁰⁹ A.Anušauskas. Lietuvių tautos sovietinis naikinimas 1940-1958 metais. [*Soviet Annihilation of the Lithuanian Nation in 1940-1958*] "Mintis", V.: 1996, p. 90

¹¹⁰ A.Anušauskas. Lietuvių tautos sovietinis naikinimas 1940-1958 metais. [*Soviet Annihilation of the Lithuanian Nation in 1940-1958*] "Mintis", V.: 1996, p. 103

¹¹¹ S.Urbonas. Trumpa 29-jo šaulių teritorinio korpo lietuviškųjų dalių iš raudonosios armijos atsipalaidavimo apžvalga". [*Brief Overview of Liberation of Lithuanian Units of the 29th TIC from the Red Army*]- "Karys", 1943, Nr.Nr. 40-46 ir kiti šaltiniai

Russian units, the Lithuanian soldiers revolted. The division managed to separate itself from the corps with minor casualties. Part of the soldiers were taken prisoners by Germans, but were released after some time. The major part of the 184th Infantry Division soldiers returned at the end of June to Vilnius, location of its permanent deployment.

The 179th Infantry Division soldiers were ordered to march from Pabradė-Švenčionėliai region to Adutiškis and retreat to Russia. The Lithuanian soldiers resisted withdrawal to Russia and abandoning Lithuania in general. At the start of the march Lithuanians began escaping. Some companies managed to free themselves quite easily, but soon the protection of the Lithuanian units was enhanced and the separation was more difficult, in some places even armed resistance was needed.

The Red Army columns and separate tanks were retreating along with the Lithuanians and the latter were forced to proceed, waiting for a chance to escape. Some of them were arrested and killed under suspicion of unreliability.

On 27 June 1941, the 179th Infantry Division crossed the Lithuanian border and continued further into the East. Beyond the borders of Lithuania, the Lithuanian soldiers had to choose between surrendering to coercion and trying to liberate themselves at any price. One of the bigger armed conflicts took place near the Norica village. 18 Lithuanian soldiers are buried there. 1 officer and 10 soldiers are buried in a forest near the Žukov village. Another fierce armed clash between Lithuanians and the Soviets took place near the village of Glubokoje. A group of Lithuanians managed to escape the Red Army surveillance and, having dispersed, returned to Lithuania.

Only the remainder of the corps, mainly soldiers of the 179th Infantry Division, reached Russia. They were assembled and reorganised in the Pskov region, near Nevel and Velikije Luki, and thrown into the battle with Germans near the Idrica River on 10-14 June. Many of them surrendered to Germans. The remaining withdrawn and distributed, after the corps was disbanded, among the other Red Army units. Later they were included in the newly raised 16th Lithuanian Infantry Division.

The list of the 25 perished officers is presented in *Annex 53*.

The Vilnius Infantry Military School.¹¹² In the liquidation of the Lithuanian Army, the former Military School was detached from the formed 29th TIC, and the Vilnius Infantry Military School was formed on its ground. Two cadet battalions were raised in the school after its reorganisation, a Russian and a Lithuanian one. On the day of the start of the war, the USSR Security People's Commissar ordered to "mix" the battalions, i.e. to redistribute the Lithuanian and Russian students among battalions, companies, and troops, irrespective of their nationality. At that time the Military School, as well as the units of the 29th TIC, was based on the Švenčionėliai military ground. While retreating, the number of Lithuanians was constantly diminishing, and the Head of the School ordered to form a special target group from Russian students for the execution of suspects and deserters. But the order was of no help: on 24 June it turned out that the number of missing Lithuanian cadets doubled, while the Lithuanian officers had disappeared nearly all. Many cadets perished. Near Vileika the suspected Lithuanians were arrested and driven on foot to Russia where they were attached to the arrested 179th Infantry Division soldiers. Near Vitebsk the arrested Lithuanians succeeded in disarming the NKVD guards; some Lithuanians were killed in the fights, some managed to return to Lithuania. The part of

¹¹² K. Ališauskas. VPM karui prasidėjus. [*Vilnius Infantry School after the Start of the War*]- "Karys", 1943, Nr.Nr. 4, 6 ir kiti šaltiniai

the Military School that reached Lapelis was put to rout in German attack of 5-6 June and the school ceased to exist. The Lithuanian cadets who survived served later as officers in 16th Division.

762 Lithuanians served in the Vilnius Infantry School before the war. It is known that out of them 374 Lithuanians were reported free and 17 dead as of 12 July 1941. The exact number of the dead is not available up till this day. Out of 61 Lithuanian officers, 49 managed to free themselves, 4 were killed, the remaining were either taken to Norilsk or attached to the 16th Division. The fate of the remaining cadets is unknown. 11 Lithuanians out of 120 had managed to escape from the allegedly most reliable Bolshevik company of politruks. It is unknown how many of the company's cadets were killed, but nearly all the survivors later served in 16th Division.

The NKVD began the arrests after the remainder of the corps and the Military School had retreated to Russia. The prisoners were thrust into freight cars in the middle of August. The echelon arrived in Krasnojarsk as late as on 18 September. In the beginning of October the group of approximately 60 Lithuanian soldiers was joined to the soldiers of the former 29th TIC who were deported earlier. 21 officers were arrested near Nevel and Polock, 5 of whom were later executed, 7 died in labour camps, 2 went missing. (*Annex 52*)

“Qualification improvement” courses for the artillery-men. 14 artillery officers (the Corps Artillery Commander General Major Vincas Žilys, 179th Division Artillery Commander General Major Jonas Juodišius, and others) were summoned to the Staff of the Baltics Special Military Command and were told to attend the qualification improvement courses in the Dzerzhinski Military Academy in Moscow on 10 June.

The Estonian and Latvian artillery-men were also sent to the courses that took place on the Gorochevskij military ground of the Military Academy.

At the start of the war between Germany and the USSR, the courses were still carried on for several days. The officers were unaware of the fact that the Chief of the 3rd Board of the People's Commissariat of the USSR State Security Major Mischejev on 24 June approved the decision to arrest them and send to a labour camp. All the Baltic officers were summoned to the Staff of the academy on the military ground on the night from 28 June to 29 June and arrested on the charges of anti-Soviet activity and poor training of their cadets.

The artillery-men were taken to the Lama labour camp in Norilsk. Out of 14 of them, 7 died in the labour camps. (*Annex 51*)

CONCLUSIONS

1. **Moscow achieved its aim to confront no armed resistance in its occupation of Lithuania on 15 June 1940. The Army did receive an order to be prepared for military operations. The Government of Lithuania did not take any measures to prepare for the armed resistance**, although it did receive the intelligence information about the operation of occupation being prepared. No steps towards staging a possible armed resistance were taken in the late evening of 14 June 1940 either, when the Government received Moscow's ultimatum. The urgent late-night meeting of the Lithuanian Government to discuss the ultimatum and the possibility of resistance, was a mere formality. As the Lithuanian Government accepted the ultimatum, the Kremlin thereby implemented the major part of its plan to incorporate Lithuania into the USSR.
2. **The main task of the Russian Embassy in Kaunas till the incorporation of Lithuania into the USSR was to achieve that the Lithuanian Army showed no armed resistance as it could have distorted the planned run of events in the incorporation of Lithuania into the USSR.** The Lithuanian Army was to be liquidated later.
3. The Lithuanian Army Liquidation process may be conditionally divided into two main stages related to the incorporation of Lithuania into the USSR:

the first stage – the period from the start of occupation till the end of August 1940 when the liquidation of the Lithuanian Army began by incorporating it into the Red Army and reforming it into a National 29th Territorial Infantry Corps;

the second stage – the period from the end of August 1940 till the start of the war when the former Lithuanian Army existed as the Red Army's 29th Territorial Infantry Corps.

These two stages may also be divided into several separate intervals.

The first stage should be divided into the following intervals:

the period from the start of occupation till 3 July on which the Army was called the Lithuanian People's Army;

the period from 3 July till the end of August the so-called People's Army period.

The second stage should be divided into the following intervals:

the period from the end of August till the end of 1940 – the period in which the former Lithuanian Army was incorporated into the Red Army, reformed into the 29th Territorial Infantry Corps, while the remainder of the Army not involved in the process of reform was liquidated.

the period from the beginning of January 1941 till June – in this period the Red Army leadership was preparing to shift to the extra-territorial principle of the corps formation, common in the Red Army.

the period from the beginning of June till the start of the war between Germany and the USSR – in this period the leadership of the corps and its units were being replaced by the Red Army commanders, the corps units were supplemented by the Red Army officers and Red Army men, while the exposed unreliable soldiers, officers mainly, were being isolated by subjecting them to mass repression.

The period from the start of the war till the middle of July 1941 – in this period the corps was liquidated (the remainder of the corps that retreated to Russia was disbanded,

while the bigger part of the corps, that remained in Lithuania, was liquidated pursuant to the orders of the German Occupation Authority).

4. The reorganisation in the first stage should be considered a preparation for the incorporation into the Red Army. Another purpose of these reorganisations was to prepare for the neutralisation of the Army in order to prevent its armed resistance.

The main factors in the neutralisation of the Army were:

mass discharge of high-ranking commanders, spreading the process on to the lower ranks later, and the parallel replacement of commanders;

exercising political supervision in the army by establishing the Institute of Political Instructors whose main task was to cause confusion in the Army so that it would not be able to stage resistance.

handing over the leadership of the army to the Lithuanian henchmen sent by the Red Army leadership;

arresting officers and soldiers (at first arrests were avoided, but from the second half of July arrests became common)

The liquidation of the National Guard that was considered a reactionary counter-revolutionary organisation should also be reckoned among the above-mentioned factors.

Moral coercion was of exceptional importance. The army whose main purpose was to resist the occupant army, was coerced to glorify Stalin, the USSR and the Red Army, to rejoice in all the innovations introduced by the puppet government and to speak approvingly of the incorporation into the Soviet Union. And not only in meetings and various manifestations organised by the Communist Party. **The assessment of qualifications (certification) of officers, re-enlistees, non-commissioned officers, and civilian staff was announced. Each of them had to confirm with their signatures their loyalty to the implementation of the aims of the new People's Government.** Moreover, the infiltration of communist ideas began in the political training of soldiers and through the dissemination of political information.

Everything in the army that could have reminded of the former army of an independent state was changed, introducing innovations that had to make the Army similar to the Red Army: epaulettes were abolished, and the rank straps had to be attached to the triangles on the collar.

The liquidation of the armies of the Baltic states was carried out without delay and as early as on 14 August, the VCP (b) CC Political Bureau took the decision to reform the armies. All the preparatory work had to be completed in two weeks, and on 30 August, under the decision of the Council of People's Commissars of the Lithuanian SSR, the Lithuanian Army, together with its armament and assets, was handed over to the Baltics Military Command to be reformed into the 29th Territorial Infantry Corps. Moscow was urging to complete the formation of the corps as quickly as possible, but it dragged out till the end of October, as it was inconceivable to solve all the issues with regard to the transfer of the mentioned property and to select the officers for the service in the Red Army in a short time (300 officers were not admitted into the corps and were discharged).

5. Certain aims were pursued with decision to reform the armies of the Baltic States pending liquidation into national territorial corps. The directive of the USSR People's Security Commissar No 0/2/105022 of 17 August 1940, instructed to retain the armies of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania for one year while purging them of unreliable elements and reforming each of the armies into a national

territorial corps. During the time the leadership had to master the Russian language and military training. The territorial corps had to be later changed into extra-territorial by forming them on a common basis.

Disbanding the army would have posed problems as that way the underground resistance movement would have been given a considerable amount of organised forces. The process of consolidation of Soviet authority in the Baltic countries had only begun, and organising such a mighty universal spying system that the USSR needed, took time. Thus, it was inexpedient to create favourable conditions for the formation of dangerous secret and, evidently, well-armed organisations in these countries on the eve of the war between Germany and the USSR.

There was another possibility, widely practised in the Soviet Union – mass arrests to the Russian labour camps. However, conditions had to be created for that, and time was needed for preparation.

The USSR was forced to take the decision to retain the former armies of the Baltic States; moreover, the decision helped to control the considerable might that the armies represented.

One year was needed for the purging of the former Baltic armies. This was the main aim. The continuous and gradual process of “purging” the armies from “unreliable elements” had to prevent the formation of secret resistance in the units and to enhance the control of the Baltic soldiers.

6. **Politico-repressive structures were formed for the exercising of the control and the conducting of the “purging”:** the special NKVD Departments, Military Prosecutor’s Offices, Political Boards and departments with their representatives – political instructors in every company and subunits equal to them. It was not an exception, as such was the order throughout the Red Army. In addition to that, an Institute of Military Commissars was established to control the commanders (Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians), and the regular Red Army officers were appointed to the posts of Deputy Commanders. The control was based on the training of the soldiers in the spirit of the communist ideology.

The Special NKVD Departments of the corps and the divisions was the main repressive structure, the formation of which started along with that of the corps. The Political Departments provided it with a considerable part of the information, but the aim of the NKVD was to create a wide separate network of secret agents and informants, and in order to achieve this, Lithuanian residents or Lithuanian-speaking residents of Lithuania were needed.

As early as in the beginning of 1941, nearly 3 thousand soldiers, non-commissioned officers and officers were listed by the NKVD and the Political Departments (which had a separate network of informants, based on the so-called *the actives*) as unreliable. The suspects would be arrested when the repressive structures had collected sufficient incriminating evidence against them.

7. **In May 1941 the preparation for the liquidation of the corps as national unit began.** The NKVD and the Political Departments were ordered to identify officers and re-enlistees suitable for further service, those who had to be discharged and those to be sent to training. Evidently, the order to discharge included the active service soldiers as well.

The units of the corps were supplemented with the Red Army officers and political instructors at the end of May and in June 1941. The commanders of the corps, the

divisions, the units and Staff officers were replaced by the Russian officers, while Lithuanians were sent to attend courses in Russian academies.

On 14-16 June 1941, during the mass deportations of the Baltic States' residents, most of the officers listed for discharge reserve were arrested immediately and deported to the Russian labour camps.

- 7. At the start of the war the corps was ordered to retreat to Russia. However, the Lithuanian soldiers staged a revolt in an attempt to separate themselves from the Red Army. Under 1.5 thousand of the corps' soldiers retreated to Russia and the leadership of the Red Army was forced to liquidate the corps.**

Around 120 Lithuanian soldiers died during the liberation of the corps. Some were executed on the charges of unreliability, others perished in the armed resistance, several officers killed themselves, unwilling to be forcibly driven out of Lithuania. Several hundred Lithuanian soldiers were taken prisoners by Germans.

- 8. The part of the corps that remained in Lithuania organised itself into a unit with the Staff in Vilnius, however, following German orders at the end of July several Lithuanian self-defence battalions were raised on its basis, while the remaining soldiers were discharged.**

- 9. The consequences of the first Soviet occupation with regard to the former Lithuanian Army:**

500 officers were discharged in the period from the start of occupation till the end of 1940 when formation of the corps was completed, and 39 of them were arrested.

A total of 87 officers out of those who served in the army at the start of the occupation were arrested before the mass arrests in June 1941 (30 of them were taken to the Russian prisons and labour camps, 23 of whom died there; several officers were released after interrogation, and the rest were freed at the start of the war).

During the mass arrests made in the corps in June 1941, 253 officers were arrested and taken to prisons and labour camps, 125 of whom died there. The 50 officers who experienced repression after being discharged during the Soviet occupation, should also be included here. 29 of them did not return either from labour camps or from deportation.

At the start of the war, 14 officers attending the artillery courses and 21 officers out of the remainder of the 29th Territorial Infantry Corps who had forcibly retreated to Russia, were arrested. All of them were taken to the Norilsk labour camps.

A total of 276 officers were imprisoned in the Norilsk labour camps, 134 of whom did not return to Lithuania: they were either executed or died in the camps of hunger, cold and diseases. Approximately 40-50 private soldiers, non-commissioned officers and civilian staff were also imprisoned in Norilsk, 14 of whom were killed.

A total of 415 officers (excluding those who were discharged before the occupation of Lithuania) were deported to prisons and labour camps, 196 of whom died there. The number of the perished officers is no less than 221, including those who died or were killed at the start of the war between Germany and the USSR (25 officers).

The figures should be higher but they are based on various sources. When the doubt-raising data on the repressed persons (arrested and put in labour camps, prisons, or deported and killed) is verified, the number of the repressed officers could reach 470-490, while that of the perished – 230-240.

SOURCES

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