

Translation of:

http://www.lzinios.lt/lt/2011-08-27/redakcijos_pastas/kas_tebebijo_1941_metu_birzelio_sukilimo_dvasios.html

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The sentence highlighted in red for readers' interest (on p. 2) is not highlighted in the original text.

Letters to the Editor

Who's Still Afraid of the Spirit of the June 1941 Uprising?

Half of the year comprising the 70th anniversary of one of the most important events in our modern history, the June 1941 Uprising, has passed. The idea then of the Freedom Union against the occupiers did not subside until March 11, 1990, when the nation again received back its statehood.

The action by society that began spontaneously then [1941] was a response to the totalitarianisms which sought to divide up the world and those who collaborated with them. So it's understandable: the circumstances of the period of Soviet reoccupation, leading to the catastrophe of the state in 1940, later the June Uprising, and resistance during and after the war became a hidden part of our history. Many of use only learned the real truth about the events of those years from the lips of our mothers.

For that reason 19 NGOs named this year in [their] Declaration the *Year of Research and Commemoration of the History of the June Uprising*. It wasn't exclusively members of these organizations who were invited to collect the broken shards of recent history. It was anticipated that professional historians and state institutions would focus on this, and it was anticipated there would be initiatives to correct distortions of history. To find the real truth, rather than to wave about fragments from different contexts, this is what the Parliamentary resolution "On the Judgment of the Events of the June, 1941, Uprising," signed by chairman professor V. Landsbergis, and the *Law on the Legal Status of Members of the Resistance to the 1940-1990 Occupations* adopted during the presidency of V. Adamkus, were intended to do. The current Parliament named the anniversary year the Year of the Defense of Freedom and Great Losses. The Parliament's Science and Education Committee required the Government to direct national attention to events [marking] the anniversary.

The consequences of the catastrophe that occurred in 1940 still haven't been universally erased. So it is important whether society and especially the ruling elite comprehend the mistakes made then, the fateful mistakes, so they wouldn't be repeated. Consideration of history would compel thinking about that.

As the anniversary year reaches its halfway point, however, we cannot fail to notice: representatives of the Government, including the prime minister, are not attending events dedicated to the June Uprising. Some of the talk by representatives of the History Institute show there is an intentional attempt by them to push things onto the track of quasi-historiography. Perhaps there is even an attempt to follow upon the heels of the creators of the quasi-legal system which has successfully legalized the seizure of the nation's economy. Who next will experience the pressure and distortions? Perhaps Lithuanian Studies?

Historical truth, however bitter it might be, is important to us, Lithuanians, as much as it is to the ethnic communities who live together with us. Especially to those whom the policies of the occupiers condemned to extermination. We have already seen how uniformly "distinct" the Nazis and Bolsheviks were. **So separately we would bring the attention of thoughtful members of the Jewish community to the fact that the NKVD "furazhki" replaced by yarmulkes might also have their own, special agenda. An agenda that does not in any way serve social harmony and justice.**

Has anything been done in the West toward moving the remains of the most famous representatives of the nation from the era of the Uprising [for reburial] in the Nation? Why isn't the public being told about this. Or will they continue to be brought to the homeland in suitcases?

The country is not in such a situation it can't allocate the funds and attention needed for matters of the spirit of the nation. But the anniversary year has shown that this attention is already lacking. Speaking much of civic initiative, the leaders of the country failed to note that there are still among the living those who rose up in '41 aspiring to defend the trampled honor of our homeland Lithuania.

Alfonsas Žaldokas, Lithuanian Union of June 22-28 1941 Insurgents

Kęstutis Mirkeraitis, Friends of the Lithuanian Front

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