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Seventieth Anniversary of Death of Lithuanian Activist Front Chiefs of Staff Commemorated

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The Vilnius Officers’ Club of the Lithuanian military marked the 70th anniversary on December 18 of the execution of the leadership of the Vilnius headquarters of the Lithuanian Activist Front (LAF) in Nizhny Novgorod (former Gorky) Prison by the Soviet occupiers.

At that time the following were shot: Lithuanian LAF leader major Vytautas Bulvicius, captain Juozas Kilius, lieutenant Juozas Radzevicius, lieutenant Leonas Zemkalnis, deputy director of the Vilnius railway station Jurgis Gobis, attorney Aleksas Kamantauskas and the teachers Stasys Mockaitis and Antanas Skripkauskas.

A representative of the Center for the Study of the Genocide and Resistance of Residents of Lithuanian, Dr. Arunas Bubnys, delivered a report at the commemoration on the activity of the LAF and the Lithuanian military honor guard transferred flowers which were later laid next to a plaque commemorating the Vilnius headquarters of the LAF, at the base of a cross in Lukiskiu square dedicated to the insurgents of 1863, at the Genocide Victims’ Statue on Auku street and at graves of 1941 insurgents who perished, Lithuanian soldiers who died in 1920, the grave of the unknown soldier and Dr. Jonas Basanavicius’s grave in Rasu cemetery.

The LAF was an anti-Soviet resistance organization that operated in 1940 and 1941. It was the first organization in Lithuanian history to unite people of different views and political persuasions in a common purpose—to restore Lithuanian independence—and planned and carried out the June,

1941, Uprising. The Uprising was begun the first day of the German-Soviet war, on June 22, and lasted a week. The insurgents created the Provisional Government of Lithuania which, on June 23, 1941, proclaimed the restoration of Independent Lithuanian state and made an appeal to the Lithuanian nation over Kaunas radio. The composition of the Provisional Government was also announced. Lithuania was the only one of the countries occupied by the Soviets where an armed uprising took place when the German-Soviet war began.

The LAF was established on November 17, 1940, in Berlin by authorized Lithuanian minister and ambassador to Germany Kazys Skirpa. The LAF's beginning in Lithuania was on October 9 [sic—trans] at a secret meeting of members of the underground in Kaunas. The Vilnius and Kaunas headquarters together made up the Supreme LAF Headquarters. Chief of staff major Vytautas Bulvicius was considered the head of the entire Lithuanian LAF.

When the LAF was planning and activating the uprising, Soviet security forces began to arrest LAF members. The Vilnius headquarters suffered especially, and from June 7 to June 21, 1941, fourteen of its members were arrested and imprisoned.

[Lithuanian] Ministry of Defense information

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