

“My country, today among the smallest in Europe, was once among the biggest and richest. From the 13th to 15th centuries, it included in its territory Belarus, Ukraine and parts of what are today Poland and Russia. My father comes from a wealthy landowning family, my mother from simple farming folk. Despite representing different ends of the social spectrum, both families faced fierce persecution when the Soviets invaded in 1940. We had a few years' respite from the communists while the Nazis were in control during World War II. The Soviets re-occupied Lithuania in 1944.”

— from Vygaudas Ušackas's 6 December 2011 *Wall Street Journal* article. Mr. Ušackas is the European Union ambassador to Afghanistan. He is a former Lithuanian ambassador to the United Kingdom and foreign minister of the Republic of Lithuania.