

ISTORIJOS ŠALTINIŲ
TYRIMAI

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LIETUVOS ISTORIJOS INSTITUTAS
VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETAS

ISTORIJOS ŠALTINIŲ TYRIMAI

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Visi leidinio straipsniai recenzuoti dviejų mokslininkų

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JAV AMBASADORIAUS MASKVOJE DŽOZEFO E. DEIVISO 1937 M. VIZITO Į BALTIJOS ŠALIS IR SUOMIJĄ ATASKAITOS

Zenonas Butkus, Magnus Ilmjärv

Spausdinamos Džozefo Edvardo Deiviso¹ 1937 m. vasaros vizito į Estiją, Suomiją, Latviją ir Lietuvą ataskaitos JAV valstybės sekretoriui surastos Kongreso bibliotekoje². Istoriniuose tyrimuose šios ataskaitos beveik nepanaudotos. Patį vizitą, kiek mums žinoma, yra trumpai aptaręs tik latvių istorikas Edgaras Andersonas (Edgars Andersons) savo garsiojoje dviejų tomų Latvijos užsienio politikos istorijoje³. Tiesa, pats Deivisas dalį šių ataskaitų yra panaudojęs savo atsiminimų knygoje, išleistose Antrojo pasaulinio karo metais⁴. Bet jos jau – bibliografinė retenybė ir ataskaitų tekstai tenai pateikti tik fragmentiškai, neištisai.

Tad ištaisai publikuojamos Deiviso ataskaitos taps tyrinėtojams ir šiaip skaitytojams prieinamos. Jos – svarbus, autentiškas istorinis šaltinis, parodantis, koks buvo įtakingo Amerikos pareigūno požiūris į Baltijos šalis, kokį jos padarė jam įspūdį, ko siekta ir pasiekta šiuo vizitu. Deiviso ataskaitos verčia suabejoti įsitvirtinusia pažiūra, esą JAV, neratifikavusi Versalio sutarties, tarpukaryje nesidomėjo Europos reikalais.

¹ Džozefas Edvardas Deivisas (Joseph Edward Davies, 1876–1958) – JAV teisininkas, diplomatas, gimė Viskoncine, JAV. 1905 m. baigė Viskoncino teisės mokyklą ir vertėsi privačia teisininko praktika. 1912 m. JAV prezidento V. Vilsono (Woodrow Wilson) paskirtas korporacijų komisaru, 1915 m. – Federalinės prekybos komisijos pirmininku. 1936 m. prezidento F. Ruzvelto paskirtas JAV ambasadoriumi Sovietų Sąjungoje ir ėjo tas pareigas dvejus metus. Antrojo pasaulinio karo metais Deivisas ėjo JAV valstybės sekretoriaus K. Halo (Cordell Hull) asistento pareigas. 1942–1946 m. buvo prezidento F. Ruzvelto įsteigtos Karo paramos kontrolės valdybos pirmininkas. 1945 m. JAV ambasadorius Potsdamo konferencijoje. Mirė Vašingtone 1958 m. gegužės 9 d. Jo pelenai palaidoti kriptoje Vašingtono nacionalinėje katedroje.

² Kongreso biblioteka Vašingtone (The Library of Congress, LC), Rankraščių skyrius, byla nr. 5. Išsamų Dž.E. Deiviso archyvinųjų dokumentų kolekcijos aprašą žr. <[http://www.loc.gov/search/?q=Joseph Davies&fa=digitized:true](http://www.loc.gov/search/?q=Joseph+Davies&fa=digitized:true)>.

³ E. Andersons, „Latvijas vēsture 1920–1940“, *Ārpolitika*, t. 1. Stockholm, 1982, p. 638–639.

⁴ J.E. Davies, *Mission to Moscow*, New York, 1941, p. 207–209, 572–579; Sydney–London, 1942, p. 159–161, 425–430.

Jose apibūdinama politinė, ekonominė, socialinė Baltijos šalių padėtis, aptariama tarptautinė jų orientacija, bet kartu iš ataskaitų galima suprasti, kad svarbiausias vizito tikslas buvo išsiaiškinti, kokią poziciją šios šalys pasirengusios užimti kilus karui. Tiksliau sakant, siekiama įsitikinti, ar tikrai Baltijos valstybės gali tapti placdarmu, tramplinu eventualioje nacių Vokietijos agresijoje prieš Sovietų Sąjungą.

Būtent karo nuojauta alsuote alsuoja iš skelbiamų ataskaitų. Jų autorius buvo asmeninis JAV prezidento Franklino Ruzvelto (Franklin D. Roosevelt) bičiulis. Šia bičiulyste ir galima paaiškinti, kodėl Deivisas, nebūdamas profesionalus diplomatas, o tik tarptautinės teisės specialistas, 1936 m. buvo paskirtas ambasadoriumi Maskvoje. Šis paskyrimas galėjo ženklini JAV vadovybės siekį stiprinti ryšius su SSRS ir apskritai suaktyvinti politiką už šalies ribų. Tad Deiviso ataskaitose, kad ir netiesiogiai, ryškėja F. Ruzvelto ir jo aplinkos požiūris į tuometinius tarptautinius santykius, į ryškiausias grėsmes taikai.

Šioje aplinkoje, kaip ir apskritai Vakaruose, manyta, kad pavojų taikai pirmiausia kelia nacių Vokietija, kuri 1936 m. užėmė demilitarizuotą Reino zoną ir pasirašė sąjunginius susitarimus su Italija bei Japonija. Būtent Japonijos suartėjimas su Europos naciais ir fašistais galėjo JAV vadovybei kelti didžiausią nerimą, juo labiau kad vizito išvakarėse, 1937 m. liepos 7 d., japonai atnaujino 1931 m. pradėtą agresiją prieš Kiniją. Tai skaudžiausiai palietė Amerikos interesus Tolimuosiuose Rytuose, dėl to SSRS imta labiau vertinti kaip jos būsima sąjungininkė, galinti padėti stabdyti japonų ekspansiją. Šiomis objektyviomis aplinkybėmis pirmiausia aiškintume Deiviso pastangas suartinti Maskvą ir Vašingtoną⁵. Dėl suartinimo jis net buvo linkęs nepaisyti Sovietų totalitarizmo nusikaltimų, masinių represijų, palankiai vertino, net liaupsino Stalino politiką. 1943 m. Holivude buvo sukurtas filmas „Maskvos misija“, kuris traktuotinas kaip vienas ryškiausių prosovietinės propagandos JAV pavyzdžių. Jame rožinėmis spalvomis vaizduojama Deiviso diplomatinė patirtis Sovietų Sąjungoje, net teisinamas nusikalstamas Molotovo–Ribbentropo paktas. Maža to, tais pačiais 1943 m. interviu leidiniui *Life Magazine* Deivisas pateisino ir Sovietų suinteresuotumą pasilaikyti sau Baltijos šalis. Dėl to Latvijos pasiuntinys Vašingtone Alfredas Bilmanis (Alfreds Bīlmanis) nusiuntė protesto laišką šio leidinio redakcijai⁶. Visiškai neatsitiktinai Deivisas 1945 m. gegužės 24 d. buvo apdovanotas Lenino ordinu už SSRS ir JAV draugiškų santykių stiprinimą, už pasitikėjimo atmosferos tarp abiejų šalių kūrimą.

Vis dėlto Deiviso palankumas Sovietams pirmiausia aiškintinas geopolitiniais motyvais, ypatingu jų, kaip JAV sąjungininkų, sureikšminimu. Nieku būdu jis nebuvo komunistinių ar socialistinių pažiūrų. Atvirkščiai. Deivisas mėgdavo pabrėžti, kad

⁵ Plačiau apie JAV ir SSRS santykius žr. В.Л. Мальков, *Россия и США в XX веке. Очерки истории межгосударственных отношений и дипломатии в социокультурном контексте*, Москва, 2009, p. 186; G.E. Kennan, *Russia and the West under Lenin and Stalin*, Boston, 1961 ir kt.

⁶ „Pāris Eest“, *Eesti Vabariigi Häälekandja*, 1943, nr. 1, p. 7–8.

„turtų paskirstymo metodas“ Amerikoje yra nepalyginamai geresnis nei SSRS, ir nesiliovė tikėti, jog pastaroji grįš į kapitalizmą; pagaliau jis pats buvo multimilijonierius. Kita vertus, istorikai jau yra pastebėję, kad Deivisas neturėjo gebėjimų perprasti sovietų komunizmo ir neretai stalinizmo propagandą priimdavo už gryną pinigą⁷.

Šiaip ar taip įtarimus, kad potencialią JAV sąjungininkę – SSRS naciai puls per Baltijos šalis ir kad pastarosios nesikratys agresijos tilto vaidmens, o gal jau turi polinkį juo tapti, matyt, bus įpiršę Sovietų politikai, diplomatai, apskritai šios šalies propaganda. Jau per pirmąją vizito kelionę į Estiją (1937 m. liepos 24–26 d.)⁸ Deivisas šios šalies pareigūnams aiškino, kad Vokietija gali pulti SSRS per Estiją; kaip tik per ją lengviausiai (tiek sausuma, tiek jūra) galima pasiekti Leningradą (Talinas esąs „senas rusų laivybos uostas, geležinkeliu tiesiogiai sujungtas su Leningradu“⁹). Teisybės dėlei reikia pasakyti, kad Deivisas nesilaikė įsikibęs išankstinių nuostatų, o buvo linkęs priimti per vizitą gaunamą informaciją. Ataskaitoje jis pranešė, jog estų pareigūnai neigia minėtą galimos nacių agresijos kelio versiją nurodydami, kad jų teritorija per daug nutolusi į šiaurę, todėl nepateks į šios agresijos pavojaus zoną, nes puolimo tikslas būsianti Maskva, o ne Leningradas¹⁰.

Per antrąją vizito kelionę į Suomiją (liepos 31–rugpjūčio 2 d.)¹¹ Deivisas taip pat, jei galima taip pasakyti, ieškojo ko nepametęs, būtent: stengėsi išsiaiškinti Vokietijos galimybes pulti SSRS per šią šiauriausią Baltijos šalį – daugiau kaip pusė ataskaitos apie kelionę į Suomiją skirta tai temai. Iš karto pabrėžiama, jog Vokietijos įtaka Suomijoje „labai agresyvi“¹². Tačiau ataskaitos autorius pats tarsi išsiduoda, joje prasitardamas, jog tokią nuomonę formuoja SSRS. Jis rašo, esą Sovietai „stipriai nujautė“¹³, kad Vokietija kažkokiu būdu yra susitarusi su Suomija dėl SSRS puolimo per Baltijos šalis. Apie šį galimą susitarimą Deivisas daug kalbėjo per vizitą susitikdamas su Suomijos užsienio reikalų ministru Rudolfu Holsčiu (Eino

⁷ E. Andersons, „Latvijas vēsture 1920–1940“, p. 638.

⁸ Ataskaitoje kelionės į Estiją laikas konkrečiai nenurodytas. Bet remiantis jos turiniu galima teigti, kad ji veikiausiai vyko 1937 m. liepos 24–26 d. Mat, ataskaitoje pasakyta, kad kelionė į Estiją truko 3 dienas (2 Taline ir 1 Narvoje), taip pat nurodyta, jog ji vyko savaitgalį, o pati ataskaita datuota liepos 28 d. Prieš šią dieną pagal 1937 m. kalendorių savaitgalis buvo liepos 24–25 d. Galėtų tik kilti klausimas, kuri buvo trečioji kelionės diena – pirmadienis ar penktadienis. Manytume, kad ne penktadienis, nes ataskaitoje teigta, jog jos autorius nebesutiko Estijos prezidento ir užsienio reikalų ministro, kurie jau buvo išvykę į užmiesčio sodybas. Greičiausiai taip negalėjo būti penktadienį, o tik šeštadienį. Matyt, Deivisas šeštadienį ir sekmadienį praleido Taline, o pirmadienį, jau judėdamas link Rusijos, apsilankė Narvoje. Ataskaita juk parašyta Maskvoje liepos 28 d.

⁹ Žr. spausdinamą Deiviso ataskaitą p. 13.

¹⁰ Ten pat.

¹¹ Vizito į Suomiją laikas ataskaitoje taip pat nenurodytas, tik joje pasakyta, kad jis truko tris dienas. Kadangi ataskaita rašyta Helsinkyje rugpjūčio 2 d., manytume, jog vizitas į Suomiją vyko kitą savaitgalį po kelionės į Estiją, taip pat pasiliekant tenai pirmadienį.

¹² Žr. spausdinamą Deiviso ataskaitą, p. 14.

¹³ Ten pat, p. 15.

Rudolff Woldemar Holsti) ir premjeru prof. Aimo Kajanderiu (Aimo Cajander). Deivisui Holstis detaliai aiškino, jog per savo vizitą į Maskvą jis patikino užsienio reikalų liaudies komisarą Maksimą Litvinovą, taip pat Molotovą ir Vorošilovą, kad Sovietų nuogaštavimai, esą Suomija susitarusi su Vokietija dėl puolimo prieš juos, yra niekuo nepagrįsti. Šiems Maskvos politikams Holstis pareiškęs, jog bet kokia valstybė, taip pat ir Vokietija, peržengusi Suomijos sieną taptų Suomijos priešė ir tai yra nepajudinamas suverenios valstybės politikos principas. Tokiu pareiškimu Vorošilovas pasitenkinęs, bet Litvinovas dar reikalavęs „konkretesnių garantijų“. Tuomet Holstis pasirūpino, kad minėtas principas būtų viešai deklaruotas naujai išrinkto Suomijos prezidento inauguracinėje kalboje ir visomis kitomis galimomis progomis.

Deivisas savo ataskaitoje turėjo pripažinti, kad pačiai Suomijai kelia nerimą Sovietų kariniai pasirengimai, jų siunčiami kariniai pastiprinimai į Kareliją. Ap-skritai Suomija, būdama tarp dviejų didelių kaimynių, turi nepavydėtiną padėtį. Ji yra pasiryžusi laikytis neutraliai, bet ją nuolat SSRS kaltina provokiškumu, o vokiečiai – prosovietišku. Ir viena, ir kita didžioji valstybė tik ieško priekabių, siekdama kontroliuoti jos užsienio politiką. Galų gale Deivisas ataskaitoje padaro gana objektyvią išvadą, kad Suomija „nėra provokiška“, kad jos vyriausybė priešiška vertina Hitlerio politiką ir jokių būdu neleis savo šalies paversti „mūšio lauku“¹⁴.

Vokietijos agresijos pavojų Deivisas tyrė ir per savo trijų dienų (rugpjūčio 13–15 d.) vizitą Latvijoje, kur jį priėmė karo ministras generolas Janis Baluodis (Jānis Balodis), užsienio reikalų ministras Vilhelmas Munteris (Vilhelms Munters), taip pat finansų ir prekybos ministrai. Nesusitiko svečias tik su prezidentu Karliu Ulmaniu (Kārlis Ulmanis), nes šis tuomet atostogavo. Ypač detalai Vokietijos agresijos grėsmę Deivisas aptarė per pokalbį su Munteriu, kuris ką tik buvo lankęsis Maskvoje ir susitikęs su pačiu Stalinu, taip pat ne kartą viešėjęs Vakarų Europos šalyse, kur prieš keletą mėnesių apie politinę padėtį išsamiai diskutavo su Didžiosios Britanijos ministru pirmininku Neviliu Čemberlenu (Nevilie Chamberlain). Deivisui Latvijos užsienio reikalų ministras pranešė, jog N. Čemberleniui aiškines, kad Vokietija turi pasirašyti nepuolimo sutartis su Baltijos šalimis, taip pat su Lenkija ir Rumunija, t. y. tokias sutartis, kokias šios valstybės jau turi sudariusios su SSRS. Sutartyse privalėtų būti apibrėžta agresoriaus sąvoka. Šitai taika Rytų Europoje liktų išsaugota, mat, tarp Vokietijos ir SSRS būtų nutiestas „saugumo stogas“ ir joms pačioms nebereikėtų sudaryti nepuolimo sutarties – esą Hitleris su Sovietais jokios sutarties nepasirašysias¹⁵.

Munteris „neoficialiai ir konfidencialiai“ Deivisui pranešė, kad nemaža dalis „svarbių asmenų Anglijoje“ laikosi nuomonės, jog Čekoslovakija yra vienintelė valstybė, kurią galima nepastebimai nušluoti nuo Europos žemėlapiu. Jei Vokietija

¹⁴ Ten pat, p. 17.

¹⁵ Ten pat, p. 21.

Čekoslovakiją užgrobs, prancūzai nė piršto nepajudins, nors turi su pasmerktąja valstybe sutartį. Ši Munterio tuomet sensacinga, bet pranašiška mintis, matyt, stipriai paveikė Deivisą, nes ataskaitos apie vizitą į Latviją pabaigoje jis vėl grįžo prie Čekoslovakijos ateities vertinimo¹⁶. Ši spausdinamoje ataskaitoje užfiksuota žinia, be kita ko, sukelia abejonių, ar Miuncheno sąmokslas buvo Hitlerio spontaniškai išgautas susitarimas, ar anksčiau ir demokratinių valstybių planuotas veiksmas.

Taip pat verta dėmesio Munterio pareikšta nuomonė, kad Vokietija dar „dvejus ar trejus“ metus nebus pasirengusi karui, bet vėliau jos kariuomenė gali „gerai pasirodyti kare“¹⁷. Tad JAV ambasadorius Latvijoje galėjo pasisemti prasmingų ir ateitį numatančių idėjų.

Deiviso vizitas į Lietuvą buvo trumpiausias, tetruko vieną dieną – rugpjūčio 16. Turbūt jis viešėjo tik Klaipėdoje, kur, kaip ir į Latviją, atplaukė jachta. Klaipėdoje JAV ambasadorius susitiko su krašto gubernatoriumi Jonu Kubiliumi, kitais svarbiais vietinės valdžios pareigūnais. Ambasadorių lydėjo ir jam pagalbą teikė JAV konsulas ir reikalų vedėjas Lietuvoje Porteris Kuikendalis (Porter Kuykendall). Klaipėdoje Deivisas taip pat pirmiausia siekė ištirti, kiek čia parengta dirva nacių ekspansijai Rytų kryptimi, link Sovietų Sąjungos. Jis konstatavo, jog Lietuva yra pačiame „pavojaus zonos viduryje“, kadangi įsikūrusi tarp SSRS ir Vokietijos. Ji „iš prigimties antivokiška“, su Vokietija palaiko „tik griežtai formalius santykius“ ir baiminasi, kad naciai neatplėštų jos vienintelio uosto, vienintelių vartų į jūrą – Klaipėdos krašto. Tai buvo taiklios pastabos, tačiau vienos dienos tyrimo ambasadoriui, matyt, neužteko, kad išvengtų ir abejotinių vertinimų bei prognozių. Štai ataskaitoje teigiama, kad vokiečiams Klaipėda rūpi tik dėl istorinių sentimentų, o ekonominiu požiūriu esą Vokietijai nenaudinga prisijungti Klaipėdą, nes tai ūkiškai atsilikęs kraštas ir atsидūręs Vokietijos valstybėje smukdytų aukštą visos šalies pragyvenimo lygį. Tai, aišku, buvo nacių ekspansijos pavojaus menkinimas, nors kitas pasakymas – Hitleris „šiuo metu karinių ketinimų Klaipėdos atžvilgiu neturi“, – tuomet atitiko tikrovę.

Publikuojama ataskaita rodo, kad Deiviso vizitas į Baltijos šalis buvo naudingas, nes jis galėjo įsitikinti, jog šios šalys nelinkusios atsiverti nacių ekspansijai ir jose jokio placdarmo SSRS puolimui neparengta. Atvirkščiai, ataskaitoje konstatuojama, kad visos JAV ambasadoriaus aplankytos valstybės brangina nepriklausomybę ir stengiasi nepakliūti nei Vokietijos, nei SSRS įtakon. Štai ataskaitoje pasakyta, kad pagrindinis Lietuvos užsienio politikos tikslas yra „išsaugoti nepriklausomybę“ ir visos Baltijos šalys, būdamos tarp Vokietijos ir Rusijos, stengiasi išlaikyti „nacionalinę esybę“ ir ypač brangina taiką¹⁸. Per gana trumpą vizito laiką JAV ambasadorius sugebėjo pastebėti, kad Baltijos šalys, vengdamos abiejų totalitarinių valstybių įtakos,

¹⁶ Ten pat, p. 24.

¹⁷ Ten pat.

¹⁸ Ten pat, p. 26.

siekia palaikyti kuo glaudesnius santykius su Anglija, ypač stengiasi plėsti su ja ekonominius ryšius, o Suomija Angliją laikanti Europos politine lydere.

Apskritai ataskaitoje gana objektyviai įvertinta tarptautinė Baltijos šalių padėtis ir jų tarpusavio santykiai. Teisingai sakoma, jog Lietuva, Latvija ir Estija yra sudariusios sąjunginę organizaciją, t. y. mums žinomą Baltijos Antantę, tačiau tik dvi pastarosios turi sukūrusios „gynybinį aljansą ir karinį paktą“. Artimiau bendrauti su Lietuva joms trukdantis josios konfliktas su Lenkija, kuri nuo 1920 m. spalio laiko okupavusi istorinę Lietuvos sostinę Vilnių. Tarp konfliktuojančių šalių visiškai uždaryta siena, net nepavykę išsiųsti telegramos iš Klaipėdos į Varšuvą. Lietuva turinti du svarbiausius specifinius užsienio politikos uždavinius – atgauti Vilnių ir išlaikyti Klaipėdą. Konfliktuodama su Lenkija ir Vokietija, Lietuva ieškanti artimesnių ryšių su SSRS, o tai kelia nerimą Latvijai ir Estijai, kurios baiminasi suartėti su Lietuva, kad kartu su ja netaptų Sovietų marionetėmis. Estija, be to, norinti į „Baltijos bloką“ įtraukti Lenkiją, dėl to siekianti panaikinti jos nesutarimus su Lietuva. Suomija labiau trokštanti glaudis prie Skandinavijos valstybių, net siekianti įeiti į „Oslo bloką“, bet Švedija baiminasi Suomiją įsileisti dėl jos konflikto su SSRS. Taigi, ataskaitoje tarptautinė situacija Rytų Pabaltijyje nupiešta visai tikroviškai.

Taip pat realistiškai apibūdinta ir Baltijos šalių vidaus padėtis. Nors Estija, Latvija ir Lietuva vadina save demokratinėmis valstybėmis, bet yra įsivedusios autoritarinius režimus. Ataskaitoje jų atsiradimas ir funkcionavimas charakterizuotas suprantamai. Estų ir latvių autoritariniai lyderiai įvertinti gana palankiai, pažymėta, kad jie nuosaikūs politikai ir išsilavinę žmonės. Ataskaitoje pasakyta, kad Konstantinas Piatsas (Konstantin Päts) „nepasižymi Napoleono kompleksu“, o Karlis Ulmanis yra dėstęs Nebraskos universitete¹⁹. Tik, kad ir netiesiogiai, kažkiek pašiepiamas Antanas Smetona, mat, ataskaitoje užsimenama, kad didelę įtaką valdžiai Lietuvoje turi dvi moterys, prezidento ir ministro pirmininko žmonos²⁰, t. y. plačiai žinomos seserys Chodakauskaitės (Smetonienė ir Tūbelienė).

Geriausią įspūdį iš keturių aplankytų šalių Deividui paliko Suomija. Ataskaitoje pabrėžta, kad ši šalis „tiesiog klesti“, ir pramonė, ir žemės ūkis, laivininkystė, komercinė veikla patiria „bumą“, pragyvenimo lygis aukštas, prekių kainos mažesnės nei JAV; Suomijos politikai sumanūs, visuomenė save gerbianči, pasižymi puikia administracija, gyventojai labai gabūs, savarankiški, protingi, blaiviai mąstantys, susikūrę puikią demokratinę valdymo sistemą, kurioje dera privatus verslas ir viešasis interesas²¹. Nemažai išgirtos ir Estija su Latvija. Ataskaitoje sakoma, kad Latvijoje „ekonomikos bumai“, klesti statybos, o Ryga – gražus, švarus, klestintis ir pasiturinčias atrodantis miestas; Estijos miestuose ir kaimuose žmonės taip pat pasiturintys, taupūs,

¹⁹ Ten pat, p. 11, 20.

²⁰ Ten pat, p. 27.

²¹ Ten pat, p. 14–15.

patogiai ir švariai gyvenantys, save gerbiantys²². Nepalankai ataskaitoje įvertinta tik Lietuva, kuri, autoriaus nuomone, esanti „neabejotinai visais atžvilgiais“ labiausiai atsilikusi Baltijos šalis. Pragyvenimo lygis Lietuvoje esantis labai žemas, veikiausiai dėl šimtmečius trukusios Lenkijos įtakos ir socialinės struktūros²³, Klaipėdos uostas paliekantis provincialaus, atsilikusio miesto įspūdį, jis esąs „išskirtinai nešvarus“²⁴. Kyla klausimas, ar tokia Lietuvos charakteristika pagrįsta? Gal JAV ambasadorius, tepraleidęs čia vieną dieną, susidarė paviršutinišką įspūdį?

Deiviso vizitas nesukėlė Baltijos šalyse ryškesnio visuomeninio rezonanso, nes faktiškai jis buvo neoficialus. Apie jį spaudoje pasirodė tik trumpų žinučių²⁵. Šį vizitą galėjo užgožti kitų oficialių svečių kelionės, būtent, 1937 m. Baltijos šalis aplankė Sovietų Raudonosios armijos Generalinio štabo viršininkas maršalas Aleksandras Jegorovas (vasario mėn.), Anglijos užsienio reikalų viceministras lordas I. M. Plymutas (Plymouth) (birželis), Švedijos užsienio reikalų ministras Richardas Sandleris (Richard Sandler) (birželis), Tautų Sąjungos generalinis sekretorius Žozefas Avenolis (Joseph Avenol) (rugpjūtis).²⁶ Prie išvardytų svečių pridėję Deivisą drąsiau galėtume teigti, kad per jų vizitus augo tarptautinis susidomėjimas Baltijos šalimis. Šis susidomėjimas sietinas su 1934 m. įkurtos Baltijos Antantės veikla ir tuo, kad Latvija, kaip tos organizacijos narė, 1936 m. buvo išrinkta į Tautų Sąjungos Tarybą. Į tai atsižvelgdamas nebenorėčiau sutikti su savo paties ankstesne²⁷ ir apskritai plačiai paplitusia nuomone, kad 1937 m. Baltijos Antantė „iš esmės jau buvo negyvas organizmas“²⁸. Gal kaip tik kylantis susidomėjimas Baltijos šalimis paskatino ir Deiviso vizitą. Turbūt neatsitiktinai detaliausiai tarptautinę padėtį jis apsvarstė susitikęs su V. Munteriu, kuris, kaip tiesiogiai dalyvaujantis Tautų Sąjungos Tarybos veikloje, tą padėtį išmanė labiau nei kitų Baltijos šalių užsienio reikalų ministrai.

Deiviso vizitas ne tik ženklino JAV susidomėjimą Baltijos regionu, bet ir paskatino jos diplomatinį aktyvumą šiame regione. Veikiausiai neatsitiktinai, kaip tik 1937 m. liepos mėn., JAV savo konsulatą Kaune paaukštino į pasiuntinybę, būtent paskyrė Lietuvai atskirą pasiuntinį dr. Oveną R. Noremą (Owen Norem). Iki tol, kaip žinia, Lietuvoje Amerika laikė tik konsulą ar reikalų vedėją, o jos pasiuntinys visoms Baltijos šalims buvo tik vienas ir visada rezidavo Rygoje. Konsulatą JAV įsteigė Kaune dar 1921 m. lapkričio 7 d.²⁹ ir šio diplomatinio rezidavimo lygmens

²² Ten pat, p. 10.

²³ Ten pat, p. 25.

²⁴ Ten pat, p. 28.

²⁵ Žr. „Davieso Jachta Klaipėdoje“, *Lietuvos Aidas*, 1937 08 17, nr. 369, p. 2 ir kt.

²⁶ *Baltijos valstybių vienybės idėja ir praktika 1918–1940 metais*, sudarė Z. Butkus, Vilnius, 2008, p. 76.

²⁷ Z. Butkus, „Baltijos valstybių saugumo problemos“, *Politologija*, nr. 5, Vilnius, 1994, p. 29.

²⁸ V. Žalys, *Lietuvos diplomatijos istorija*, Vilnius, 2007, p. 28.

²⁹ J. Skirius, *Lietuvos užatlantės diplomatija 1918–1929 metais*, Vilnius, 1995, p. 128; J. Skirius, „JAV suteikto tarptautinio pripažinimo Lietuvai 1922 m. problema“, *Jurisprudencija*, 2002, t. 33 (25), p. 48.

Lietuvoje ji nekeitė iki pat Deiviso atvykimo. Atvykimo metais Lietuva sustiprino su JAV ir ūkinius ryšius. Būtent 1937 m. lietuviškos bendrovės *Maistas*, *Lietūkis*, *Pienocentras* įkūrė prekybos atstovybes Niujorke ir ėmė plėsti žemės ūkio produkcijos eksportą Amerikoje³⁰.

Spausdinamos ataskaitos gali tapti papildomu šaltiniu, padėsiančiu įvertinti JAV politiką Baltijos regione ir tos politikos priklausomybę nuo Rusijos faktoriaus. Žymiausias Amerikos ir Lietuvos santykių tyrinėtojas prof. Juozas Skirius teigia, kad 1922 m. liepos 28 d. JAV, pripažindama Lietuvą, Latviją, Estiją *de facto* ir *de jure*, pripažino tik šių šalių vyriausybes, bet ne valstybes. Pripažinimas buvęs sąlygiškas ir laikinas – tik tam laikotarpiui, kol egzistuojanti bolševikų valdžia Rusijoje³¹. Ar ši nuostata buvo išlikusi 1937 m.? J. Skirius taip pat nurodo, jog Baltijos šalių pripažinimas buvo „vienas iš pirmųjų JAV aktyvios izoliacinės politikos keitimosi į pasyvią bruožas“³². Deiviso vizitas gal jau buvo vienas iš izoliacinės politikos įveikimo požymių. Šis vizitas taip pat patvirtina J. Skiriaus teiginį, kad Baltijos šalis JAV panaudojo kaip stebėjimo ir žinių rinkimo Rytų Europoje punktą³³. Tas punktą ne vienam JAV diplomatui buvo gera veiklos mokykla, kurią išėję jie sėkmingai tęsdavo karjerą kituose regionuose, o dažniausiai SSRS. Štai žymūs Amerikos ambasadoriai Maskvoje Džordžas Kenanas (George Frost Kennan) ir Čarlzas Baulenas (Charles E. Bohlen) buvo dirbę jos pasiuntinybėje Rygoje. Tas pats pasakytina ir apie JAV ambasadorių Irake, Indijoje, Irane, dukart dirbusį Maskvoje Luisą Hendersoną (Loy W. Henderson), kuris iki tol tarnavo ne tik diplomatinėje atstovybėje Rygoje, bet ir Kaune bei Taline, ir kurio žmona buvo latvė³⁴.

Taigi, spausdinamos Deiviso ataskaitos, kaip autentiškas, informatyvus ir įdomus šaltinis, galės būti panaudotas kompleksiniuose JAV politikos Baltijos regione tyrimuose ir apskritai platesnio pobūdžio tarptautinių santykių istorijos svarstymuose.

³⁰ J. Skirius, „Review and Commentary on Lithuanian–U.S. Relations in 1918–1940“, *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, 2003, nr. 11/12, p. 125.

³¹ J. Skirius, „JAV suteikto tarptautinio pripažinimo“, p. 42.

³² J. Skirius, *Lietuvos užatlantės diplomatija*, p. 128.

³³ Ten pat.

³⁴ E. Andersons, „Latvijas vēsture 1920–1940“, p. 358.

No. 456

Moscow, July 28, 1937.

Subject: Political Conditions in Estonia in
Relation to the U.S.S.R.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

Pursuant to my previous letter, under date of June 29th, and your telegram No. 101, July 16, 8 p.m., I have the honor to report the following:

Taking advantage of a week-end holiday, I made an unofficial visit to Estonia, by way of the national capital, Tallinn. I assumed to make this unofficial visit to Estonia, without previous notifications to the Department, due to the limitation of time, and because the summer was fast slipping by. In so doing, I particularly stressed, both upon Mr. Leonard³⁵, the secretary in charge of the Mission in Tallinn, and also upon the gentlemen of the Estonian Foreign Office, whom I met, that the occasion of my visit was unofficial, and incident to a week-end respite from the host of Moscow.

Both Mr. Leonard and Mr. Trimble³⁶ were most helpful and courteous.

It happened that both the President and the Secretary of the Foreign Office were out of the city at their country places so I did not have the opportunity of meeting them.

Informally, however, I took the opportunity of meeting several of the men in the Government, two of whom had been formally attached to the Estonian Legation in Moscow, and all of whom I found particularly intelligent and well-informed. My discussions with them and with Mr. Leonard were most helpful in understanding conditions and the situation of the Estonian Government with reference to its neighbors, and particularly the U.S.S.R.

Estonia is the most northern of the three Baltic States, constituting the so-called "Baltic Bloc". Its capital is Tallinn. The population of the country is approximately 1,400,000 people. They appear to be energetic, industrious, frugal and prosperous. The country is essentially agricultural. It is practically dependent upon England as an outlet for its butter and dairy products. It has some textile industries, but they have declined in importance since the war. There is considerable English and German capital associated with Estonia capital in local enterprises. The country produces

³⁵ Valteris Andersonas Leonardas (Walter A. Leonard, 1880–1955) nuo 1937 m. vasario mėn. buvo JAV konsulas Taline.

³⁶ Viljamas Keitelis Trimblas (William C. Trimble, 1907–1996) nuo 1936 m. buvo JAV vicekonsulas ir trečiasis atstovybės sekretorius Taline, vėliau (1939–1940 m.) konsulas Prancūzijoje.

timber and timber products, considerable flax, some paper, some leather and some cement. The religion of the population is predominantly protestant – Lutheran, with a small percentage of Greek-Orthodox catholic.

The present Government is practically a dictatorship. The President – Constantine Paets³⁷ – is a man of about 64 years of age. He is reported as not being very well. The Minister for Foreign Affairs is Dr. F. Akel³⁸. The leading national hero, and apparently outstanding man of the country, is said to be General Laidoner³⁹.

The internal political situation probably can best be described by what Mr. Johansson of the Foreign Office said to me in the course of rather an extended talk. His statement was about as follows:

That following the Russian Revolution⁴⁰, a unicameral legislative form of government was set up, on the theory of creating as pure a democracy as was possible. This was due to the dominance of the younger men, among the educational and professional intelligentsia of the country, and the influence of liberal thought, following the war. Under this form of government, the Premier was President, and the Chairmen of the Committees of the one legislative body of the State constituted the President's Cabinet. This condition he stated brought about political instability in the country, and this had an adverse effect upon economic conditions. The ambitions of many able young men in the legislature to become Premier, or President, caused frequent changes of government, et cetera – all of which was bad.

With the development of fascist states about them, they found that their system was weak. It could not make speedy and authoritative decisions that were necessary for the protection of the country. Too much time was spent in debate. In order to prevent the country from falling into the error of complete fascism as happened in Germany, the President – a very high-minded man – with the aid of other strong man usurped power peaceably and established a benevolent dictatorship, which

³⁷ Konstantinas Piatsas (Konstantin Päts, 1874–1956) – žymus estų politinis veikėjas, teisininkas. 1918 m. vasario 24 d. Estijos nepriklausomybės akto signataras. 1934 m. valstybinio perversmo organizatorius ir autoritarinio režimo Estijoje kūrėjas. 1938–1940 m. valstybės prezidentas. 1940 m. rugpjūtį išstremtas į SSRS, mirė psichiatrinėje ligoninėje Kalinine (dabar Tverė).

³⁸ Frydrichas Akelis (Karl Frydrich Akel, 1871–1941) – Estijos politikas ir visuomenės veikėjas. 1897 m. Tartu universitete įgijo mediko specialybę. Kaip karo gydytojas dalyvavo Rusijos ir Japonijos kare (1904–1905). 1923, 1926–1927 m. Estijos užsienio reikalų ministras. 1924 03–1924 12 valstybės seniūnas. Taip pat ėjo Estijos pasiuntinio Suomijoje, Švedijoje ir Vokietijoje pareigas. Estijos olimpinio komiteto prezidentas. Sovietams okupavus Estiją, 1940 m. spalį suimtas ir kitais metais liepos 3 d. sušaudytas.

³⁹ Johanas Laidoneris (Johan Laidoner, 1884–1953) – Estijos karinis ir politinis veikėjas, nuo 1939 m. generolas leitenantas. 1905 m. baigė Vilniaus karo mokyklą. Per Estijos Nepriklausomybės kovas (1918–1920 m.) buvo vyriausiasis kariuomenės vadas. Kartu su ministru pirmininku 1934 m. įvykdė valstybinį perversmą Estijoje. Iki 1940 m. buvo vyriausiasis kariuomenės vadas. Estiją užėmus Sovietams, pašalintas iš pareigų ir išvežtas į Rusiją. Mirė Vladimiro kalėjime.

⁴⁰ Turimas galvoje 1917 m. lapkričio 7 d. (pagal senąjį kalendorių spalio 25 d.) bolševikų perversmas Rusijoje.

assured a continuity of policies and unified quick action when necessary in the national interest. This action was taken with the understanding that a Constitution was to be drafted and submitted to a plebiscite looking to the creation of a strong form of democratic government.

This Constitution, it would appear, is now in process of being drafted, and is about to be placed in operation. Under its terms, the Government is to be found on three independent coordinate branches – the legislative, the judicial and the executive. The legislative is to consist of two houses – a lower house of direct representatives of the people, popularly elected; the other an upper house, with a longer tenure of office – the members of which are to be designated from different classes in the community, such as the professional classes: engineers, doctors, lawyers, college professors, accountants, and the like, and also from such institutions as the various chambers of commerce and merchants and manufacturers' associations, which would represent practically all activities of the country. The President is to be elected from three candidates – one nominated by each house, and the third by the country districts. It was quite apparent from this discussion that study and analysis had been given to this problem of government and political science, by the entire community, and that they were proceeding in a very practical way to secure their objective, i.e., an effective and efficient democratic form of government that would still have much of the direct strength of an authoritarian state. An interesting side light was a statement that they proposed to have a President with great power; something like the Premier of England, but with less power than the President of the United States.

According to the information, which I gathered, this little country is particularly fortunate in the fine type of man in charge of government. Neither President Paets nor General Laidoner appear to have the Napoleonic complex.

The dominant internal political note is: Estonia for Estonians. The nationalistic complex is very strong. The Estonian of German descent, even though he date back several hundred years in Estonian residence, is still not pure Estonian, from the political point of view. Great emphasis is placed upon maintaining an Estonian cultural independence.

Their attitude to Russia is friendly and formal. They want to get along with their big neighbor, but they still remember the unsuccessful communist putsch of 1924.

Together with Latvia and Lithuania, Estonia is a part of the "Baltic Bloc". The whole bloc is concerned with the preservation of their respective nationalistic entities as between Germany and Russia. They are all vitally concerned with the maintenance of peace.

With its neighbor Latvia, Estonia has a defensive and offensive alliance and a military pact.

Its relationship with Lithuania is friendly as a member of the "Baltic Bloc". This relationship is somewhat complicated, however, because Estonia is also particularly friendly to Poland. General Laidoner recently made a very extraordinary gesture of

friendship toward Poland. Estonia would like to have the Baltic Bloc extended to include Poland. It seeks to compose the differences between Lithuania and Poland.

Estonia seems to feel particularly kindly toward Finland, and the Scandinavian countries.

Like the rest of these eastern European countries, Estonia is chiefly concerned with “walking the tight rope” and preserving its balance, as between Germany and Russia. It is a member of the League of Nation, and generally “goes along” in European affairs. As was said to me by one of these gentlemen: “We are a member of the Non-interventional Committee in London. We are, however, fortunate in having representation there that is modest and one that recognizes the limitations of our size and un-importance. We do not take sides. Quite frankly we do not want to be placed in the position of risk, which taking sides would involve. We tell both sides frankly that we will go with the majority”. This is the key of their foreign policy. In the last analysis, however, England now dominates Estonia. Lord Plymouth has only recently visited the country on a commercial, guest-political good will tour.

There is substantial German minority “bloc” in Estonia, as well as in Latvia. This is a disturbing element. There is always the threat that should Germany regain control over Estonia, this group would assume their former dominant position.

From military point of view, in the event of a German attack on Russia, they seem to think that they are outside of the danger zone. When I called attention to the fact that the Baltic – Leningrad naval and military attack was one of the two major plans that, according to expert opinion, might be projected by Germany, in the event of an attack on Russia, the reply was that they did not agree with that theory; that Estonia was too far north; that the objective of attack would be Moscow and not Leningrad, and that the overland route to Moscow further south would leave them out of it. They insisted upon this, in spite of the suggestion that Tallinn was the old Russian seaport of Reval and directly connected by rail with Leningrad.

I spent two days in Tallinn, the capital, and one day in the country at Narva – the old seat of the Russian textile industry, which has largely disintegrated.

Both in the cities and in the countryside, there were evidence of thrift, well-being, comfort, cleanliness, and self-respect.

Respectfully yours,

Joseph E. Davies

710 Estonia

JED/bt/hla

Original and four copies to the Department.

One copy to the Legation, Ryga.

One copy to the Legation, Tallinn.

EMBASSY

XXXXXXXX

No. 456- A

Helsingfors, August 2, 1937.

Subject: Visit to Finland – 1937.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

Following my visit to Estonia, relative to which I reported to you, I have the honor to report the following:

Pursuant to schedule, I spent three days in Finland. While there I had the opportunity of meeting personally the Premier, Mr. Cajander⁴¹, the Foreign Minister, Dr. Holsti⁴², various members of the Cabinet and some of the prominent business men of the community.

At the outset I wish to acknowledge the very effective assistance and courtesy which I received from Minister Schoanfeld⁴³ and his very excellent staff. They were most cooperative and helpful.

GENERAL CONDITIONS.

Finland is enjoying a period of great prosperity. Industrial production, agriculture, shipping, employment and commercial activity bear the indices of a “boom”. Exports have increased, as have also public revenues.

Finland’s chief customer is England. This probably accounts, in part at least, for their disposition to follow the political leadership of Great Britain in European affairs. It is Germany; however, that now sells Finland the greater part of its imports. German influence, I am advised, is very aggressive here.

The officials of the Government impressed me as being strong, sane, progressive and realistic. The Minister for Finance is a business man who had achieved notable success, and a private fortune, as the head of one of the large international cooperative of Finland, prior to his public official service. The Premier is a scientific

⁴¹ Aimas Karlas Kajanderis (Aimo Kaarlo Cajander, 1879–1943) – Suomijos premjeras (1937–1939), domėjosi gamtos mokslais ir miškininkyste.

⁴² Rudolfas Holstis (1881–1945) – Suomijos užsienio reikalų ministras (1936–1938), jos pasiuntinys Londone 1917–1919 m.

⁴³ Arturas Šoenfeldas (H. F. Arthur Schoenfeld, 1889–1952) – JAV pasiuntinys Suomijoje 1937–1942 m., 1946–1947 m. pasiuntinys Vengrijoje.

and technical expert on forestry, widely known not only in practical lumbering but also in the scientific and scholastic field.

The Government consists of a coalition of agricultural, business, and social democratic interests.

The recently elected President Kallio⁴⁴ is a member of the agrarian Party; Holsti is a member of the National Progressives; four members of the Cabinet are members of the Social Democratic Party (left).

The appearance of the community indicates excellent administration, prosperity, and self-respect.

The cost of living seems to be relatively low. The prices in the attractive shop windows, in contrast to the prices in the United States, are markedly cheap.

The outstanding impression that one obtains, is that of an exceedingly able, self-contained, well-balanced people, who have worked out an excellent system of democratic government, with an unusual combination of opportunity presenting itself for individualistic enterprise, together with conservation of the general interest through intelligent governmental control and operation of certain activities of a natural monopolistic character.

The Foreign Minister, Dr. Holsti, is an exceptional man. He has had a long-continued and notable career, in the government of his country. He was active in the interest of Finland and in constant touch with the American delegation at the Versailles Conference. He participated in negotiating the loan from the United States, and is measurably responsible for the attitude of Finland in connection with her debt to the United States. He knows our country very well – has delivered a series of lectures at Leland Stanford University, and elsewhere in the United States. He is a great admirer of our institutions. He has represented Finland at the League of Nations almost continuously since its creation, and is thoroughly familiar with the situation in Europe.

Dr. Holsti, it will be recalled, visited the U.S.S.R. last spring. Upon that occasion the American Embassy tendered a reception in his honor, as previously reported. He supplemented the information which he gave me at that time with the following, which he imparted with every indication of frankness.

FINLAND – THE U.S.S.R. AND THE SCANDINAVIAN BLOC.

Finland, he stated, was desirous of participating in the Scandinavian bloc (Norway and Sweden) – the dominant purpose of which, along with Denmark and recently Belgium, is to preserve peace and to maintain a position of security for themselves in the event of a catastrophe. Finland found that its participation

⁴⁴ Kiosto Kalio (Kyösti Kallio, 1873–1940) – Suomijos prezidentas 1937–1940 m., agrarinės partijos lyderis.

in the "Oslo Bloc" was not altogether viewed with favor by Sweden, because of the apprehension that the relationship between Finland and the Soviet Union was strained. It will be recalled that a source of irritation has existed between Finland and the Soviet Union during these many years, by reason of the problems arising out of the Finnish character of Karelia, which still remains a part of the U.S.S.R. and constitutes one of the constituent Soviet republics. The Soviet Government has been engaged upon extensive fortifications and military preparations adjacent thereto on Finnish border. In addition thereto, it appears that the U.S.S.R. was exceedingly suspicious that Germany had some sort of an understanding with Finland, in the event of a German-Baltic attack on the Soviet Union.

These were the conditions, apparently, which prompted the visit of the Finnish Prime Minister.

In his conference with Litvinov, Holsti advised me that he had tried to make it clear that the apprehension which the Soviet Union seemed to have that there was some secret arrangement with Germany hostile to the Soviet Union was utterly unfounded; that Finland desired to maintain a position of absolute neutrality as between the Soviet Union and Germany, and that its established policy was to treat either of its neighbors as an enemy that would invade its borders or attack its sovereignty. The implication was quite clear that if Germany should seek to employ Finland as a base for an attack on Russia that Finland would treat Germany as an enemy, and that the converse of that position was also true.

Litvinov rejoined that his Government had no confidence in the then President of Finland because of his well-known German predilections. Holsti told me that he (Holsti) was thereafter fortunate in being able to confer (in the absence of Litvinov, due to "ill health") with Molotov, the Premier, Voroshilov, head of the army, and several other Soviet leaders, and that he had stated the some things to them. Voroshilov seemed very much impressed and relieved, and had assured him that the U.S.S.R. had no aggressive intent as against Finland and that the military preparations on the border were purely defensive.

Holsti stated that in subsequent discussions with Litvinov, the latter had stated that after all Holsti's statement was only a personal one and that his Government naturally would require some more definite assurances, whereupon he had advised Litvinov that he would return to Finland and procure such official action as would corroborate this statement of policy; that within a very short time after his return an election was held and that the then President was defeated and his successor elected.

Thereafter, Holsti advised, the newly elected President, after conferences with him, had incorporated in his address of acceptance before the Finnish legislature the direct statement of policy hereinbefore set forth. This he (Holsti) had then transmitted to Litvinov.

That in view of this official assurance of policy, Holsti expressed the hope that the Soviet Union would so conduct its military preparations as to ease off the strain on the border.

GERMANY'S ACTIVITIES IN FINLAND.

Holsti further stated to me that the activities of Germany in Finland were very aggressive and suspicious. As illustrative, he recounted an incident arising out of Lord Plymouth's recent visit to Finland. Lord Plymouth, as Hosti's guest, had sojourned with him, for several days, in the country. Immediately after Plymouth's departure, it was conveyed to him by the German Legation that Holsti was engaging in an intrigue with Great Britain adverse to Germany's interests, and that there was no other accountable reason for his visit in the country with Plymouth. He reassured the German Mission that such was not the case and that not one word had been spoken by Lord Plymouth that was hostile to Germany.

Holsti stated that he feared that, on the occasion of his return from Geneva in the near future and his stopping off in Berlin to make a formal courtesy call upon the German Foreign Minister, von Naurath⁴⁵, this would be misconstrued by Soviet Government.

The position of Finland as between its two powerful neighbors is not an enviable one.

Since my departure, and a few days ago, the German fleet of nine or ten vessels have been on a friendly visit to Helsingfors. The official papers in Moscow have been violent in their attack upon this manifestation of friendliness on the part of Finland to Germany. The Finnish newspapers have, in turn, resented the suggestion that the Soviet Union should seek to determine for Finland what friendly courtesy it should extend to a friendly neighboring State. This is illustrative of the extreme sensitiveness of the situation here.

The Scandinavian bloc is, in my opinion, very close to the British Foreign Office.

CONCLUSION.

There is a background of friendly feeling toward Germany in Finland. This has an historical basis and is due to the aid which Germany extended to the country in its struggle for independence against Russia.

On the other hand, the Finns are essentially a strong, democratic, liberty-loving and independent people. The net impression which I get (and it is quite strong) from these various conversations is that the Government of Finland is innately

⁴⁵ Konstantinas Noiratas (Konstantin Freiherr von Neurath, 1873–1956) – Vokietijos užsienio reikalų ministras (1932–1938).

hostile to the Hitler concept and his governmental policies. Finland is instinctively not “Pro-German”.

Quite independently of both of these considerations, however, Finland’s policy is based upon a realization of the exceedingly precarious geographical and military strategic position she occupies between two powerful enemy countries, and upon a determination to realistically avoid antagonizing either, if possible, and in any event do her utmost to prevent her land from being converted into a battleground whereby both her political independence and economic freedom and independent well-being might be destroyed.

Respectfully yours,

Joseph E. Davies

JED/hla

Original and four copies to the Department,
One copy to the Legation, Riga.

EMBASSY

XXXXXXXX

No. 456-C

Riga, Latvia, August 15, 1937.

Subject: Report of Visit and Trip to Latvia.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to report the following with reference to my visit to Latvia on August 13, 14 and 15, 1937.

At the outset I wish to state that Minister Lane⁴⁶ and the entire staff were most helpful and cooperative. The occasion also afforded me an opportunity to confer with Mr. Packer⁴⁷ and the staff of our Legation engaged in economic work in Riga. It is excellently organized and is doing splendid work.

⁴⁶ Arturas Leinas (Arthur Bliss Lane, 1894–1956) – JAV nepaprastasis ir įgaliotasis ministras Baltijos šalims (1936–1937 09 15), rezidavęs Rygoje. Labai palankus Latvijai ir kitoms Baltijos šalims, po Antrojo pasaulinio karo buvo pasiuntinys Lenkijoje ir parašė jaudinančią knygą „Aš regėjau išduotą Lenkiją“ (*I Saw Poland Betrayed*).

⁴⁷ Erlas Pakeris (Erl L. Packer) – JAV pasiuntinybės Rygoje reikalų vedėjas (1937 09 15–1938 10 05).

GENERAL.POPULATION AND MINORITIES.

Latvia is the middle of the three so-called Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) and adjacent to the U.S.S.R. The population is about 2,000,000, of which approximately 75% are Letts, 12% Russian, 4 % Jews – the remainder are of German and Polish origin.

GOVERNMENT.

The Latvians themselves prefer to designate their form of government as an “authoritarian state”. It is in fact a dictatorship. Since the coup d'état of 1934, which was effected by the then and present President, Ulmanis⁴⁸, with the aid of the army, there have been no elections and no sessions of the legislature. The Cabinet, which is appointed by the President, together with the latter promulgate decrees which have the effect and force of law and administer the State. They purport to be democratic in spirit. The Government seems firmly entrenched and there is no suggestion of reformation of the Constitution as in Estonia, or of a resumption of democratic legislative form.

RULING CLASSES.

The bulwark of political power resided in the professional and business men and wealthy peasants, all of Latvian stock, together with the army. Stress is placed upon a strictly Latvian nationality and the line is keenly adhered to.

RELIGION.

By far the largest part of the population are Lutheran, with the exception of a strong Roman Catholic population in the section immediately adjacent to the U.S.S.R.

DOMINANT PURPOSES OF FOREIGN POLICY.

The Government strongly adheres to the League of Nations for obvious reasons. Its entire foreign policy is based upon a desire to maintain its independence and the integrity of Latvian nationality. Peace is vital thereto. A balance and a strict neutrality as between Germany, Poland, and the U.S.S.R. is therefore imperative. It has a defensive and offensive alliance with Estonia. It is also a member of the so-called Baltic Bloc. As near as I could sense the officials are more favorably

⁴⁸ Karlis Ulmanis (1877–1942) – Latvijas valstybės ir autoritarinio režimo kūrėjas. 1936–1940 m. Latvijos prezidentas. 1940 m. sovietų suimtas ir per Maskvą išvežtas į Pietų Rusiją. Mirė 1942 m. rugsėjo 20 d. Krasnovodsko kalėjime. Kapas nerastas.

disposed toward Poland than to either the U.S.S.R. or Germany. England is their largest customer and has dominant influence.

DOMINANT PERSONALITIES.

The President, Dr. Ulmanis, was for a time a lecturer at the University of Nebraska Agricultural College. The Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Munters⁴⁹, is a young man 39 years of age (with a Scotch grandmother). He speaks Russian fluently, along with four other languages. He is an exceptionally brilliant, able and personable man. The other three outstanding men appeared to be Minister for War, General Balodis⁵⁰; the Minister for Finance; and the Minister for Commerce; all of whom I had discussions with the exception of the President, who was away on a vacation.

INDUSTRIES AND BUSINESS.

Latvia suffered severely during the war, both in loss of property and population. The large landed estates were divided up after the revolution. The distribution of the wealth of the country was, and still is, being generally projected. The principal products and industries are timber, flax, livestock and livestock products, and shipping. Prior to 1914 Riga was the largest timber port of the Baltic. It is interesting to note that the Government broadened the gauge of the railroads in Latvia leading into Russia, in order that trans-shipment traffic should be directed through their seaports. Cooperatives are very prevalent. The Government is itself also taking over industries by purchase (first from the German and Jewish minorities) and operating them through a private management, which participates in the profit, with the ultimate intention of issuing shares on these various businesses to be sold to the people generally, which shares are to be guaranteed by the State (Munters). Riga is a beautiful city, clean, thriving, and prosperous looking. The country, similar to the other Baltic States, is enjoying a boom, with much building activity in evidence.

The following is a brief digest of the conversations had with the officials of the country. The facts were largely elicited by questions which I directed.

⁴⁹ Vilhelmas Munteris (Gottards Wilhelms Nikolajs Munters, 1898–1967) – Latvijos politikas ir diplomatas. Nuo 1920 m. Latvijos užsienio reikalų ministerijos darbuotojas, 1925–1931 m. Baltijos šalių skyriaus vedėjas. 1933–1936 m. URM generalinis sekretorius, 1936–1940 m. Latvijos užsienio reikalų ministras. Apdovanotas Ldk Gedimino I ir II laipsnio ordinais.

⁵⁰ Janis Baluodis (1881–1965) – Latvijos karinis ir politinis veikėjas. Nuo 1919 m. – generolas. 1902 m. baigė Vilniaus karo mokyklą. Vienas Latvijos kariuomenės kūrėjų, nuo 1919 m. spalio kariuomenės vyriausiasis vadas. 1931–1940 m. karo ministras. 1940 m. Sovietams okupavus Latviją, buvo suimtas ir iki šeštojo dešimtmečio pabaigos kalintas.

CONFERENCE WITH THE MINISTER
FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MR. MUNTERS. RUSSIA.

It was only a few weeks ago that Secretary Munters had paid an official visit to Moscow. His impressions were quite positive and generally were the following: (1) that Stalin and the governing powers were deliberately following a policy of wiping out the old Bolsheviks, whose training and information was such that they could appreciate the distinction between what Stalin was doing and what the original concepts were, with the purpose of re-fortifying the Party with only the youth, who saw only one side of the picture; and (2) that a moral situation was coming to a head that was leading to a nationalistic, patriotic ideal, because younger generation had no real ideology or religious concept to adhere to. In the latter he saw evidence of ultimate disintegration.

RUSSIA AND THE WESTERN LOCARNO.

If England and France were to make peace with Germany and Italy and establish a Western Locarno, leaving Russia out from direct participation therein, it was the opinion of Secretary Munters that it would not be done without consideration being given and steps being taken to ensure the peace of Eastern Europe. In that connection he stated that several months ago he had had a long political discussion with Neville Chamberlain, which developed the idea that the solution for the peace of Eastern Europe might be found under an arrangement between Germany and the Baltic States, Poland and Rumania, whereby Germany would enter into the same kind of treaties with these States, respectively, which the U.S.S.R. had with these States. With such pacts of non-aggression together with a clear definition of what constituted the aggressor, peace would be assured as far as treaties could effect that and thereby there would be created a "roof" between Germany and Russia which would relieve the situation of the necessity for Russia and Germany to enter into a contract or treaty, as it was through that Hitler would under no circumstances "sign any contract with the Soviet Union at this time". This arrangement, however, he said, would assure peace in Eastern Europe at least for a time.

EUROPEAN PEACE.

The Foreign Secretary stated that basically conditions affecting peace in Europe had not improved very much despite recent developments; that the Spanish situation still looked very bad and impossible of solution and might readily get out of hand. He stated as his opinion that the situation between Italy and Britain for the past year had been fraught with the greatest danger but that there was ground for hope; that there was perceptible improvement in that situation through the arrangements

which were being now worked out by Mussolini and Chamberlain. He stated that of course it was still in the formative period and that in his opinion doubtless discussions were proceeding very assiduously in London and Rome between the parties at the present time.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

The Foreign Secretary stated that in as much as he was speaking unofficially and in confidence he would tell me that while in England he had discussed the problem in important circles and that there was a very substantial group that held the opinion that the one state in Europe that could be wiped out without appreciable difficulties was Czechoslovakia and he further stated that there were groups that were making very definite plans in that direction. Just what these plans were he did not state. I rather gathered that they had to do with business arrangements. He gave it as his opinion that it was accepted generally among leaders of political thought, quite regardless of whether they were friendly or hostile to France, that in the event of German aggression against Czechoslovakia, France would do nothing, despite her treaty with the latter. He spoke of the very large German minority in Czechoslovakia immediately contiguous to Germany, and that the size of this minority made it practically impossible (unlike other minority situations) for any possible absorption of this large part of the population.

POLAND.

Secretary Munters also expressed the ideas which were stated in Estonia, that the basic social conditions in Poland were fraught with serious danger. He elaborated upon the conditions of extreme poverty and wealth, the concurrent extension of education and the consequent serious discontent arising therefrom which, together with the existence of substantial minorities hostile to the Government, might induce serious internal trouble.

FRANCE.

France, in his opinion, was in a very serious situation internally and he expected difficulties this fall.

GERMANY.

He did not anticipate any aggressive military action by Germany for some time, as he did not think they were ready economically.

FINANCE AND COMMERCE.

The gist of my discussions with the Ministers for Finance and Commerce were about as follows:

GOLD.

The Minister for Finance stated that they had converted their dollars and pounds into gold and were holding it as a reserve for their currency; that they were not buying any more gold now. That policy, he stated, was based upon the belief that the most stable money in international exchange in Europe was the pound and that being tied thereto gave his Government the best security. Nevertheless they felt that gold was the best basis of stable value and they kept a large reserve and were very conservative in their commitments. So far as the problem involved in the purchase of gold was concerned, he stated that they had but little interest therein and did not worry about it; that they were content to let the British Treasury worry about that. He quite apparently did not know much about it and I was, of course, careful not to stress it.

BUSINESS CONDITIONS.

The Minister for Commerce stated that the country was enjoying great prosperity – almost too much; that the building activities were extensive. He also stated that the country had no stock exchange and felt that they were fortunate in that respect. He also described how the Government was engaged in buying private enterprises and planning to issue stock thereon guaranteed by the Government, for purchase by the population.

LATVIAN OPINION ON EUROPEAN MILITARY STRENGTH.

General Berzius⁵¹, the head of the army in Latvia, stated that as an old soldier and Latvian revolutionist he desired to express the thanks of his country to the United States for its help in procuring the independence of his country. He commented particularly upon the fact that the United States was one of the first of the nations to recognize the Latvian Government.

He is the type of hard-headed, old soldier and seemed to be a man of strong, balanced judgment.

⁵¹ Veikiausiai čia turimas galvoje Krišjanis Berkis, kuris 1934–1940 m. buvo Latvijos kariuomenės vyriausiasis vadas. 1906 m. jis baigė Vilniaus karo mokyklą. Prasidėjus sovietinei okupacijai buvo ištremtas į Sibirą, kur ir mirė.

THE RUSSIAN ARMY.

He had formerly been a Russian officer. The man power, he considered excellent; but, in his opinion, there was the same weakness in them as had been displayed in the previous war, to wit, the lack of a staying quality and capacity to follow through. He thought that the officer class was the principal weakness in the army.

GERMANY.

Germany, in his opinion, would not be ready for war for two or three years. It was physically impossible to get the various classes by years trained in a short time. Nevertheless, he considered that the army was strong and would render a good account of itself. It was his opinion that Hitler's attitude had been affected by the constant advices of military and naval officers that they were not ready.

ENGLAND.

He stated that from his observations, while attending the coronation, he did not have so very high an opinion of the army as such, but that they were doing great things in connection with industrial, naval and military preparedness and that within a year or 18 months England would be prepared. He regarded it as a great factor for the preservation of peace.

FRANCE.

He had stopped off in France on his return from the coronation. He was very much impressed with the French Army and thought that all in all it was the strongest military force in Europe; that the French officers were not disposed to ostentatious display in showing him what they had; but the businesslike and effective military machine impressed him greatly. He expressed serious concern as to internal conditions in France.

I venture to call your attention particularly to the comments of the Foreign Minister as to Czechoslovakia and his interview with Neville Chamberlain relative to implementing plans for Eastern Europe peace. I am impressed with their real import.

Respectfully yours,

Joseph E. Davies

JKD/hla

Original and four copies to the Department.

One copy to the Legation, Riga.

EMBASSY
XXXXXXXXXXXX

Mr. Davies

No. 456-D

Memel, Lithuania, August 16, 1937.

Subject: Report on Visit to Lithuania – Memel – (Klaipeda).

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to report the following with reference to my visit to Lithuania.

GENERAL.

POPULATION.

In the territory claimed by the Lithuanian Government, with an area of approximately 59,000 square miles, there is a population of 4,800,000, of which there are 145, 000 in the territory of Memel (Klaipeda). The cities have a heavy Jewish population. Lithuania is recognized to be the most backward economically and culturally of the Baltic States. It felt the effects of depression apparently less than almost any of the European States. The standard of living is very low and the peasantry is far more backward than those of either Latvia or Estonia – possibly as a result of the centuries of Polish influence and social structure.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

While ostensibly a constitutional democracy the Government is also in fact a dictatorship established by a group of army officers, professional and semi-professional men, for the most part of peasant origin, together with certain sections of the Roman Catholic clergy.

RULING CLASSES.

Control is held by a coalition of political leaders – the professional and businessmen of peasant origin and the clergy.

RELIGION.

It is predominantly Roman Catholic. The Jews in the trading districts of the provincial cities are, generally speaking, orthodox.

DOMINANT PURPOSE OF FOREIGN POLICIES.

Primarily of course it is to preserve their national independence. It is in the heart of the danger zone as between the Soviet Union and Germany and, while

desirous of maintaining strictly formal relationships with Germany, it is the most friendly to Russia of all the European States adjacent to the U. S. S. R. Innately it is anti-German. Its only real outlet to the sea is the port of Memel (Klaipeda) and it is in constant fear that the Nazi Government has the intention of restoring Memel to German sovereignty. The Government and the entire population are bitterly hostile to Poland. This situation has been accentuated from October 1920, when, despite the agreement between the Polish Government and Lithuania, Vilna (the then capital) was seized by the Poles and since continuously occupied by them. This bitter hostility is manifested by a tight military defense along and a complete shutting off of the border between the two countries. There is no intercourse between them, and as an illustration thereof, it was impossible for me to send a telegram to Ambassador Biddle⁵² at Warsaw from Memel. The Soviet Union is, therefore, more or less a natural ally in their hostile attitude to Poland and Germany.

The immediate objectives of their foreign policy are two:

- (1) To recover its old capital of Vilna, now in possession of the Poles;
- (2) To hold the port of Memel as against Germany.

It is a member of the so-called Baltic Bloc and collaborates with its two northern neighbors, Latvia and Estonia, but the hostility between Poland and Lithuania is a constant thorn in the projection of common purposes with the other members of the "Bloc". Another fact which somewhat dulls this coalition is found in that both Latvia and Estonia fear being drawn into the Soviet orbit and would probably not desire to maintain to close a relationship if Lithuania were to become merely a puppet of the Soviet Union by becoming too closely and irrevocably tied up with the Soviet Union. In the last analysis it seems probable – at least or the present – that self-protection as against its two avowed enemies will be more controlling, as Lithuania will find its most effective protector, in case of war with either Poland or Germany, in the Soviet Union.

INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS.

The predominant industry is agriculture. It has 40% of its territory under cultivation and about 25% pasture land. Another principal industry is in forest products. There are some food industries, leather, animal by-products, and chemical plants. The tanneries prior to the war were among the largest of the world and have recovered somewhat. Up to 1928 the principal trade was with Germany, but that has declined. The country has no coal or minerals. Its chief export market is the United Kingdom.

⁵² Antanas Džozefas Baidlas (Anthony Joseph Drexel Biddle, Jr., 1897–1961) – nuo 1937 m. JAV nepaprastasis ir įgaliotasis ministras Lenkijoje.

DOMINANT PERSONALITIES.

The dominant personalities are the President, Dr. Antanas Smetona; the Prime Minister, Dr. Tubelis; the Minister for Foreign Affairs, St. Lozoraitis; and the Reverend V. Mironas.

A unique factor in this situation is the generally accepted fact of the dominant influence of two very strong women in the affairs of the Government. They are two sisters and are the wives, respectively, of the President and the Prime Minister. They are Poles and have been much hated by the populace. There are many stories current and much gossip, much of which doubtless is untrue. The recurrence of prosperous conditions within the last two or three years has apparently strengthened the Government considerably.

MEMEL (KLAIPEDA).

Because of my interest in the Memel situation as one of the serious sore spots possibly affecting European peace, I spent some time there studying the situation. The territory is constituted as a Versailles autonomous unit under the sovereignty of Lithuania. The Governor of the territory is appointed by the Lithuanian Government and there is a measure of financial and administrative autonomy. The port was defined by the League of Nations agreement as one of international concern, to which the provisions of the League's Barcelona Transit Conference were applied. The League appoints a neutral technical expert as a member of the Harbor Board.

I called upon the Governor and visited with some of the principal citizens of the community. The Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. Kuykendall, was most helpful and cooperative in every way.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE PORT.

The city itself, with a population of approximately 40,000, gives the impression of being a backward and provincial community. It is distinctly not clean and the original Germanic influence in that respect at least seems to have subsided. The population has doubled within the past 15 years. The business is practically that of a shipping port, with some shipbuilding yards, iron foundries, chemical factories, and breweries. Its chief importance lies, however, in its transit trade in timber, grain, fish, and agricultural produce. A part of its timber export comes from the Soviet Union and is partially manufactured here. The largest part of the exports go to England. The exports to Germany have fallen off substantially and are now more or less at a standstill. It was explained to me that the difficulties lie chiefly in keeping the balance even under the barter arrangement with Germany. There is presently a balance due from Germany of 8,000,000 litai. Payment of this balance can only be procured by the purchase of German commodities. It was stated that in order to

procure this payment they would probably have to sell more goods under the barter arrangement and they feared that if they did so they would probably ultimately find that the balance of payments due would be greater still at the conclusion of the new arrangement. It is fairly typical of the Schacht trading policy.

POLITICAL SITUATION AND GERMANY.

So far as the Memel situation as an immediate issue between Lithuania and Germany is concerned, the situation seems to be better than it has been for the last two years. The last election in the Memel territory was held in 1934. At that time, for purposes of demonstration, Hitler appeared personally at Tilsit, just across the border, and it was reported that he had 25,000 men under arms stationed at that place. The election, it appears, was conducted by the Lithuanians with reasonable fairness. The result was that only five Lithuanians were elected to the governing body out of a total of 29. The population of the port particularly and of the territory generally is predominantly German and characterized by ardent pro-German sympathy.

The statement was made to me that the Governor of Lithuania had been reliably informed within the past few months that Hitler "had no aggressive intention as to Memel for the moment".

Lithuania is undoubtedly more backward in every respect than any of the Baltic States. Apart from the sentimental value of restoring the German minority in the territory to German sovereignty, there would be no advantage to Germany in re-acquiring Memel. There would be no economic advantage to Germany. In fact the contrary would probably be true, because the low standard of living in Lithuania would tend to dilute the higher standard of living of the Germans. To Lithuania, on the contrary, Memel has a very great economic value, as it is practically its only outlet to the sea.

Respectfully yours,

Joseph E. Davies

JED/hla

Original and four copies to the Department.

One copy to the Legation, Riga.

REPORTS ON THE VISIT OF THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO
MOSCOW JOSEPH E. DAVIES TO THE BALTIC STATES AND FINLAND
IN 1937

Zenonas Butkus, Magnus Ilmjärv

Summary

The article presents Joseph Edward Davis' reports to the Secretary of the US State Department on his visits to Estonia (July 24–26), Finland (July 31–August 2), Latvia (August 13–15) and Lithuania (August 16) archived at the Library of Congress in Washington. Although providing a wide range of authentic historical facts confirming that the USA became interested in European affairs in 1937, the reports were barely used in prior historic research. Published reports suggest that the President of the United States and his administration were aware of the threat of the approaching war. Firstly, Davies' visits were supposed to scrutinize whether the Baltic States and Finland became a convenient bridgehead for the Nazi Germany's attack against the Soviet Union. At that moment the administration of the United States treated the Soviet Union as a strategic ally capable of helping to counter Japan's expansion to the Far East.

J. E. Davies' visit to the Baltic States was a success. Ambassador could obviously perceive that the states he visited were not going to open the door to the Nazi expansion. On the contrary, the Baltic States were determined to maintain independence and territorial integrity. These countries strived to preserve neutrality and indicated acceptance neither of Germany nor of the USSR. However, the Baltic States were often accused of breaching the neutrality, although such accusations had no grounds and served mainly as an excuse to control foreign policy of the weaker neighbours. The content of reports demonstrates that the author managed to objectively evaluate international and internal situation of the visited countries. Possibly the Ambassador underestimated the situation in Lithuania as his visit lasted only one day compared to three-day-visits in other Baltic countries.