



# Lithuanian Military Digest

MAY 2019. NO 5 (12).

## NEWS

### FIRST LIVE FIRING WITH UPGRADED PZH2000



### US ARMY THAAD IS HEADED TO EASTERN EUROPE



### LARGEST MEDICAL EXERCISE IN NATO HISTORY

### 9.000 PARTICIPANTS MARKED NATO ANNIVERSARY

### ANTI-UAV FOR THE LITHUANIAN ARMED FORCES

## SPECIAL

### ACTIVITIES OF LITHUANIAN PARTISANS IN THE WEST



## Nearly 600 Takeoffs and Pilots Seeking to Be the Best

ALMOST 3000 HOURS — THE AMOUNT OF TIME SO FAR SPENT IN THE AIR BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL ADAM KALINOWSKI, WHO WAS IN LEAD OF THE LAST ROTATION DEPLOYED IN LITHUANIA DURING THE NATO AIR POLICING MISSION. DRIVEN BY THE LOVE FOR PLANES SINCE CHILDHOOD, POLISH DETACHMENT COMMANDER HAS BEEN LIVING HIS DREAM WHICH RECENTLY GAVE HIM AN OPPORTUNITY TO PUT HIS FIRST CONTRIBUTION TO THIS MISSION. HOWEVER, NUMBER OF CHALLENGES HAD TO BE OVERCOME IN ORDER TO HAVE ALLIES' FIGHTER JETS PATROLLING THE BALTIC SKIES, TO WHICH — IMPORTANT TO MENTION — THEY TOOK OFF EVEN 90 TIMES THROUGHOUT 2014 AFTER THE EVENTS IN UKRAINE TOOK PLACE.

### FIRST CHALLENGES

The Baltic airspace has been protected by NATO countries since March 29, 2004, when the first troops of The Belgian Air Component landed in Šiauliai Air Base right after Lithuania became a member of the Alliance.

However, with the first collective defence measure implemented in Lithuania after the ratification of the treaty, many challenges had to be faced at the beginning of the mission. According to the Lieutenant Colonel Antanas Matutis, Commander of the Air Base of the

Lithuanian Air Force, there was a need to build an infrastructure from troops' accommodation to fighter jets' maintenance, deal with various procedures, logistics, prepare personnel and overcome other difficulties arising in the process. The first soldiers carrying out the mission settled in one of the territories of the Air Base of the Lithuanian Air Force, established a military town and brought their own equipment and personnel. Then the fighters were kept outdoors in rubber hangars.

See page 10

Dear readers,

With the last issue we marked the 15-years anniversary of Lithuania's membership in NATO, therefore now we would like to pay attention to one of the first collective defence measures implemented in Lithuania after the ratification of the Washington Treaty. It goes without saying how much we are all proud to stand alongside the troops of NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battlegroup (eFP BG) who perform their duties during a peacetime collective defence mission in our land. However, we shall not forget that with the first four F-16 Fighting Falcon jets of The Belgian Air Component landing in Šiauliai Air Base on March 29, 2004, safeguarding the integrity of Baltic States' Airspace began as well. The principle of collective defence is at the very heart of NATO's founding treaty, which is why it remains a unique and enduring principle that binds its members together, committing them to protect each other and setting a spirit of solidarity within the Alliance. There are no doubts Lithuania is getting stronger every day thanks to eFP BG and NATO Air Policing mission to which all member nations contribute in some form, be it through the use of national aerial surveillance systems, air traffic management, interceptor aircraft or other air defence measures.

However, at the very beginning of new era of defence in Lithuania, the set goals were not that easy to achieve. Consequently, many efforts had to be put in improving the NATO Air Policing mission, at that time being the first-time experience for all the Baltic States. Of course, there is nothing what a determined nation would not be able to do, so after some time the major obstacles were overcome, providing way better conditions for deployable contingents. With that being said, we believe today is a good time to have a little bit closer look on what is going on in Šiauliai Air Base after 15 years have passed and meeting the 50th rotation of this mission.

*Cordially,  
Team of the "Lithuanian Military Digest"*

Photo credit: Sgš Sp. leva Budzeikaite



## Content

### NEWS

FIRST LIVE FIRING WITH UPGRADED PZH2000.....	3
US ARMY THAAD IS HEADED TO EASTERN EUROPE.....	4
RUSSIA WOULD BE TURKEY'S 'FIRST BEST CHOICE'.....	5
GERMANY MUDDLES THROUGH ANOTHER NATO SHINDIG.....	6
LARGEST MEDICAL EXERCISE IN NATO HISTORY.....	7
CYBER DEFENCE EXERCISE LOCKED SHIELDS.....	7
9.000 PARTICIPANTS MARKED NATO ANNIVERSARY.....	8
THE MECHANISED INFANTRY BRIGADE IRON WOLF EVALUATED POSITIVELY BY NATO.....	8
WARSHIPS OF NATO ALLIES VISITED KLAIPEDA.....	9
ANTI-UAV FOR THE LITHUANIAN ARMED FORCES.....	9

### NATO'S PRESENCE

NEARLY 600 TAKEOFFS AND PILOTS SEEKING TO BE THE BEST.....	1, 10
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### SPECIAL

ACTIVITIES OF LITHUANIAN PARTISANS IN THE WEST.....	16
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Publisher — Lithuanian Armed Forces. The opinion of editorial office does not necessarily coincide with the opinion of the authors. Pictures, manuscripts are not returned and reviewed. Circulation is 300 copies. Printed by the Cartography Center of Lithuanian Military, Muitinės str.4, Domeikava, LT-54359 Kaunas dist. Order GL-234.



# First Live Firing with Upgraded PzH2000

On April 17 nearly two weeks of testing the first upgraded PzH2000 self-propelled artillery systems culminated in a live fire event at General Silvestras Žukauskas Training Area in Pabradė. The exercise was the first time soldiers of the Lithuanian Armed Forces General Romualdas Giedraitis Artillery Battalion live-fired the artillery systems received in the end of last year and in the beginning of this year.

During testing the practising soldiers executed real firing with antipersonnel ammunition at fixe targets. The event took place during the light part of the day and the longest firing range was 12 kilometres (for comparison, the maximal firing range of PzH2000 is over 30 kilometres). Shells of M-50 field artillery guns could destroy targets at the farthest distance of 11 kilometres until now.

"We have followed the procedures when testing the new equipment but the conditions were not easy, the firing pace was intense but hits were accurate and the final results meet our expectations. The General Romualdas Giedraitis Artillery Battalion is on the track of becoming the strongest fire-power battalion in the Lithuanian Armed Forces," Battalion Commander Col Lt Marijus Jonelis said after the training.

The exercise site was visited by Land Force Commander Maj Gen Valdemaras Rupšys and Commander of the Mechanised infantry Brigade Iron Wolf Col Mindaugas Steponavičius who familiarised with the PzH2000 self-propelled artillery system project in more detail and observed the live-firing.

*The 155 mm PZH 2000 self-propelled howitzer is one of the most modern howitzers in series production worldwide. The field artillery system was first produced in Germany in 1999. Currently it is used by the armed forces of Germany, the Netherlands, Greece, Italy, Croatia, Qatar, and Lithuania. Lithuanian soldiers have already attended a range of courses and meetings with German experts who shared their experience both in Lithuania and at the Artillery School in Germany. Having acquired experience in using the PzH2000 systems in Germany, Lithuanian soldiers are now transferring it to their colleagues at home.*

**Lithuanian Armed Forces inf.**



Photo credits: Cpl Vaiga Zalatoraitė

# US Army THAAD is Headed to Eastern Europe



Photo credits: www.flickr.com

**S**o far only the Pacific region and, more recently, the Middle East have seen operational deployments of the U.S. Army's Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system, but now it is headed to Romania this summer, according to an April 11 U.S. European Command statement.

Questions have swirled for years on when, where and if THAAD would deploy to Europe, particularly as the situation on the eastern flank has heated up since Russia annexed Crimea in 2014.

The THAAD system, according to the USEUCOM statement, will deploy this summer "in support of NATO Ballistic Missile Defense" — in other words, it is filling in for the operational Aegis Ashore missile defense system while it undergoes a "limited period of scheduled maintenance and updates."

The Aegis Ashore in Deveselu, Romania,

has been operational since 2016. It is part of the European Phased Adaptive Approach, or EPAA, designed to defend U.S. troops and its allies in Europe against possible ballistic missile attacks.

The EPAA consists of an AN/TPY-2 radar in Turkey and two Aegis Ashore systems — one in Romania and one in Poland. The Polish system has been hit with delays due to construction issues at Redzikowo military base that are unrelated to the system's performance. It won't be operational until 2020.

The scheduled update to the Aegis Ashore system in Romania is part of regular updates performed on all Aegis systems — the majority of which are ship-based, according to the statement.

The system will come from the 69th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, 32nd Army Air and Missile Defense Command at Fort Hood, Texas.

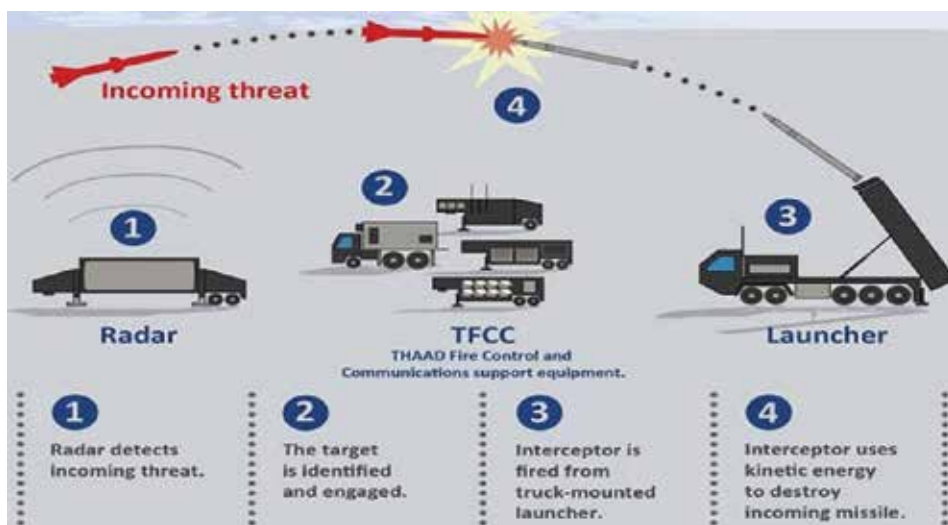
NATO's Allied Air Command will have operational control of THAAD during its mission.

USEUCOM was clear in its statement that the updates will not add offensive capabilities to the system and maintains that the site "provides a defensive capability to deter future conflict, and to defend ourselves, and our NATO allies, should deterrence fail."

THAAD is an important part of the U.S. Army's layered missile defense capabilities and is capable of neutralizing ballistic missile threats in the terminal phase of flight. It has been deployed in Guam since 2013 and in South Korea since 2017.

THAAD was deployed to Israel last month. The United Arab Emirates is the only foreign customer under contract, but the U.S. has also reached a deal to sell THAAD units to Saudi Arabia. ■

[www.defensenews.com](http://www.defensenews.com) inf.



# Russia Would Be Turkey's 'First Best Choice'

If U.S. officials were to expel Turkey from the multinational group that builds the F-35 Lightning II, Turkish defense officials said they likely would pursue Russian fighter jet technology.

"We cannot afford to leave the F-35 not substituted," a senior military officer told Defense news. He declined to comment on the replacement options, as this would require "technological, economical and political deliberations."

But a defense procurement official said "geostrategic assessment" would make Russian options emerge as the natural first replacement. "Russian fighter technology would be the first best choice if our American allies behaved in an un-allied way and questioned Turkey's membership in the Joint Strike Fighter program," he said.

Washington has threatened to expel Ankara from the multinational program if Turkey deploys the Russian-made S-400 surface-to-air missile system on its soil.

If Turkey accepts the S-400, "no F-35s will ever reach Turkish soil. And Turkish participation in the F-35 program, including manufacturing parts, repairing and servicing the fighters, will be terminated, taking Turkish companies out of the manufacturing and supply chain for the program," wrote a group of bipartisan lawmakers from the Senate Armed



Photo credits: www.flickr.com

Services Committee and Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Earlier this month, the Pentagon announced a freeze on deliveries and activities with Turkey in relation to the F-35 program over Ankara's decision to buy the S-400. Turkey insists the first S-400 shipments would arrive in July and the first S-400 system would become operational in September.

A Turkish presidential source said that potential Turkish-Russian cooperation on fighter technology was "preliminarily discussed" between their respective defense officials dur-

ing Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's visit to Moscow on April 8.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Çavuşoğlu told broadcaster NTV on April 10: "There are F-35[s], but there are also aircraft manufactured in Russia. If we are not able to purchase [the] F-35, Turkey will buy similar aircraft from other countries. And this will continue until we start producing our own fifth-generation fighter jets."

Such a move would make Turkey the only NATO member to simultaneously use the S-400 and Russian fighter.

"This is not a useful dispute for the alliance," asserted an Ankara-based European Union military attache. "What we observe today could push Turkey further into Russia's military orbit... and we don't want that."

Earlier this month, Russian Helicopters CEO Andrey Boginsky visited Turkey to discuss the possibility of co-production efforts.

However, Russia is not the only alternative for the F-35. In 2015, Turkey's procurement authorities released a request for information for the TF-X, the country's indigenous fighter jet program. Sweden's Saab was one of the bidders to supply know-how for the initial design phase of the program, but Ankara selected Britain's BAE Systems for that contract.

"Saab's commitment to technology transfer was very generous, but its price was expensive at the time," a Turkish official recalled. "Saab could now revise its bid and incorporate it into the new [no F-35] situation," he said.

Another option for Turkey is Airbus, a partner in the Eurofighter program based in the Netherlands and France, the official added. ■

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# Germany Muddles Through Another NATO Shindig



Photo credits: www.flickr.com

Say what you will about Germany's defense spending, the ritual of U.S. leaders trashing Berlin is almost becoming something of a unifying force within the alliance.

The country is far from on track when it comes to reaching the military budget target agreed by all allies: 2% of gross domestic product by 2024. As expected, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence called Germany out for its lackluster defense expenditures on the eve of a NATO ministerial in Washington this week, referring to a draft budget projection in Berlin that would put the country at 1.3% or so by that time.

And as expected, German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas responded in the same way that his government always does: re-subscribing to the spending commitment, throwing up his hands over competing domestic priorities, and pleading to widen the scope for measuring German contributions to NATO beyond the defense budget alone.

"We intend to keep our word," Maas said in Washington on Wednesday afternoon, having just hopped off the Amtrak from United Nations business in New York. For good measure, he threw in a reference about the intricacies of the German budgeting process, as if hoping that its opacity would one day give way to even a 1.5% spending level.

That is the percentage figure almost tacitly accepted by some European alliance members who just want to see Berlin make

an honest effort. Getting to the NATO-required spending of 2% by 2024 would require such a massive influx of military spending in such a short amount of time that there would be good reason to wonder if the Bundeswehr could absorb it to good effect.

There is no more hoping to fly under the radar with a missing half percentage point now. Key allies in Europe had signaled that they could defend a German exception for a 1.5% target against the White House, but the news from earlier this spring that Berlin's trajectory

is now even lower was a significant snub to them, said Christian Mölling, a senior analyst at the German Council on Foreign Relations in Berlin.

There is also a fear here by European NATO members that if Germany manages to anger President Trump enough over underspending, his rage could target the alliance as a whole. "There is fear of a spill-over effect," Mölling said. When it comes to spending and the perception of threats to NATO, "We are on a different planet than all the other allies," he added.

Let us remember that the ministerial and surrounding festivities for NATO's 70th birthday were choreographed specifically to avoid giving Trump a platform for the kind of acrimony that permeated the last day of the Brussels summit last year. And that plan has largely worked.

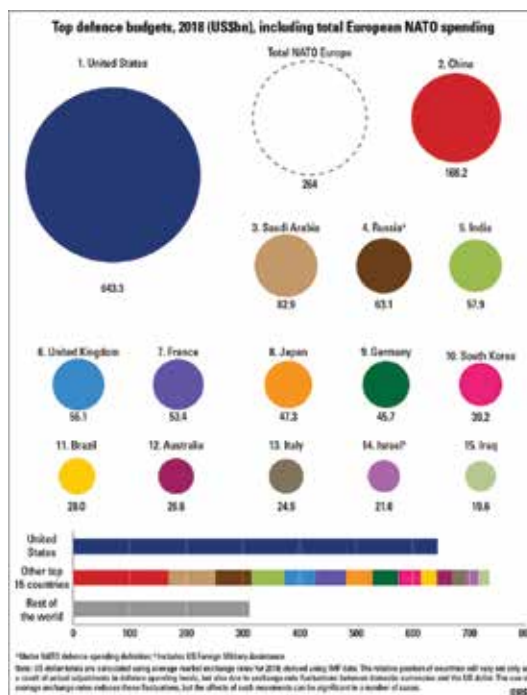
"Nothing happened, and everyone is happy about that," said Mölling when asked about the gathering's lasting effect.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg helped persuade Trump in Brussels to take alliance-wide spending increases to the bank as his personal achievement, averting a catastrophic implosion of the summit at the last minute. The Norwegian emerged as a key figure again this time around, stoically reciting the mantra that all members — read: Germany — would be held to their commitments while dutifully lauding Berlin's ongoing alliance contributions. Stoltenberg delivered a rousing speech before a joint session of Congress, viking jokes and all, that managed to revive for a moment the spirit of multilateralism against the backdrop of a U.S. administration known for its transactional foreign policy.

Along with his criticism of Germany, Pence, too, invoked transatlantic unity. "The United States has been faithful to Europe for generations, and we'll keep the faith," he said. "The United States of America is now, and will always be Europe's greatest ally."

Germany has its own internal struggles ahead when it comes to defining a budget commitment to NATO, which all members reportedly reinforced in this week's ministerial communique. The final due date for the spending increase is still several years away. Until then, there will be more alliance events for Berlin to muddle through. If nothing else, that spectacle seems to keep everyone at the table talking about moving the alliance forward, for now. ■

www.defensenews.com inf.



# Largest Medical Exercise in NATO History



Photo credit: Sg. Spc Ieva Budzeikaite

**M**ilitary medics with the Lithuanian Armed Forces MD Jonas Basanavičius Military Medical Service took part in international medical NATO exercise Vigorous Warrior 2019 in the period of March 30-April 14. Nearly 60 military medics of career and reserve service deepened their knowledge at the exercise held in Romania.

The exercise held in Romania this year was the largest exercise for training military medics in the history of the Alliance with participants from 38 NATO allies and partners. The Military Medical Service of the Lithuanian Armed Forces send medical support units of different specialties to the exercise every time, this year Lithuanian military medics took part with their designated equipment — containers, tents,

medical equipment and devices, and recovery vehicles.

"This is the first time our medical personnel is fully deploying their support units during an exercise abroad and will participate independently in medical support provision phases. Working together allows military medics from different countries to show each other they are professionals and share the same values, and are ready to ensure medical support to a joint force," Lieutenant Colonel Inga Jancevičienė, commander of a medical support group, said.

The objective of the exercise was to train and assess NATO and partner nations' interoperability at medical support level during military operations. The exercise also highlights cooperation with civilian institutions during

emergencies, medical command and control procedures, continuation of medical assistance, mobility and international cooperation in supporting joint military operations.

Over 20 different international medical support units were deployed at Cincu Training Area in Romania during the exercise: primary level healthcare, including stabilisation of condition, triage and evacuation (forward) (or Role 1), secondary level healthcare, including damage control — (forward) surgery, diagnostics, tactical evacuation (or Role 2), and secondary-tertiary level healthcare, including tactical evacuation (Role 3). During the exercise the training medics rehearsed giving medical aid, interacting with foreign colleagues, hone evacuation, medical logistics, and command and control procedures.

In total, over 1000 medical incidents were planned to be rehearsed at the exercise. Another characteristic of the exercise is interaction with civilian healthcare institutions of Romania. An alleged civilian emergency was rehearsed with numerous injured in Bucharest and participation of military medical capabilities. Lithuanian military medics were planned to take part in that phase.

## EXERCISE VIGOROUS WARRIOR

Every two years the exercise is organised by the NATO Centre of Excellence for Military Medicine (NATO MILMED COE) in Budapest, Hungary. The exercise is growing every time: it was held in Hungary and included participants from 5 countries in 2011, in 2017 it took place in Germany and included participants from 26 countries. ■

Lithuanian Armed Forces inf.

# Cyber Defence Exercise Locked Shields

**T**he active phase of one of the largest and most complex international live-fire cyber defence exercises Locked Shields 2019 has come to end. Over a thousand cyber security experts from 30 NATO allies and partners, including teams from NATO and EU agencies, practiced defending complex networks and systems of vital services.

Lithuania was represented at the exercise by a joint team of as many as 42 specialists from managers of critical infrastructure and communications operators and the Lithuanian Armed Forces. Colleagues from the U.S. and Georgia

also backed up the Lithuanian team with expertise this year.

In total, 23 Blue Teams were training in the exercise to protect and ensure continuous operation of nearly 4 thousand virtualised systems while experiencing over 2.5 thousand cyberattacks launched on them by the Red Teams.

Locked Shields 2019 is organised by CCD-COE in cooperation with the Estonian Defence Forces, the Finnish Defence Forces, the United States European Command, National Security Research Institute of the Republic of Korea, TalTech, and industry partners. One of the largest cyber defence exercises in the world



Photo credit: Sg. Spc Lukas Jamosiunas (MoD)

is a unique opportunity for national cyber experts to practise protection of national IT systems and critical infrastructure under the intense pressure of a severe cyberattack. ■

Lithuanian MoD inf.

## 9.000 Participants Marked NATO Anniversary

Photo credit: Sg. I. Budzeikaite



**O**n April 6 a running event on a military runway at the Lithuanian Air Force Base — Runway Run 2019 attracted over 9.000 participants to surmount the 3.000 meter-distance and marked the 70th NATO anniversary.

Participants were congratulated by Minister of National Defence Raimundas Karoblis who noted the symbolism of the venue: "This is exactly the place that the F-16 fighter aircraft of the Royal Belgian Air Force landed 15 years

ago several hours before Lithuania became a member of NATO, ready to protect our airspace from the very first seconds of our membership. For 15 years already the mission has been not only a guarantee of our security but also a real and tangible example of a collective defence commitment," he said.

More than a hundred and a half of soldiers from NATO allies deployed in Lithuania ran alongside residents and guests of Šiauliai in the event marking the NATO anniversary

and demonstrating unity of allies while G&G Sindikatas band made sure the mood was right.

A static display of military equipment and weaponry brought to Lithuania by our allies was presented: the 36 tone Boxer wheeled infantry fighting vehicle, Fenek armoured reconnaissance vehicle, Germany's Leopard 2 tank, Marder infantry fighting vehicle, and other equipment brought by the NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battalion Battle Group.

At the event the Lithuanian Special Operations Forces presented a static display of their weaponry and vehicles for the first time. Also, participants of the event were able to see military aircraft of the Lithuanian Air Force, F-16 fighter aircraft of the Polish Air Force's rotation of the NATO Air Policing Mission in the Baltic States, weaponry, equipment and military vehicles used by Lithuanian and NATO allies' soldiers, and to ask questions about the Continuous Mandatory Initial Military Service.

Charity was collected at Runway Run 2019 for the Injured Service Members Association that assists Lithuanian Armed Forces soldiers overcome trauma and injuries and their effects and to reintegrate. The donations will be transferred to the charity fund of the Association used for paying for rehabilitation, medications, and other necessities for injured soldiers. ■

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## The Mechanised Infantry Brigade Iron Wolf Evaluated Positively by NATO

**T**he staff of the Mechanised Infantry Brigade (MIB) Iron Wolf of the Lithuanian Armed Forces has passed the NATO combat readiness test. That is what stated in the official assessment documents signed by representatives of the Lithuanian Armed Forces Defence Staff and NATO's Allied Land Command in Germany after five months of training and three weeks of testing as international Exercise Allied Spirit X is drawing to a close. It is the first evaluation of the staff of the MIB Iron Wolf conducted according to the NATO Combat Readiness Evaluation System (CREVAL) procedures.

The "Wolves" have proved their ability to plan, command and control a brigade made up of Lithuanian and NATO allies' units. The testing included simulations of various types of operations, control of decision-making processes. The training soldiers were required



Photo credit: Lithuanian Armed Forces

to look into complex tactical situations that might develop when military actions are carried out. Performance of the Brigade's staff was closely followed by an international assessment group.

The official Combat Ready assessment

means that soldiers of the MIB Iron Wolf are able to solve tactical issues on time and properly, as well as to coordinate their actions with representatives of international organisations and civilian authorities. ■

**Lithuanian Armed Forces inf.**



# Warships of NATO Allies Visited Klaipėda

**O**n April 5-8 warships of our NATO allies visited Klaipėda Seaport ahead of taking part in historic ordnance disposal exercise in the Baltic Sea DEUSQUADEX 19-1/BALTEX on April 8-10.

Warship from 8 countries moored at Klaipėda Seaport for a three-day visit: mine countermeasures ships FGS Weilheim (Germany), FGS Bad Rappenau (Germany), LVA Talivaldis (Latvia), HNoMS Rauma (Norway), ORP Bukowo (Poland), and command and supply ships FGS Rhein (Germany), FGS Donau (Germany) and LVA Virsaitis (Latvia).

Ship commanders met with the Mayor of Klaipėda and leadership of the Lithuanian Navy. A preparation conference was held in Klaipėda ahead of the historical explosive ordnance disposal operation DEUSQUADEX 19-1/BALTEX.

The historical ordnance disposal operation led by the German Navy, DEUSQUADEX 19-1/BALTEX, was held in the territorial waters and exclusive economic zone of Lithuania for the first time. Before the ships arrive in Lithuania to take part in the operation on April



Photo credit: Giedre Maksimovitz

8-10, it took place in the territorial waters and exclusive economic zone of Latvia. The part of the operation in Lithuania's territorial waters was conducted by the foreign warships and Lithuania's LNS Skalvis mine countermeasures vessel.

Traditionally, every three years Lithuania hosts NATO-led international historical explosive ordnance disposal operation Open Spirit

which involves a big number of warships from NATO allies and partners. This year Open Spirit 2019 will take place in Lithuania in May. The most recent Open Spirit was held in Lithuania's territorial waters and exclusive economic zone in 2016, as a result, the area of 54 nautical miles was swept of 15 naval mines, 3 torpedoes and 3 shipwrecks. ■

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## Anti-UAV for the Lithuanian Armed Forces

In the second half of April the Ministry of National Defence and the United States Government signed a sales contract for buying protective equipment (anti-drone) against unmanned aerial vehicles for the Lithuanian Armed Forces.

"We are developing new capabilities of the Lithuanian Armed Forces by procuring equipment for protection against UAVs from our strategic partner U.S.," Vice Minister of National Defence Giedrimas Jeglinskas said after signing the contract.

The total worth of the contract is approx. USD 1.3 million not including VAT. It will be financed by the U.S. Department of State security assistance program in full. It has been agreed in the contract that the anti-drone equipment will be delivered to units of the Lithuanian Armed Forces by the middle of 2020.

The Lithuanian Armed Forces will use the anti-AEV equipment to solve the issue of more and more drones flown over forbidden terri-



Photo credit: www.flickr.com

tories. The anti-drone equipment is effective against standard commercial use or modified unmanned aerial vehicles. The equipment cuts off the communication between the drone and its operator thus disabling its control, also, it can block navigation system signals.

At the moment the Ministry of National Defence is in negotiations on procuring 200 JLTV armoured all-terrain vehicles from the

United States Government for the Lithuanian Armed Forces. Lithuania has already bought from the U.S. anti-aircraft missiles, Javelin anti-tank systems, communication systems and ammunition. In its turn, the United States has invested considerably in military training areas and other infrastructure in Lithuania, finances studies of Lithuanian soldiers and specialists at U.S. military schools, etc., under security assistance programs in Lithuania.

Earlier this year the Ministry of National Defence and the U.S. Department of Defence agreed to a five-year bilateral defence cooperation plan. It outlines the priority areas for the next five years as follows: joint exercise and training, enhancement of the deterrence measures in the Baltic region, participation in multinational operations, development of regional cyber capabilities, and more. The document was signed to seal the continuity of activities and appropriate financing of long-term projects. ■

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## Nearly 600 Takeoffs and Pilots Seeking to Be the Best



Photo credits: Kotryna Gurevičiūtė

From page 1

The military container town and the work positions created in containers were replaced by an administrative building with work positions and a full infrastructure opened in the spring of 2013. In order to improve the living conditions of troops carrying out the NATO Air Policing mission, an agreement was signed between the three Baltic States regarding the service package, defining the services and conditions to be provided by Lithuania as host country. According to Lt Col A. Matutis, such an agreement greatly facilitated and specified the work guidelines. Besides, as the Commander emphasized, it is important to mention the Lithuania's contribution to the NATO Air Policing mission in this region. "Since the beginning of the mission the main and alternative runways as well as the taxiways were upgraded, special hangars were installed for the mission's fighters, the fuel base, transport and fighter

aprons, centre for wing operations and new building for the troops of NATO Air Policing mission were built. Also, fighter arresting gear systems were established, a variety of devices which improve the orientation of the landing planes were built, and various techniques to serve the aerodrome were purchased," listed Lt Col A. Matutis.

### ALMOST 600 TAKEOFFS

Until 2014, the airspace of the three Baltic States was guarded by one NATO country and four fighters, but in the aftermath of the crisis in Ukraine, NATO quickly made a decision to increase the number of fighters. Then the US F-15 fighters deployed in Šiauliai were supported by six additional fighters, and after the contingents changed, two countries and 8 fighters were deployed instead of one country and the usual four fighters. Also, one country and 4 fighters were deployed to each base: Amari in

Estonia and Malbork in Poland. Therefore, in the summer of 2014, the Baltic airspace was protected by as many as 16 fighters.

As Lt Col A. Matutis told, usually NATO fighters take off for the trainings on a daily basis, only the tasks that pilots perform in the air are different. Meanwhile, the number of real takeoffs varies and depends on the activity of other countries in the region. "Sometimes aircrafts fly once a month, sometimes several times a week," he said. During the entire mission's period, NATO fighter jets have been diving the Baltic skies nearly 600 times so far. After asking how has the frequency of the mission fighters' takeoffs changed, giving the first decade and the events in Ukraine when the contingent of the Air Policing mission was expanded, Commander claimed that significant changes were implemented: "In 2004, we had only 5 'Alpha Scramble', while in 2014 NATO fighters took off 90 times. By monitoring statis-

” Lt Col A. Matutis:  
"Currently, the Baltic  
airspace remains active  
and the number of flights  
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beginning of the mission."

tics, the increased activity of neighbours could be seen in 2011. Then NATO fighters were flying 4 times more often than in 2010, and since then the number of takeoffs has steadily increased. Currently, the Baltic airspace remains active and the number of flights is much higher than at the beginning of the mission."

### FIRST MISSION OF THIS KIND

One of the most active participants of the NATO Air Policing mission in the Baltic States is Poland, with the last four months being the 8th time the Polish Air Force deployed rotation in Lithuania. Our neighbour's first contribution to this mission began almost in the very beginning – in 2005 with MiG-29 Fulcum fighter aircrafts, but since 2017 they have been crossing the sky with F-16 Fighting Falcon fighter jets from 31st Poznań-Krzesiny Tactical Air Base, four of them were patrolling the airspace over the Baltic countries during the last rotation. Polish detachment Commander



Photo credit: Alfredas Pliadis (MoD)

Lt Col A. Matutis: "In the summer of 2014, the Baltic airspace was protected by as many as 16 fighters."

Lieutenant Colonel Adam Kalinowski as one of the benefits of these aircrafts indicates the impressive endurance on which depends how many minutes pilots are going to stay airborne during the intercepts. However, to maintain the jets ready for the takeoffs and landings Commander describes as the most challenging part. According to him, it is not that easy to have all the necessary equipment in storage since the place is quite small. Consequently, most of the

spare parts of the jets are stored in Poland thus it becomes strenuous to bring them to Šiauliai as quickly as possible and have the jets fixed to support the mission.

Roughly about 70% of the Polish personnel took part in the Baltic Air Policing mission two years ago. "Those people are doing the job that they were taught in our country. Some of them carried out other exercises or missions in different regions over the whole block, for example,





Lt Col A. Kalinowski: "Over the time it became easier for us due to the endurance of our jets which is slightly higher than the MiG-29."

conducting an operation in Kuwait. However, although the tasks of Baltic Air Policing mission are slightly different than in soldiers' previous experience, they are learning new things every day here. Let's say a car breaks down away from the city or the jet is forced to land over Riga or other airport, they have to drive over there, find a way how to quickly fix the problem and bring the jet back to Šiauliai as fast as possible. This is how the pilots and the personnel constantly improve the skills which benefit their military career. Besides, it allows Polish Air Force to be more deployable than it used to be before 2007," said Lt Col A. Kalinowski for whom to be appointed as the leader for this kind of mission was also a first-time experience. As he said, the previous colleague who was the detachment Commander two years ago shared with him general ideas on how to lead the Air Force during the mission: "It was challenging, but I learned something new as a detachment Commander working with around 140 people. Also, over the time it became easier for us due to the endurance of our jets which is slightly higher than the MiG-29. In addition, most of the pilots I have here under my command

joined the Baltic Air Policing mission for the very first time so they have never experienced before to fly airborne getting in touch in a close distance with the Russian planes."

Lt Col A. Kalinowski said that once the Ukraine's events took place in 2014, Poles saw the higher presence of the hostile planes flying over the neighbouring countries and above the Baltic Sea doing the exercises. He explained that during the same time NATO countries, in-

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**” Lt Col A. Kalinowski:**  
"Russian planes are also getting better, they equip them with new devices and are improving their pilots' abilities to operate those aircrafts. Besides, Russians are flying different paths above the Baltic Sea."

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cluding the Americans, were training together and the Russian planes interfered by flying into their exercises over the Baltic Sea. "Since 2014 the presence of the Russian planes was more significant during our exercises than it was previously. So, in terms of how the security situation looks like today when the time is passing and the changes are being made, I can say that Russian planes are also getting better, they equip them with new devices and are improving their pilots' abilities to operate those aircrafts. Besides, Russians are flying different paths above the Baltic Sea therefore our job is to follow them and prevent from entering the national airspace of the Baltic States as well as Poland's," stressed Lt Col A. Kalinowski.

#### **DARED TO FOLLOW THE DREAM**

As already mentioned before, the Baltic Air Policing mission was the first time when Lt Col A. Kalinowski was appointed to take the lead as a detachment Commander on a combat mission in a peace-time environment. However, he certainly came to Lithuania having different experience. In 2012, he took part in three-months-long Red Flag exercise in Alaska, for

two and a half months staying in Elmendorf Air Force Base and flying over there as one of the pilots. A couple times Lt Col A. Kalinowski was also taking part in NATO Tiger Meet exercises, tactical leadership programme exercise, training in Spain based school and conducted a couple of squadron exchange deployments over the countries in Europe, for example, being a detachment Commander in Greece.

Undoubtedly, just like for any other pilot, the one and only motivation to pursue a military career and not in any branch, but exactly in the Air Force, was planes. Back in those days, the future Lieutenant Colonel did not even consider any other options for himself. "When I was a young boy I have been dreaming about flying jets and one day becoming a fighter pilot. At the beginning, I was leaded by my parents to become a person that they wanted me to be, but at the age of 13–14 I started questioning myself what I actually want to do in the future. Being 15 years old I decided that this is not going to be the way I will live my life. I started thinking about something that would suit my dreams better. It was the time for me to decide if I will make it happen to achieve my dreams and finally become the person I have always wanted to be. Therefore, I took a chance," Commander shared his memories.

After some time, Lt Col A. Kalinowski joined the Polish Air Force Academy located in Deb- lin, eastern Poland. There he had a chance to do some parachute jumping and fly gliders. After finishing this school, he was able to challenge himself flying one of the jets over the Malbork,

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**” Lt Col A. Kalinowski:  
"Every pilot loves to fly.  
The most interesting and  
exciting part for him is the free  
will. It is a free dimensional  
environment, where nobody  
tells you what to do with your  
plane."**

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a town in northwestern Poland. Finally, another opportunity appeared for Lt Col A. Kalinowski: to become a fighter pilot of F16. In addition, he got the chance to go overseas — for one year and eight months to conduct training in the United States, later coming back to his 31st tactical base in Poznań, Poland. "During my military career my main goal is to stay with the planes and fly fighter jets for as long as possible. If back at the time I had not been able to fly F16 or other fighter jet I would consider the only other option — to quit the military," smiled the pilot, who spent almost 3000 hours in the air," However, due to the fact that all the pilots have age limits and the time is passing, I guess that in the future I will be facing different challenges such as doing more paper work than flying planes."

#### **TO BE THE BEST**

Lt Col A. Kalinowski was not able to remember his very first takeoff and landing, but

he was surely smiling when talked about the F16 training and his third flight with the instructor pilot. He remembers when he touched the sky for the first time, he took his first parachute jump out off the plane. "Even now, I have goose bumps all over my skin just by remembering that moment. Whenever you ask a pilot how does it feel to jump off the plane you will always get one answer: it is not normal to leave the plane that is working properly and can land you on the ground," Commander laughs, "Right after I jumped out I saw the plane moving away and suddenly, after a couple seconds, I was hanging on a parachute and looking down being 100 meters above the ground. I remember myself thinking 'Ok, I am alive, thus I am going to survive'".

After asking what is the thing that fascinates about the planes so much, the Commander talked about freedom: "Every pilot loves to fly. The most interesting and exciting part for him is the free will. It is a free dimensional environment, where nobody tells you what to do with your plane. Of course, pilots have to comply with the regulations, tactics, and they must fly their jets as best as they can. If the achievement is at 100% of the initial purpose, you can see a smile on every pilot's face and the satisfaction that he fulfilled his goals. And if there is one person standing up after one day of flying and the detachment or the mission Commander says that today he is the best one, it means the biggest award for the pilot." ■

**Kotryna Gurevičiūtė**





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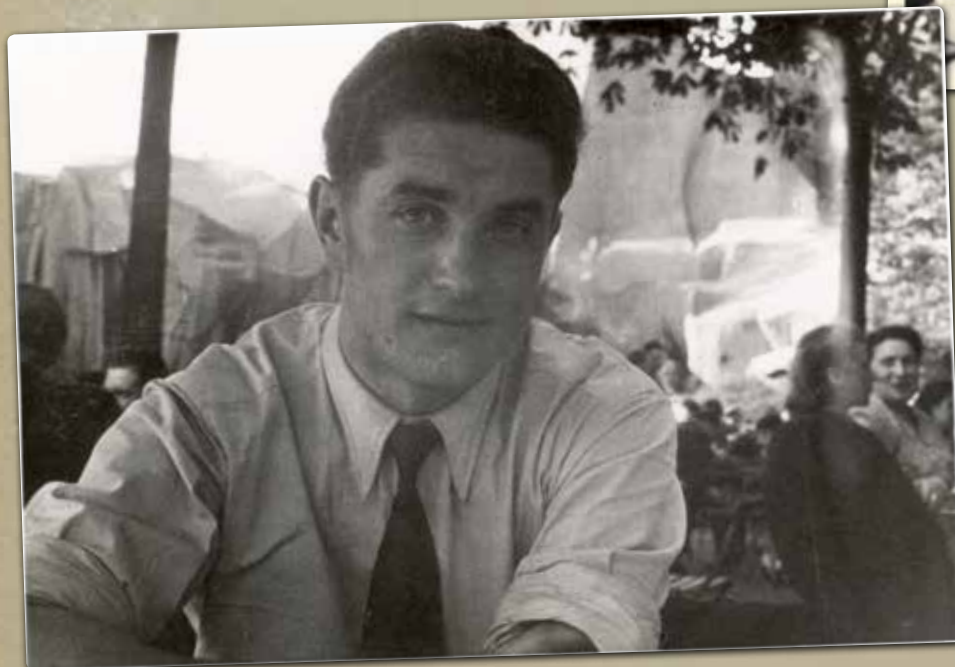


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### OTHER SERVICES



## Activities of Lithuanian Partisans in the West



IN THE TIME OF WAR AFTER WAR, ONE OF THE MAIN GOALS OF LITHUANIAN PARTISANS WAS TO PASS ON THE INFORMATION ABOUT THE ATROCITIES OF THE SOVIET OCCUPATION TO THE WEST AND TO RECEIVE SUPPORT OF DEMOCRATIC WORLD IN THE FIGHT AGAINST BOLSHEVISM. WITH THIS PUBLICATION WE WANT TO INTRODUCE

YOU TO THE GOALS AND ACTIVITIES OF LITHUANIAN PARTISANS IN THE WEST UNTIL THE FALL OF 1950, WHEN JUOZAS LUKŠA RETURNED TO THE HOMETLAND TO CONTINUE TO RESIST THE SOVIET OCCUPANTS.

**J**uozas Lukša-Skirmantas and Kazimieras Pyplys-Audronis, who successfully crossed the border of the Soviet Union (USSR) and Poland at the end of 1947, reached Sweden in early February 1948, where they found themselves in care of Jonas Deksnys-Alfonsas Hektoras, participant of anti-Nazi and anti-Soviet resistance. It was he who helped these fighters come from Poland to Sweden using his contacts.

During this period, J. Deksnys acted in ways that he alone could understand, sometimes

unpurposefully, and became very confused in foreign intelligence networks. At the same time, this former anti-Nazi and anti-Soviet underground member had ties with American, British, and Swedish intelligence, but he did not believe that he is blindly serving foreign special services. Later, arrested by the Soviet security, he claimed that he was not "imperatively bounded by any of the intelligence." According to him, national tasks were the primary goal, and intelligence was a tool for receiving foreign support, and not for himself, but for his

activity. In the long run, J. Deksnys was most tied with British intelligence. It is difficult to answer how much such practical cooperation could actually help anti-Soviet resistance in Lithuania. Undoubtedly, J. Deksnys himself believed more or less that contacts with intelligence would help the anti-Soviet resistance, and that it would ensure at least a little bit of missing material support for the resistance movement. Although for the sake of justice it should be said that foreign intelligence was mostly interested in military intelligence in-



formation from the USSR, not the idea of Lithuanian anti-Soviet resistance.

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Partisans brought many documentary materials about the situation in Lithuania to the West and tried to spread this information abroad. In total J. Lukša and K. Pyplys had 47 different documents, but there was little information about the military power of the USSR that was of interest to them. J. Lukša and K. Pyplys provided data only on the Liusberg (now Linksmakalnis in Prienai district) aerodrome. J. Deksnys handed over this document to Swedish intelligence officer. Representatives of the resistance to the Soviet occupation brought most knowledge about the situation of Lithuanian partisans and Soviet repression against the Lithuanian nation. Participants of the armed fight believed that this would draw the attention of foreign governments. "Documentary material (lists of repressed people, photos of killed freedom fighters, etc.) was of great impor-

tance. <...> By using it, the Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania (VLIK, lith.) prepared a comprehensive memorandum on the genocide matter, which was multiplied and distributed to all UN members. This memorandum was the first one to get the attention I need," J. Lukša wrote later. But the reactions of foreign countries, which would have increased to specific support, were not received, although J. Lukša did his best to distribute the material brought from Lithuania. Through the priests Feliksas Kapočius, Stasys Yla and Antanas Šidlauskas, the "Lithuanian Roman Catholics' letter to the Holy Father" was handed over to Vatican.

It was difficult to make a difference when working abroad without the support of local authorities. This was seen by J. Lukša, who went to the West: "The accomplishment of the tasks received by the representatives arriving in 1948 was linked to many obstacles. Foreign Lithuanian organizations, without the support of the West, were incapable of helping the in-

coming representatives to get a little bit different necessary material support for the homeland — money, press means, weapons and ammunition, also to get means not only for staying in touch, but for restoring the communication."

J. Deksnys opposed the Supreme Liberation Committee of Lithuania (VLIK) (established in the years of Nazi occupation in 1943, composed of representatives of various parties and residing in West Germany during the aforementioned period) seeking to lead political fight for Lithuanian independence abroad.

J. Deksnys-Alfonsas Hektoras was more tend to cooperate with his environment and Lithuanian diplomats who also sought political leadership in Lithuanian emigration. J. Deksnys tried to create the Foreign Delegation of the Supreme Committee of the Restoration of Lithuania (VLAK, lith.), in order to eliminate the influence of VLIK. Of course, the latter could not agree. His delegation spread information about the situation in



*Mafius*

Fragment of Juozas Lukša's photo album. At the top left is Kazimieras Pyplys.



*Uisas*



*Senė*



*As 1946 m.*



Lithuania, spread the idea of passive resistance, and strengthened the so-called principle of the country's primate (i.e. the main fight for independence takes place in Lithuania, not abroad). Alfonsas Hektoras presented himself as a Lithuanian resistance's representative abroad.

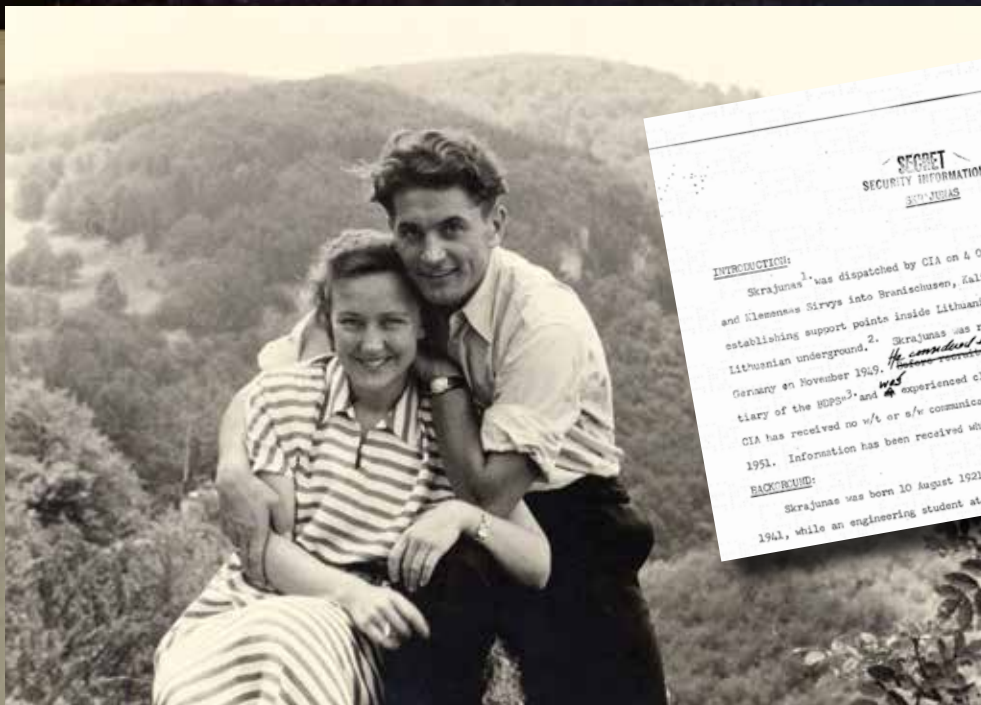
After understanding some of J. Deksnys' actions as the isolation of incoming partisans from Lithuania, J. Lukša left Sweden, and K. Pyplys stayed in this country. Unfortunately, there is not much data on his activity in Sweden until his return to occupied Lithuania with amphibious assault in the spring of 1949. It is known that K. Pyplys was preparing for further resistance activity in Lithuania: he learned to use the cipher, work with walkie talkie, appealed to the Lithuanian freedom fighters on the radio.

The path of J. Lukša was different. Through Jonas Pajaujis (close to him in political views) who then lived in Sweden, the relationship of J. Lukša and people of VLIK were established. After arriving to West Germany, J. Lukša quickly got along with Committee members. Probably the consensus was determined by the common political views, as well as the fact that VLIK Chairman Prelate Mykolas Krupavičius was the pastor of Veiveriai (parish of J. Lukša's homeland) and other reasons. J. Lukša became a defender of VLIK positions, so the people of the Committee also were happy about the contacts with the partisan from Lithuania. Through VLIK members the contacts with French intelligence emerged. A fighter from Lithuania began studying at the Intelligence School in Paris. But time has shown that French intel-

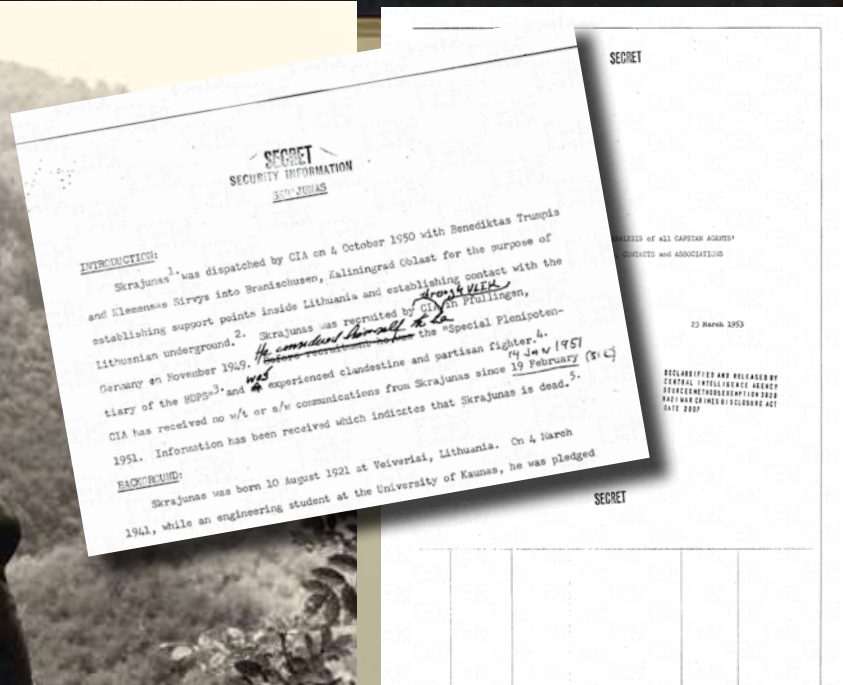
ligence officers did not do anything more efficiently, so ties between VLIK and American intelligence (which also started looking for contacts) emerged and intensified in 1949. The Committee agreed to cooperate with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), believing that it could help Lithuanian resistance and to spread its own ideas abroad. In the spring of 1950, J. Lukša went to study at the Intelligence School in Kaufboiren, near Munich. The paratroopers who were trained there learned how to use cipher, use various weapons, blasting, jumping with parachutes, etc. He also used to get news from his instructors about life in USSR and occupied Lithuania. At the Intelligence School, J. Lukša named himself Sten-Stasys for conspiracy reasons and met with future comrades-in-arms Benediktas Trumpys and Klemensas

**Juožas Lukša (in the center) with the leadership of VLIK. In the first row (kneeling) from the left: Stasys Balčiūnas, Juozas Brazaitis and Jonas Pajaujis. In the center — Juozas Lukša. In the second row (standing) from the left: Stasys Daunys, Vytautas Vaitiekūnas, Julijonas Būtėnas, Stasys Yla and Leonas Prapuolenis. Photographed in 1948 in West Germany.**





Juozas Lukša and Nijolė Bražėnaitė-Lukšienė in the mountains of the Tübingen area in West Germany a few days after the wedding. Photographed in July 1950.



CIA's files (recently unclassified) about cooperation with Juozas Lukša-Skrajūnas.

Širvys. They were all studying there for almost three months.

While living abroad, J. Lukša wrote a book about Lithuanian Freedom Fighters "Partisans behind the Iron Curtain", based on the brought material and his memories. It was published in 1950 in the United States (USA). J. Lukša also cooperated with foreign Lithuanian press, where he published several articles about *War After War* Lithuania. He wrote his book under the nickname Daumantas, although he did not use it any more elsewhere in the underground. The book was released several times in the West, later in Lithuania. J. Lukša became the most famous partisan among exiled Lithuanians and his book became almost like a textbook about partisan fights in Lithuania.

While living abroad, J. Lukša married Nijolė Bražėnaitė in 1950, but due to Juozas' determination to return to fight Lithuania, they lived together for a very short time. The letters they wrote to each other reflect not only the relations between the two, but also J. Lukša's commitments to resist and other moments of life when the future did not seem optimistic. Preparing to return to Lithuania, he wrote in a letter dated August 1950: *"And if the fate would like to destroy me physically, then you, Niliuk, make me to exist somewhere happy by creating a happy life for yourself again. It is not impossible for me to turn into the dust of our homeland's bloody ground."*

Letters are published as a separate book "Letters to Beloveds" — there were two of them: J. Lukša's wife Nijolė and the other one — Lithuania.

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It should be noted that there were efforts by Lithuanian emigrants to coordinate positions on the need for common resistance. For example, in 1948, the Baden Baden protocol was signed, which states that VLIK "performs the functions of the state power of Lithuania", in other words, directs resistance abroad. This document was signed not only by J. Lukša, but also by J. Deksnys, which suggests that he sometimes behaved unpurposefully. The subsequent conflicts testify that this consensus did not solve the disagreements.

Then, in 1948–1949, two teams began to prepare for Lithuania: one led by J. Lukša and supported by CIA, and another under the leadership of J. Deksnys and supported by British intelligence. Both of them became competitors, and in some cases, they could even be called opponents. However, from the perspective of time, it would be the best to call them rivals pursuing one goal, but in different ways.

## JOURNEY OF J. KRIKŠČIŪNAS-RIMVYDAS

In the long run, various news and unverified rumours about the companions who left

for the West began to spread among the Lithuanian partisans. The Commanders of Tauras Military District (MD) who sent them were feeling that they had representatives abroad. During the Congress of Lithuanian partisans' commanders which took place in Mėnaičiai, Radviliškis district in February 1949, the issue of relations with the West was also discussed. This was reported by Adolfas Ramanauskas-Vanagas, the Commander of Dainava MD and Aleksandras Grybinas-Faustas, the Commander of Tauras MD (he knew the most about the expulsion of J. Lukša and K. Pyplys to the West). They said that on the basis of the letters they think that there are emigration centres abroad, and J. Lukša-Skrajūnas has intentions to return, but the circumstances do not allow. During the Congress, it was decided to stay in touch with foreign countries, to inform about the underground and economic, political and military situation of the USSR. Relations with the West were entrusted to Vanagas. It was also planned to collect certain information for abroad. At the same time, it was found that data collection was conducted unsatisfactory, there was no organizational work, so it was decided to strengthen the work of intelligence units, to appoint people to collect data and to instruct them. Instructions for collecting intelligence material (often based on the so-called instruction of the Supreme Armed Forces Staff (VGPŠ,



Jurgis Krikščiūnas-Rimvydas.

lith.), prepared in 1947) reached many MD's. In 1949, an order was issued in Samogitia MD, ordering to take pictures of squads and divisions, with weapons, during classes and breaks, to collect letters of deported people. The material had to be sent to headquarters of the area and later abroad. In the same year, the Commander of Vytautas MD stated that "data must be collected secretly and as accurately as possible", even though military information was collected earlier, especially in Western Lithuania. Such statements are confirmed by the documents of the partisans of the United MD of Kęstutis. For example, from the correspondence of units of the United MD of Kęstutis, it can be understood that the train move-

ment was monitored in 1948. In September of that year, it was written: "Make every effort to create intelligence and tracking points of the Baltic Sea coast, as it is a matter of urgency and necessity to gather as much knowledge as possible of the armed forces' situation, changes or additions in the sea and coastal protection units". But there were no possibilities to transfer the collected information abroad.

In the spring of 1949, after returning to South Lithuania from the Congress of Lithuania's partisan commanders, A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas spread the news among the partisans and led to transfer them abroad. In April 1949, Jurgis Krikščiūnas-Rimvydas, Head of Communications and Intelligence Division

of Dainava MD, who was sent to the West, already had border crossing experience, but this time the partisan was followed by failure. He got into Poland with other fighters but there, as compared to the first break in 1947, the situation had deteriorated. This was also noticed by J. Lukša: "In early 1948, the situation in Poland was greatly exacerbated <...> the conclusion was made to not use Poland as the communication base anymore." The pro-soviet Polish government controlled the situation much more strongly. However, J. Kikščiūnas-Rimvydas still managed to find reliable contacts among local Lithuanians. The most trusted contacts were Teklė Pauliukonytė and Veronika Judickaitė. But Rimvydas did not manage to transfer the brought materials to the West. The documents he sent to the French Embassy in Warsaw had disappeared (actually, one of the agents destroyed them due to suspicion of possible arrest). French intelligence invited J. Krikščiūnas to Warsaw, but he did not go there because he suspected deception. In April 1949, he was still able to send a letter to J. Lukša (he received a letter in May) announcing the disappearance of the brought material. In a reply letter, J. Lukša suggested to prepare reports on the situation in the country based on memories. J. Lukša himself claimed that he received several Rimvydas' reports on deportations, 1948 elections and partisan songs. He also mentioned that he tried (through intermediaries asked for the help of Americans) to bring J. Krikščiūnas-Rimvydas from Poland to the West, but he failed. J. Lukša wrote about it: "After a couple months of hard work, certain authorities of N state (France) refused to put further efforts to help us to bring <...> Believing that then the arrival of J. Rimvydas is necessary, I tried to help him with the assistance of another force (Americans). I managed to find new contacts who reported that only a few days ago, December 15, 1949, Rimvydas and his friend were tracked down and both were killed."

In the same year, the partisans who ended up in Poland were killed or arrested. On December 15, 1949 the Polish security forces discovered a bunker near the village of Šlynakiemis (near Punksk), where J. Krikščiūnas-Rimvydas (who was still on treatment after the injury) and Vytautas Prabulis-Žaibas were killed during the shooting between Lithuanian partisans and Polish security forces. The partisans who sent them did not know what exactly happened to their representatives. Before the death, A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas stated in a letter to the Chairman of the Presidium of

the Council of the Lithuanian Freedom Fight Movement (LLKS, lith.) Jonas Žemaitis-Vytautas: "Rimvydas does not respond."

The deaths of partisans in Poland were followed by other repressions. According to historian Bronius Manauskas, on December 15-30, 1949, 10 persons involved in underground activities were arrested, also 39 persons were arrested who crossed the border to Poland in 1945-1946. 19 families (80 persons) were exiled from Suwalki region to the other regions of Poland, and 8 agents were recruited.

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Sometimes the efforts to establish contacts with foreign partisans ended with their own deaths. In 1951 the USSR State Security Ministry (MGB) staged that Lithuanian partisan, former comrade of J. Krikščiūnas-Rimvydas, severely injured during shooting in 1949, arrested, little healed, broken and recruited by the MGB under the nickname "Bronius", is returning to Lithuania with Polish partisans, but actually they were the agents of MGB. On September 27, 1951 in Bestraigiškės forest, they met with local

fighters. Then Juozas Gegužis-Diemedis, the Commander of Dainava MD, Bronius Šalaševičius-Žilvitis, the Commander of Šarūnas team as well as 4 more partisans died, also Medelis, the Commander of Juozapavičius MD was arrested, and after recruiting him the fake headquarters of the MD was created and it was used as a cover when killing partisans. In 1952 the actual headquarters of Dainava MD stopped operating.

Some partisans took their own initiative and began traveling to the West. In 1949 Juozas Jucys-Margis, Algirdas Jonauskas-Pagirys, Vladas Freigofas-Audrūnas and Algirdas Freigofas-Sūnus, the partisans of the Samogitian MD Sword team were determined to travel to the West. After crossing the Kaliningrad region, they broke through the border of Poland. But in this country, they were arrested, handed over to the USSR and in 1950 sentenced to spend 25 years in GULAG, except J. Jucys-Margis, because he managed to escape and return to his comrades in Lithuanian forests. On December 1, 1949 the Soviet border guards detained

Pranas Raukas-Postas and Jonas Vitkauskas-Jaunutis, partisans of Kudirka MD of Kęstutis MD, who were planning to go to Sweden. It is unclear whether they did do on their own initiative or with the approval of the leaders. Both were sentenced to death for partisan activities, the sentence was conducted on 28 March 1951.

J. Lukša was not missed from the sight of partisan leaders. On October 1949, J. Lukša was promoted to the rank of Captain, was appointed the Head of the Political Department of the LLKS Public Section. J. Lukša was considered an official representative of LLKS abroad.

#### SOVIET SECURITY'S ACTIVITIES

The archival documents show that Soviet security was not an observer of events, but made active steps to disorganize partisan relations with the West. Its staff claimed: "Foreign nationalist centres, led by American and English intelligence, illegally send VLIK emissaries to Lithuania for connection with Lithuanian underground and the conducting of intelligence work." It was thought that foreign Lithuanian organizations tried

to strengthen the armed fight and to intensify the intelligence work. Such statements later were established in Soviet propaganda literature. How much accurate they are is another question.

At that time, MGB did not have any specific data on the partisan relations abroad. Security officials assumed that the LLKS had contacts with the West through Tauras MD, but had no data on direct LLKS ties. Also, for some time members of Soviet Secret Service (former Soviet KGB agents) did not know about the journey of J. Lukša ir K. Pyplys, but in September, 1948, Estonian SSR MGB arrested radiomen who were sent from Sweden and recognized J. Lukša and K. Pyplys according the photographs. According to their data, J. Lukša had to return to Lithuania in September 1948 and K. Pyplys in November 1948. The fact

Juozas Lukša with manuscript of memoirs "Partisans behind the Iron Curtain". Photographed in 1948 in Paris.





is that this did not happen, and there is lack of data on the actual return plans. Later J. Deksnys who was arrested by the MGB, claimed during the interrogation that in the second half of 1948 the Americans had planned to move J. Lukša and K. Pyplys to Lithuania, but Washington did not give permission because a diplomatic scandal would have occurred in case of failure. He claimed that he received these news from Swedish intelligence. After receiving data from Moscow, Lithuanian SSR MGB ordered to find possibly returned freedom fighters, and security units were constantly preparing to "accept" foreign paratroopers.

MGB continued the tradition of creating fake "underground" organizations. Instead of the underground Presidium of the United Democratic Resistance Movement (BDPS) which was liquidated in 1947–1948, security officers created one of their own. In addition to its other goals, MGB, when creating its "BDPS Presidium", tried to take over channels of communication with emigration centres,

infiltrate agency to those centres and foreign intelligence, and renew the spread of passive resistance. The alleged "BDPS Presidium" consisted of an agency or persons who were manipulated by the security without knowing it themselves (the term "in the dark", rus. *втемную* was used in documents). MGB checked agents who were included in work: "Vytautas" ("Kardas" in underground, former secretary of the Party of Nationalists), "Mindaugas" ("Žemaitis" in underground, former Lieutenant Colonel of the Lithuanian Armed Forces), "Liūtas" (priest, "Kęstutis" in underground), "Liepsna" ("Arūnas", "Gintautas", "Aukštatis" in underground, former Lieutenant of the Lithuanian Armed Forces, who belonged to the underground in 1944, but left it). All the listed agents were linked "in the dark" (not knowing about each other who let to control and to check them), detailed legends and lines of behave were prepared, and "BDPS Presidium" activities against agents were even created. Also, some other persons assisted "in

the dark". In the underground, agents had a few nicknames which they used when introducing themselves in Lithuania and abroad, for example, "Dramblys", "Ruginis", "Ąžuolas", "Maironis". The MGB agency file was called "Les" (Forest, eng.).

This fictitious formation failed to influence the partisans because they did not trust the new organization, and also identified some underground members as security agents. In 1948, the leaders of the Dainava MD and subdivisions (including A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas, Sergijus Staniškis-Litas and others) met with several representatives of the "BDPS Presidium", but suspected them to be provocative because they were unable to answer certain specific questions. With reasonable suspicions, partisan commanders did not come to other meetings. Having already gained underground work experience and already knowing a little bit about the Soviet security's ways of working, partisan commanders were not naive and did not believe in the legend about the alleged

Fragment of Juozas Lukša's photo album. Juozas Lukša (on the right) and Jonas Kupstas-Ursus, his colleague and companion from the intelligence school. Photographed in April 1949 in Paris.



*"Juokis ir tu, Bolonija, kartu su mumis..."*



Juozas Lukša's foreign passport.

city-based organization. "BDPS Presidium" in its letter to Vanagas even expressed dissatisfaction with the establishments of the LLKS, since only the "Presidium" manages resistance not only in the country, but also abroad, and after the establishment of LLKS, "the "Presidium" was almost forcibly removed from its legitimate functions" and disagrees with that. But the partisans did not take this into account and continued to disclose MGB plans.

Partisans learned even more about the fictitious "BDPS Presidium" when, in 1949, they arrested this "organization's" communicator (actually MGB secret colleague) and extracted data on the alleged underground. The alleged underground's members (in fact, Soviet security agents) were inaccessible to the partisans, but the fighters began an assessment of their activities. On September 7, 1950 in Tauras MD, according to the order of the Commander of South Lithuania (Nemunas), court-martial behind their backs examined the files of "Ruginis", "Dramblys", "Ąžuolas", "Aodrūnas" (members of "BDPS Presidium" — MGB agents), who were accused for provocations against LLKS. A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas reported these MGB provocations to the partisan areas. After seeing that the agency did not make it to infiltrate itself among of partisans, MGB had to admit: although they managed to restore ties with "some of the leaders of bandits' MD's and their liquidation was being prepared, "many mistakes" were made, and the partisans did not recognize BDPS and created their centre: LLKS. This is how the partisan

movement avoided the influence of another destructive activity of alleged underground organization, and we cannot say the same about some foreign Lithuanians and British intelligence, who took the bait of members of Soviet Secret Service.

After failing to influence partisans, MGB started a game with foreign intelligence and part of Lithuanian emigration: "BDPS Presidium" were given a role of disinformers. In 1950, the agent "Liepsna" was sent to the West with the aim to compromise the LLKS and its tactics abroad, to strengthen the contradictions between VLIK (according to security, supporting active tactics) and Lithuanian Resistance Unity (LRS, lith.) (supporting passive tactics). "Liepsna" went to the West using communication channels created in Poland by real undergrounders.

The mentioned agent left his mark in a fight against partisan movement, therefore, after arriving abroad, he stayed undercover. "Liepsna", when visiting the West, met with Lithuanian emigrants (members of Lithuanian Parliament, Lithuanian diplomats) and British intelligence representatives. During his meetings, he spread his information and passed on the collected knowledge to security. However, VLIK did not trust the "representative" from Lithuania — the former partisan J. Lukša, who then was abroad, after getting acquainted with the letters of the undergrounder Arūnas (agent "Liepsna"), did not doubt that he was a provocateur, because his data did not match with the data of J. Lukša. However, he was rewarded by the

"Liepsna", who, after returning to Lithuania, showed documents describing the landing of J. Lukša-Skirmantas with airborne troops to Lithuania. But such an agent's decryption did not affect those emigrants who trusted the supposed undergrounder, because they did not trust the VLIK even more as political opponent in emigration.

Through this agent members of Soviet Secret Service used to spread the idea about not perspective partisan movement, whose participants only kill people and provokes repressions of the Soviet government with their actions. Also, members of partisan leadership were characterized as splitters of unity of resistance. For example, the agent "Liepsna", who went abroad, wrote: "BDPS Presidium does not support the tactics of Cpt Žemaitis (Jonas Žemaitis-Vytautas — Chairman of the Presidium of the LLKS Council) and will not do so, because it leads to the destruction of our compatriots and partisan forces."

The actions of file "Les" were continued and the facts shows that British intelligence and some of the leaders of Lithuanian emigration believed in the game imposed by the MGB.

And J. Lukša and K. Pyplys continued preparing to return to Lithuania. ■

**Dr. Darius Juodis, Dalius Žygelis**

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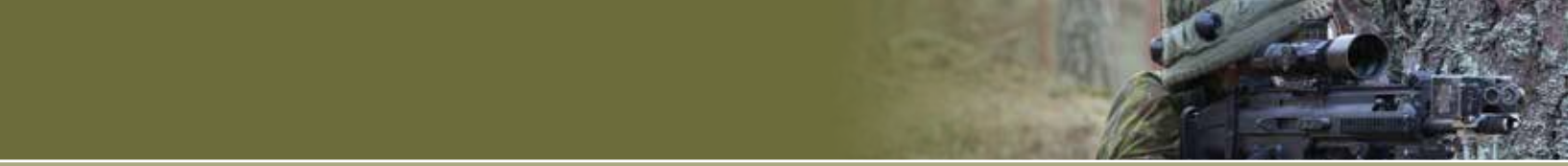


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