



Lithuanian Military Digest

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NEWS

NATO ENHANCES CYBER CAPABILITIES



NATO'S PRESENCE

INTERNATIONAL EXERCISE IRON WOLF 2022-II



SPECIAL

COMMEMORATION OF THE BATTLE OF VIENNA



Next U.S. rotation arrived in Lithuania

Rotations of the U.S. battalion deployed at the General Silvestras Žukauskas Training Area in Pabradė are changing over. Military personnel and equipment of the 1st Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment, 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, U.S. Army, or 1-66, that trained in Lithuania from July, will be replaced by U.S. Army service members and equipment of the 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Task Force, 1st Infantry Division (Steel Dragon) and the 2nd Battalion, 7th U.S. Cavalry Regiment (Ghost Battalion).

The new U.S. rotation brings along M109A6 Paladin self-propelled 155 mm howitzers, M1A2 Abrams tanks, Bradley in-

fantry fighting vehicles, M1068A3 armored carrier vehicles, all-terrain vehicles, and every other military equipment up to the task by trucks from Poland.

The rotational presence of U.S. Army troops has been maintained in the Baltic states and Eastern Europe since spring 2014 as part of U.S. Army Operation in the eastern part of the Alliance, Atlantic Resolve, in demonstration of the U.S. collective defence commitment to NATO Allies and as an assurance in the wake of the Russian aggression in Ukraine. ■

Information credits: Lithuanian Armed Forces
Photo credit: Sgt Spc 1st Class Ieva Budzeikaitė

EU commences military assistance mission



Meeting in Brussels on November 15, the EU Foreign Affairs Council in defence configuration agreed to launch a European Union Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM Ukraine) so that its present needs were met and training provided for 15 thousand service members of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. All of EUMAM Ukraine activities will be implemented on the territories of EU member states. The mission stands as a demonstration of European solidarity extended to help Ukraine to defend its sovereign and territorial integrity.

"We have reached a critical political agreement concerning the mission launch and we need to start the implementation immediately. Next phase rests on three core principles: the needs of Ukraine, effective coordination, and further assistance with weaponry. The EU Military Assistance Mission for Ukraine is an important step which will further Ukraine's ultimate victory and deoccupation of all captured territory. Lithuania will contribute all necessary resources to reach EUMAM Ukraine objectives, as well as continue the assistance to Ukraine bilaterally and in other formats" said Minister of National Defence Arvydas Anušauskas.

Lithuania plans providing training for over a thousand members of the Armed Forces of Ukraine next year, a portion of the number — as part of EUMAM Ukraine. Alongside other partners, Lithuania will deliver a basic military training course, junior command, CBRN protection, paramedic and artillery, military police and special operations training. Lithuania will be training Ukrainian troops in explosive ordnance disposal and demining alongside Nordic counties. The starting point two-year mandate span of the mission is adaptable to the necessity.

EUMAM Ukraine is a part of the wider EU Integrated Approach in support of Ukraine which includes political, humanitarian, financial and military assistance. Since the beginning of this year, the EU has provided over EUR 19 billion in financial assistance to Ukraine to build up its economical, social and financial resilience. ■

Information credits: MoD
Photo credit: EU courtesy

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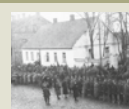


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Military Press Office of Lithuanian Armed Forces
Totorių str. 25, LT-01121, Vilnius;
Phone (370 5) 210 3897, GSM (370 6) 86 94458; fax (370 5) 273 5550;
Email Ilona.Skujaite@mil.lt

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Lithuania handed over heavy mortars

Lithuania continues suitably supporting Ukraine militarily: the Armed Forces of Ukraine Monday received mobile heavy mortars mounted on M113 PACs from Lithuania.

Lithuania handed over 12 items of M113 APCs: 10 with 120mm mobile mortars mounted on them and 2 for the role of fire control. Ukraine also received the 120mm ammunition for the weapons.

To date, Lithuania has handed over 62 items of different modifications of M113 APCs to Ukraine.

“Lithuania continues fulfilling its obligations. I wish to thank all Lithuanian Armed Forces personnel and professionals of the National Defence System who arranged and implemented the logistical side of it at a very short notice,” says Minister of National Defence Arvydas Anušauskas.

The military assistance supplied to Ukraine by the Lithuanian National Defence System so far includes different types of weapons, ammunition, thermo-imaging equipment, UAVs, anti-drone equipment, training for military personnel, and other assistance matched to Ukraine’s request. ■

Informarion and photo credits: MoD





NATO enhances cyber capabilities

On November 10 NATO's 2022 Cyber Defence Pledge Conference pulled together delegations from NATO Allies, Sweden and Finland in Rome.

Representatives from across the Alliance discussed cybersecurity threats and necessary preventive measure, ways of information sharing, cooperation with the private sector and latest technologies.

One of the most recent NATO initiatives concerns development of a joint virtual capability for cyber incident response, to which Lithuania contributes actively with its five years of experience as coordinator of the PESCO Cyber Rapid Response Teams (CRRT) project. Aside from the expertise in cyber capability development, Lithuania also shared experience in ensuring supply chain security and counter-ransomware measures at the conference. ■

Information credits: MoD

Photo credits: NATO



Britain to join EU push

The United Kingdom will join a European Union initiative to help military troops and equipment move swiftly across the continent, with alliance officials citing Russia's war against Ukraine as a critical factor in bringing the former EU member on board.

The announcement was made during a Nov. 15 meeting of the EU's Foreign Affairs Council on defense issues in Brussels, where the council adopted a decision to invite the UK to join the Permanent Structured Cooperation's (PESCO) Military Mobility project, which was launched in 2018.

London recently requested to participate in the program, which aims to streamline and standardize cross-border military transport procedures within the EU, for example by cutting red tape on customs requirements between nations. Union ambassadors endorsed Britain's inclusion in the program in mid-October, teeing up the formal decision at the defense and foreign ministers' regular autumn session.

While the project is four years in the making, the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine has caused EU members to more readily focus on the need to quickly move across the continent.

"Sharing information and experiences with key partners is crucial. The PESCO project 'Military Mobility' provides the right platform in this regard," said Josep Borrell, the EU's high representative for foreign affairs and security policy, in a Tuesday statement. "Ensuring fast movement and secure transport of armed forces is crucial to improve the EU and NATO's ability to respond to crises, in particular now as we provide urgent military support to Ukraine."

U.K. Minister of Defense Ben Wallace on Nov. 14 called the Military Mobility project "an important scheme for all of us to move our assets around Europe at the time of a war."

During a bilateral press conference with Germany's Defense Minister Christine Lambrecht, Wallace shared that Britain "still has concerns overall" with PESCO's policy on third-party involvement, along with the protection of intellectual property. But he noted that this particular initiative made sense for both the EU and its former member.

"I take a pragmatic case-by-case basis.



This [project] suited perfectly," he said.

Lambrecht added that Germany appreciated that London will participate in the project, and called the U.K. "a very, very important" partner when it comes to deploying troops in Europe. British troops currently lead one of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence (EFP) battle groups in Estonia, and a handful of Royal Air Force (RAF) service members participated in the recent "Baltic Tiger" exercise coordinated by Germany's Air Force and Navy, at Estonia's Ämari Air Base.

According to PESCO guidance, the Military Mobility project's goals will be achieved via a number of working groups

within and beyond the Union, and with EU institutions. The Netherlands serves as lead coordinator for the program, and other members include: Austria; Belgium; Bulgaria; Cyprus; the Czech Republic; Germany; Estonia; Greece; Spain; Finland; France; Croatia; Hungary; Italy; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Latvia; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Sweden; Slovenia; and Slovakia.

Canada, Norway and the United States joined the project as non-EU members in 2021, and at the time were the first third-party partners to join a PESCO project. ■

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\$38 billion more in Ukraine aid



The White House on Tuesday asked Congress for another \$38 billion in Ukraine aid. If lawmakers fund the supplemental request, it would bring the total amount Congress has appropriated for Ukraine to more than \$100 billion in less than a year.

The Office of Management and Budget asked Congress to include the \$38 billion Ukraine supplemental funding request — which includes \$21.7 billion in security assistance — in the government funding bill for fiscal 2023, while seeking additional funds for COVID-19 relief and disaster assistance.

"We are urging the Congress to provide additional appropriations to ensure Ukraine has the funding, weapons and support it needs to defend itself and that vulnerable people continue to receive lifesaving aid," Office of Management and Budget Director Shalanda Young wrote in a letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.

The \$21.7 billion in Pentagon funding is "for equipment for Ukraine, replenishment of Department of Defense stocks and for continued military, intelligence and other defense support," according to a summary table accompanying the supplemental request.

The request includes another \$14.5 billion in funding for the State Department and USAID for direct financial support to the Ukrainian government, humanitarian assistance and strengthening global food security. A \$900 million request for the Department of Health and Human Services would "provide standard assistance health care and support services to Ukrainian parolees."

The request also contains a \$626 million Energy Department request, in part for "nuclear security support." Congress has previously granted

funding to the Energy Department's National Nuclear Security Administration to help Ukraine prepare for a potential incident from ongoing Russian shelling at the besieged Zaporizhzhia power plant.

In addition to the total \$38 billion Ukraine aid request, the White House is also asking Congress to authorize \$7 billion in presidential drawdown authority for Kyiv — which allows President Joe Biden to transfer weapons from existing U.S. stocks.

The Defense Department announced last week that it would transfer another \$400 million worth of U.S. weapons stocks to Ukraine, and it has used drawdown authority more than 20 times since August 2021.

Congress has already passed \$65.9 billion in Ukraine assistance through three separate supplemental funding packages since Russia's invasion in February. If Congress funds the fourth request, it would bring the total amount of Ukraine aid lawmakers have approved to \$104 billion in less than a year.

The Office of Management and Budget said that the Biden administration already has committed three-fourths of the \$12.35 billion in Ukraine funding that Congress approved in September.

The White House intends for the latest supplemental request to last through the end of FY 23. But the Biden administration burned through the \$40 billion Ukraine aid supplemental that Congress passed in May in a matter of months, raising the possibility that it may have to ask for a fifth supplemental in what is likely to be a Republican-controlled House.

Several conservative House members aligned

with former president Donald Trump have pushed against previous tranches of Ukraine aid, with 57 House and 11 Senate Republicans voting against the \$40 billion Ukraine supplemental earlier this year.

A coalition of 12 conservative groups on Tuesday sent a letter to Pelosi and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., urging them not to approve the White House's latest Ukraine aid request. The coalition included the influential Heritage Foundation, the Trump-aligned America First Policy Institute and Concerned Veterans for America.

"It would be a colossal mistake for congressional leaders to use this lame-duck session to fast-track yet another massive aid package to Ukraine as the United States faces historic inflation and a \$31 trillion national debt," Concerned Veterans for America deputy director John Byrnes said in a statement, adding that the U.S. "should not continue to write a blank check to Ukraine."

McCarthy — who is likely to become House speaker in the next Congress — said in October that his party will not write a "blank check" for Ukraine. But McCarthy — who voted for the \$40 billion Ukraine supplemental earlier this year — struck a more conciliatory tone a few days before the November midterm elections, clarifying in a CNN interview that "there has to be accountability going forward" and that "resources are going to where it is needed."

Other key Republicans, particularly in the Senate, have shown more enthusiasm about passing additional Ukraine aid.

"I'm proud of them fighting for freedom and so forth, and I think that we will not turn our back on them," Sen. Richard Shelby of Alabama, the top Republican on the Appropriations Committee, told Defense News on Monday. "If they show it's needed, we ought to do it."

It also remains to be seen whether Congress will surpass the Biden administration's \$38 billion request with an even higher package. The White House asked for \$33 billion in its second supplemental funding request in April, only for lawmakers to plus that number up to \$40 billion.

"We are waiting to get some final numbers," Rep. Betty McCollum, D-Minn., the defense spending panel chairwoman told Defense News on Monday. "But I look forward to supporting the Ukrainian people in their battle for freedom." ■

Information and photo credits:
www.militarytimes.com

U.S. Department of State approved potential sale of HIMARS

On November 9 the U.S. Department of State greenlighted a potential foreign military sale of M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) launchers to Lithuania. The contract is expected to be signed by the end of the year. It is planned to cover eight launchers with live and dummy ammunition including different types and combat characteristic guided missile pods, for example, the ATACMS Army Tactical Missile Systems with the range of 300 km. Lithuania will also procure training and system maintenance equipment, services for personnel training, system integration and connection with the NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence System (NATINAMDS). The deal is assessed to be worth USD 495 million. The principal sale contractor will be U.S. company Lockheed Martin.

The decision was taken aiming to support Lithuania in strengthening its defensive capabilities as a NATO Ally. The acquired armament is compatible with other technologies used by the Lithuanian Armed Forces which will make it easy to integrate into the existing defence plans and build up deterrence. The Latvian and Estonian Allies also eye HIMARS acquisition which will unquestionably lead to the capability becoming a substantial boost to the defence of not just Lithuania but the entire region. ■

Information credits: MoD

Photo credits: Lockheed





Freedom Struggles of the young Armed Forces of Lithuania

ON NOVEMBER 23 LITHUANIA MARKS THE RESTORATION OF THE ARMED FORCES DAY. IN 1918 ON THIS DAY THE CONTEMPORARY PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA AUGUSTINAS VOLDEMARAS SIGNED THE ORDER NO. 1 GIVING LEGAL BASIS FOR FORMATION OF THE ARMED FORCES OF LITHUANIA. IN 1919 THE NEWLY BORN MILITARY UNITS HAD TO FIGHT AT ONCE AGAINST 3 ENEMIES INVADING LITHUANIA FROM DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS.



Volunteers of the Lithuanian Armed Forces heading to the Lithuanian Wars of Independence in Vilkaiviškis, 1919.

RESTORATION OF THE STATE AND ARMY

During World War I, when Germany attacked Russia, the territory of Lithuania was occupied by the Germans. Riots began in Russia, Bolsheviks seized power, and Russia withdrew from World War I. Meanwhile, Germany, under pressure from the Entente, was forced to capitulate. The historical opponents of Lithuania weakened, and Lithuanians had the opportunity to create a state.

On February 16, 1918 Lithuania declared restoring its independence. Under the ceasefire agreement, Germany undertook to maintain its army in the Baltics for some time to the countries of the Entente, which won World War I

and to protect the area from possible Bolshevik attack. The Russian Bolsheviks intended to take back all the "provinces" that separated from Russia. The Germans, under pressure from the Bolsheviks, began to retreat. The nascent Lithuanian state, as at the beginning of its history, was again in danger of losing statehood at its very beginning.

During the restoration of the state, there were opinions that Lithuania did not need a military, because Lithuania did not intend to attack anything. When the intentions of the Bolsheviks became clear, the creation of a military force began immediately.

On November 23, 1918 Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania Augustinas Volde-
maras signed the Order No. 1 giving legal basis

for formation of the Armed Forces of Lithuania and on December 29 an invitation to join the Lithuanian Armed Forces voluntarily was distributed — Lithuanians realized the danger to their young state, and the army began to grow rapidly.

THE FIRST LITHUANIAN MILITARY UNITS

The Lithuanian Wars of Independence, also known as the Freedom Struggles, refer to three wars Lithuania fought defending its independence at the end of World War I: With Bolshevik forces (December 1918 — August 1919), Bermontians (June 1919 — December 1919), and Poland (August 1920 — November 1920). The wars delayed international recognition of



Augustinas Voldemaras, Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania in 1918.

independent Lithuania and the formation of civil institutions.

Development and organization of the Armed Forces of Lithuania moved slowly due to lack of funding, arms, ammunition, and experienced military commanders. On December 20 the President of Lithuania Antanas Smetona and the Prime Minister Voldemaras went to Germany to request assistance. In the end of 1918 Germany paid the Lithuanian government one hundred million marks in reparations; the organization of the new Lithuanian army proceeded under the auspices of the German army, which was withdrawing in stages. However, the departure of both leaders created a difficult domestic situation. The Council of Lithuania released Voldemaras' cabinet; Mykolas Sleževičius became the Prime Minister of Lithuania and formed a Cabinet on December



Enlistment in the Lithuanian Armed Forces in Panemunė, Kaunas, 1919.

26, 1918. Perceiving an imminent threat to the state, he issued a proclamation several days later. Directed at Lithuanian men, the proclamation invited volunteers to join a force to defend the country.

Lithuanian volunteers who agreed to join the military force were promised free land. Fulfilling its Armistice obligation to support Lithuanian independence, Germany initially tried to organize a volunteer force from units remaining in Lithuanian territory, but those attempts failed. Crimps were sent to Germany to recruit volunteers. A division of volunteers was soon formed, who were paid 5 marks per day plus 30 marks per month. The first units began arriving in Lithuania during January 1919, although some of them were sent away because they were in poor condition. By the end of January, 400 volunteers were stationed in Alytus, Jonava, Kėdainiai, and Kaunas. They formed the basis for the 46th Saxonian division,

renamed in March to the Southern Lithuanian Saxonian Volunteer Brigade. The brigade consisted of the 18th, 19th, and 20th regiments. The last of these German troops would leave Lithuania during July 1919.

Belarusians and Lithuanian Jews also participated as volunteers of the Lithuanian Army.

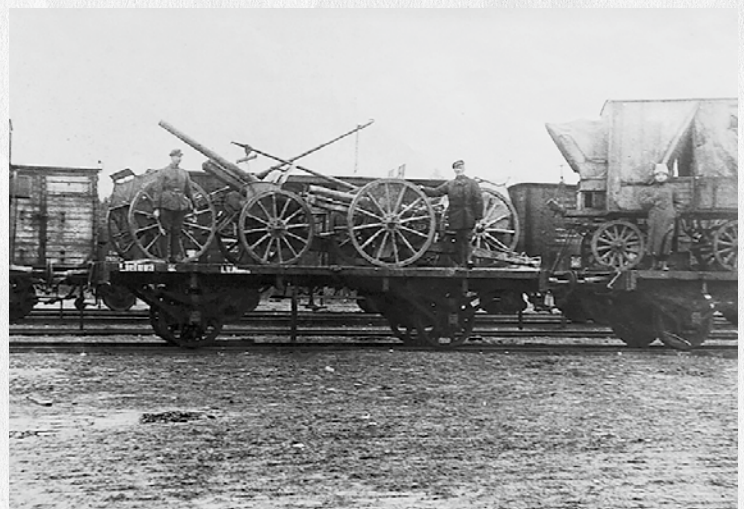
After successful attempts at mustering a voluntary force to defend Lithuanian territories, mobilization was begun on March 5, 1919 to expand the Lithuanian armed forces. At the end of summer 1919, the Lithuanian army numbered about 8,000 men. During the battles that followed, 1,700 Lithuanian volunteers died, more than 2,600 were injured, and 800 were missing in action.

WAR AGAINST THE BOLSHEVIKS

As revolution broke out in Germany, the German government withdrew support for the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which had ceded



Volunteers of the Lithuanian Army.



Lithuanian military during the Wars of Independence.



Advance of Bolshevik forces (red arrows). The red line shows the Bolshevik front in January, 1919.



Soldiers of the Red Army.

along the Hrodna–Kaišiadorys–Kaunas line, and helped the Lithuanian forces, commanded by Jonas Variakojis, to stop the Red Army advance near Kėdainiai. On February 8, during a reconnaissance mission, the first Lithuanian soldier to die in the wars, Povilas Lukšys, was killed near Taučiūnai. On February 10 the joint forces captured Šėta and forced the Red Army to retreat. The success of this operation lifted the Lithuanian army's morale.

On February 12 Bolshevik forces attacked Alytus. Lithuanian 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th companies of the 1st Infantry Regiment had to withstand pressure from the Red Army. During this battle the first Lithuanian officer to die in the wars was killed: Antanas Juozapavičius, the commander of the 1st Infantry Regiment. After the loss of their commander the regiment began retreating towards Marijampolė. On the night of February 14–15, German forces retook Alytus.

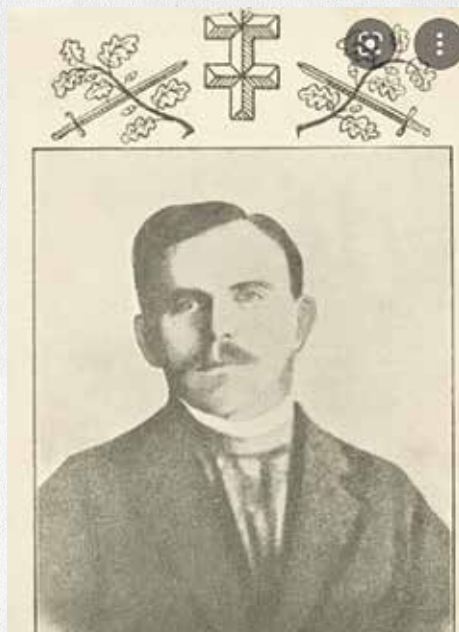
Towards the end of 1918 the officer Povilas Plechavičius, together with his brother Alek-

Lithuania independence from Soviet Russia on November 5, 1918. Meanwhile, the Soviet Russian government renounced the treaty on November 13. The Bolsheviks attempted to conquer Lithuania from the East as part of their global proletarian revolution. Elsewhere, the treaty of 1918 had also ceded independence to Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia in the Near East, and Belarus and Ukraine in Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union attacked these nations as well. But whereas they did fall, Lithuania and Poland would not.

On December 8 1918, a temporary revolutionary government in the capital city of Vilnius was formed by the Russians, consisting solely of members of the Communist Party of Lithuania. Vincas Mickevičius-Kapsukas became its chairman. The following day a workers' soviet was formed and declared that it had taken control of Vilnius. However, Voldemaras' government and a Polish committee also declared their control of the city at the same time. The Germans finally abandoned Vilnius on December 31, 1918. On January 5, 1919 the Red Army took it and advanced further in the west. Local Polish paramilitary platoons led by general Władysław Wejtko fought the Red Army in Vilnius for five days; the Lithuanian government had left Vilnius along with the regular German Army. On January 1, 1919 local communists in the town of Šiauliai, about 200 kilometers west of Vilnius, rebelled and created a 1,000-man Samogitian Regiment; when the Red Army entered the town on Janu-

ary 15, Soviet power already existed there. On January 18 the Soviets and Germans signed a treaty and designated a demarcation line that barred Bolshevik forces from directly attacking Kaunas, Lithuania's second-largest city. The Red Army would need to attack through Alytus or Kėdainiai.

German volunteers led by Rüdiger von der Goltz arrived in Lithuania, took up positions



Povilas Lukšys was the first Lithuanian soldier to die in the Freedom Struggles. He was killed by Bolsheviks on February 8, 1919 near Taučiūnai, Kėdainiai District.



Antanas Juozapavičius was the first Lithuanian officer to die in the Lithuanian Wars of Independence on February 13, 1919 in the morning of his 25th birthday during the Battle of Alytus with the Red Army.



Povilas Plechavičius photographed in the front of the Lithuanian Wars of Independence, 1919.

sandras, began organizing partisans in Skuodas. On February 9 the partisans took an oath, and on February 16 they paraded in the town square. A partisan unit commanded by army officers was also organized in Joniškėlis.

At the end of February the Lithuanian partisans, supported by German artillery, took Mažeikiai and Seda, and pursued Bolsheviks to Kuršėnai. On February 27, 1919, German vol-



Lithuanian soldiers during the Lithuanian Wars of Independence (between 1919–1920).

unteers supported by Plechavičius' partisans and Joniškėlis' partisans, defeated the Samogitian Regiment in a battle near Luokė. By that time the regiment had been incorporated into the Red Army's 2nd Latvian International Riflemen Division. On the same day the Lithuanian–Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (Litbel) was declared. On March 7, 1919 the Germans took the town of Kuršėnai, on March 11 — Šiauliai, on March 12 — Radviliškis. On March 14 Lithuanian partisans and German forces captured Šeduva. The German troops were active in Lithuania until May 31, 1919.

Due to a succession of losses, the Bolshevik forces stationed in Panevėžys and Kupiškis rebelled, and were quelled only by a Red Army Division from neighboring Latvia. The Bolshevik morale underwent deeper declines, and between March 19 and March 24 their forces left Panevėžys. Lithuanian forces entered the city on March 26, but the Red Army retook it on April 4.

In April the Lithuanian army began moving towards Vilnius, taking Žašliai and Vievis, but their advances stopped on April 8. In the meantime, on April 19, the Polish army had taken Vilnius from the Bolsheviks and forced them to withdraw their left wing from territories south of the Neris River. The shortened front line that resulted allowed Lithuania to send stronger forces to northeastern Lithuania, and carry out operations there.

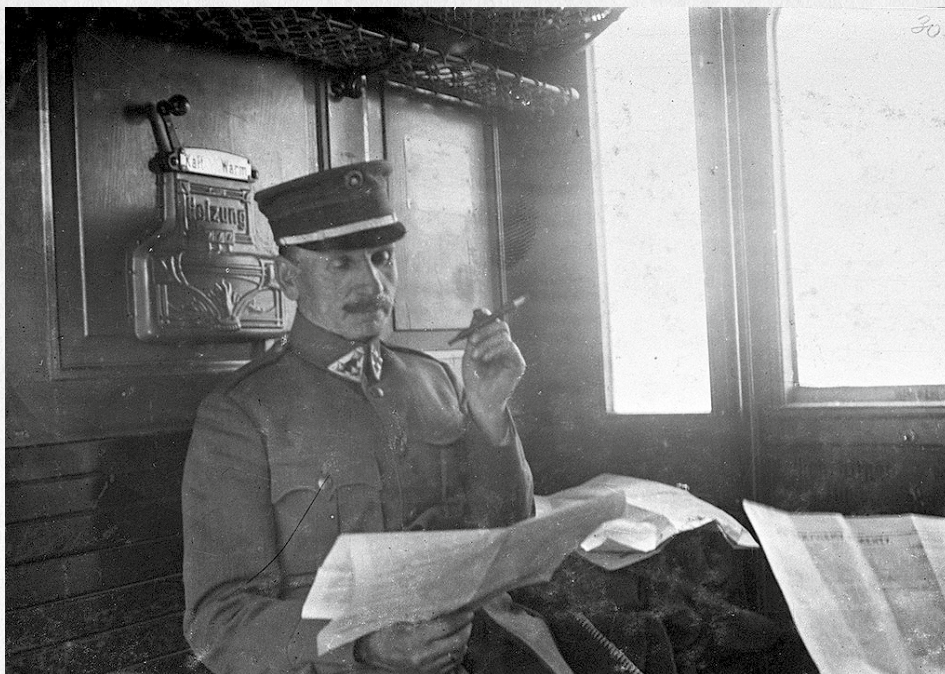
LITHUANIANS DRIVE OUT RUSSIANS

In the beginning of March the mobilization began and Lithuanian forces increased their numbers. At the end of April the Lithuanian army's chain of command was reformed. General Silvestras Žukauskas was designated Chief of Staff, and on May 7 he assumed command of the entire Lithuanian army. A complete reorganization took place over the next few weeks, and the strengthened Lithuanian forces were now ready to push the Red Army back. Žukauskas decided to concentrate his Lithuanian forces in two areas. The first brigade, centered in the Ukmergė–Utena–Zarasai region, was called the Vilkmėrgė Group; the second brigade, centered in the Kėdainiai–Panevėžys–Rokiškis region, was called the Panevėžys Group. Operations planning was undertaken during the middle of May.

A drive towards Utena started on May 31, and the city was secured on June 2. The Panevėžys Group launched a drive towards Panevėžys on May 18. On May 19 the brigade secured Panevėžys and Raguva; on May 20 its field staff moved to Panevėžys. The city withstood a Bolshevik attack that took place on May 21 and 22. On May 24 Žukauskas ordered both groups to push farther. On May 30 they took Rokiškis; Bolshevik forces left Kupiškis on the night of May 30–31, and Lithuania secured that city on June 1. The advance continued, and on June 10 Lithuanian forces reached the territory



Lithuanian armoured train Gediminas.



Chief Commander of the Lithuanian Army General Silvestras Žukauskas heading to the front, 1919.



Lithuanian soldiers in Vievis surroundings.

controlled by Latvian partisans (Green Guard) and supplied them with munitions.

The Lithuanian successes continued, and by the end of August, the Bolsheviks were defeated near Zarasai. On October 2 Lithuania took Griva, a suburb of Daugavpils. The Lithuanian forces stopped at the Daugava River near the border with Latvia, and the front line stabilized. The short-lived Litbel government was discontinued.

On July 12, 1920 Lithuania signed a peace treaty with the Russian SFSR. Russia recognized Lithuania's independence and its right to the Vilnius Region. This treaty was not recognized by Poland or by the short-lived Democratic Republic of Belarus.

WAR AGAINST THE BERMONTIANS

The Bermontians, named for their leader Pavel Bermond-Avalov and formally known

as the West Russian Volunteer Army, were a mixed German-Russian army. The army included Russian prisoners of war, released by the German Empire after promising to fight against the Bolsheviks in the Russian Civil War, and members of the Freikorps, stationed in Latvia and Lithuania after Germany lost the war. The official goal of this army was to fight Bolsheviks along with Aleksandr Kolchak's forces.

At first the Bermontians operated mostly in Latvia, but in June 1919, they crossed the Lithuanian-Latvian border and took the town of Kuršėnai. At that time the Lithuanians were engaged in battles with the Bolsheviks and could only issue diplomatic protests. By October, the Bermontians had taken considerable territories in western Lithuania (Samogitia), including the cities of Šiauliai, Biržai, and Radviliškis. Af-



Bermontians' planes captured by the Lithuanian Armed Forces near Radviliškis, 1919.



ter they had annexed a town, the Bermontians enforced a rule that only the Russian language could be used to conduct administration. They became notorious for robbing and looting the local populace, who began organizing local partisan groups.

During October 1919, Lithuanian forces attacked the Bermontians, achieving an important victory on November 21 and 22 near Radviliškis, a major railway center. The Lithuanians collected significant spoils of war there, including 30 airplanes and 10 cannons. Later clashes were stopped by the intervention of an Entente representative, the French General Henri Niessel, who oversaw the withdrawal of German troops. The Lithuanian military followed the retreating Bermontian soldiers to prevent them from further looting and to ensure their complete evacuation. By December 15 the Bermontians were completely removed from Lithuania.

WAR AGAINST POLAND

Poland also liberated itself from the Russian Empire. The goal of recovering Poland is to recover the land lost during the divisions. Lithuania was considered by the Poles to be part of Poland. Thus, the old Lithuanian ally became an enemy. The Poles fought the Bolsheviks and pushed them into Ukrainian territory. In 1919 In April, the Polish army took the then Bolshevik-occupied Vilnius. In 1920 the Bolsheviks, who went on the offensive in July, took Vilnius again and handed it over to Lithuania in the execution of the peace treaty. In August, the Poles took the initiative again



Polish artillery in Vilnius, 1919.

and pushed the Red Army into the territory of Lithuania.

The Lithuanians hurriedly organized the defense, but the advantage was on the Polish side. In September, in the forests of Augustów, the Lithuanian forces, which could not withstand the onslaught of more Polish forces, suffered the greatest failure during all the struggles for independence. The Suwalki region was lost, and the Poles continued to attack the depths of Lithuania. After the intervention of the Entente states, the hostilities were terminated, a temporary demarcation line was established, the Suwalki region passed to Po-

land, Vilnius and the Vilnius region remained to Lithuania. Negotiations were started in an attempt to avoid an armed conflict between Poland and Lithuania.

On October 7, the Suwałki Agreement was signed. However, on October 8, before the agreement was to formally take effect, General Lucjan Żeligowski, acting on orders from the Polish leader Józef Piłsudski, staged a mutiny by Polish troops, invaded Lithuania and occupied Vilnius. Suddenly The Polish government, in order not to be accused of violating the treaty of the international community, declared Żeligowski's army to be separate from the army but secretly supported them. Żeligowski continued to push to occupy Kaunas and the whole of Lithuania. In the face of danger, the Lithuanian military mobilized and prevented the invading Poles. 1920 November 19 the Poles were defeated near Širvintos and on the 21st. — near Giedraičiai. The military saved Lithuania from the threat of occupation. Through the mediation of the League of Nations, the fighting was suspended. The Lithuanian military lost the opportunity to take advantage of success and occupy Vilnius. Vilnius remained in the hands of the Poles until the beginning of World War II. Although a large part of Lithuania's territory remained in the hands of Poles, the most important goal of the military — to defend the country's independence — was achieved. ■



Lithuanian soldiers of the Fifth Infantry Regiment in the forests of Vievis during the fighting with the Żeligowski's unit of the Polish Army.

LMD inf.

Photo credits: Archives of Vytautas the Great War Museum, the Central Archive of Lithuania.



International exercise Iron Wolf 2022-II



NATO's presence



On October 17-26 international exercise Iron Wolf 2022 II organized by the Lithuanian Land Force Infantry Brigade Iron Wolf took place in the General Silvestras Žukauskas Training Area (Švenčionys region) and around. Approx. 3500 troops and 700 pieces of military equipment — tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, armored vehicles, artillery guns, supply and administrative role vehicles — from Lithuania and nine other NATO Allies and partners, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Luxembourg,

UK, U.S. and Australia, trained for two coming weeks.

The exercise assessed readiness of the Lithuanian Grand Duke Algirdas Mechanized Infantry Battalion of the Iron Wolf Brigade to plan and execute offensive, defensive and other types of operation. The NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battle Group carried out "force on force" training together with Algirdas Battalion alongside units and representatives from other Lithuanian Armed Forces' units as well.

Exercise Iron Wolf takes place every spring and fall in order to maintain and assess combat readiness of the Infantry Brigade Iron Wolf and its subordinate battalions. The series challenges the training audience to showcase their level of readiness, facilitate experience sharing and hones interoperability between NATO Allies. ■

Lithuanian Armed Forces inf.
Photo credits: Lithuanian Armed forces, the Iron Wolf Brigade





The discount is applicable only upon presentation of a service card.

Conditions and applicable discounts may change.

* There are additional conditions.

** Expositions are free of charge to the Lithuanian Military Academy (LMA) cadets, Permanent Mandatory Initial Military Service (PMIMS) soldiers serving in the LMA, and soldiers from the Gediminas Headquarters Battalion (GHB).

*** Coordinate with the regional Conscription and recruiting service department.

**** Due to a match of the football club "Atlantas" coordinate with the Grand Duke Butigeidis Dragoon Battalion's S5 division of the Motorized Infantry Brigade "Samogitia". Due to a match of the basketball club "Neptūnas" coordinate with the National Defence Volunteer Force's S5 division of the Samogitia district 3rd team. Due to a match of the football club "Sūduva" coordinate with the Lithuanian Grand Duke Vytenis General Support Logistics Battalion's S5 division.

***** The discount is applicable to persons who serve or have served in the Lithuanian Armed Forces, also to those who are in the prepared personnel reserve of the Lithuanian Armed Forces (for the entire study period both for the first and second cycle studies).

***** The discount is applicable on February 16, March 11, July 6, and November 23.



National Defence System employees (soldiers, civil servants and employees working under an employment contract)



Soldiers of the Permanent Mandatory Initial Military Service



Members of the Lithuanian Riflemen's Union



Lithuanian soldiers



Soldiers of the National Defence Volunteer Forces



NATO soldiers



Negotiation issues

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Commemoration of the Battle of Vienna

ALTHOUGH THE BATTLE OF VIENNA IS CONSIDERED TO BE ONE OF THE TEN MOST EPIC BATTLES THAT CHANGED THE COURSE OF HISTORY, FEW KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE BATTLE TODAY. THE SIEGE AND BATTLE FOR VIENNA, WHICH LASTED FROM JULY 14, 1683, TO SEPTEMBER 12, 1683, WAS THE MAJOR ENGAGEMENT IN THE 300-YEAR STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN FORCES OF THE HAPSBURG EMPIRE AND THE OTTOMAN TURKS FOR CONTROL OF CENTRAL EUROPE.

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE'S AGE-OLD DREAM FOR VIENNA

Most historians believe that an Ottoman Empire victory would have spread the Islam religion across all of Europe and totally changed history. It should also be noted that the Battle of Vienna was the first time that European nation states combined their military forces on a large scale against a foreign invader, similar to today's NATO organization's mission. For such reasons, the Battle of Vienna is worthy of remembrance.

The Christian forces consisted largely of the armies of the Holy Roman Empire, its German state allies, and the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth forces and the Muslim forces con-

sisting of an Ottoman Turkish Empire army and its vassal and tributary states. Emperor Leopold I was then the Habsburg Monarch, who ruled the Holy Roman Empire with its capital in Vienna and was also the King of Hungary, Croatia, and Bohemia and the Ottoman Empire by Sultan Mehmet IV, the monarch of the Ottoman Turkish Empire and ruler over most of Western Asia, North Africa, and South-eastern Europe with its capital in Constantinople, modern day Istanbul. Like many Western nations of the period, the Ottoman Muslims had sought to expand their empire into Europe for several centuries. Vienna the capital of the Holy Roman Empire was the most coveted prize because of its location. As a result, the

Ottoman Empire, and the Christian kingdoms of Central Europe where virtually in a constant bloody struggle for control of control of Vienna because of its strategic location that controlled the Danube water route to southern Europe and the overland trade route into the Eastern Mediterranean and Germany.

Although the Ottomans had besieged the Vienna in 1529 their attempt was thwarted by the city's strong walled defenses, running short of supplies, and a plague that spread within their invading forces. During the 1660–1680 period, the Ottomans had improved their road and bridge systems and military resources that allowed them to make major territorial gains into the Holy Roman Empire's northern board



Leopold I – Holy Roman Emperor (1640–1705).
Portrait by Benjamin von Block (1672).
Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Bilddatenbank.



Sultan Mehmet IV (1642–1693).
By Unidentified painter.

against Poland which led to their obtaining of the province of Podolia and the transforming of the Cossack regions in the southern Ukraine into becoming a protectorate. The able Ottoman commander then obtained the approval of Sultan Mehmet IV for him to commence a campaign against the Holy Roman Empire with objective of capturing Vienna. Although the Ottoman army began mobilization on January 21, 1682, it was not sufficiently prepared to march on August 6, 1682, when the empire officially declared war on the Holy Roman Empire. Because of their anticipated campaign to reach Vienna would take three-month, the Ottomans delayed their march that gave the Holy Roman empire time to prepare for the invasion.

THE BEGINNING OF THE HOLY LEAGUE OF NATIONS

As a result, the Ottoman army only assembled in Belgrade on May 3, 1683, to begin their pillaging and looting march into Austria. Their advance Crimean Tartar Forces of about 40,000 men about twice the size of the Imperial troop by July 7, 1683, where within 40 km East of Vienna. At this point, Emperor Leopold and his royal court fled Vienna quickly followed by some 60,000 Viennese civilians.

The Austrian Army consisting of about 20,000 men, under the command Charles V, the Duke of Lorraine, after some initial engagements withdrew towards Linz leaving the defense of the city to Ernest Rudiger Graf von Starhemberg with a garrison consisting of 370 cannons and approximately 15,000 soldiers and 8,700 volunteers.

The long delay between the Ottoman mobilization and invasion gave Emperor Leopold sufficient time to prepare for the defense of his empire that included the gathering of a relief force from other Christian states. Although King Louis XIV of France declined to help his Habsburg rival, Pope Innocent XI and his fellow Habsburg rulers agreed to come to his rescue. With the French declining to contribute troops, the Pope then sought and eventually gained the support of John III Sobieski, the King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania. Emperor Leopold with the assistance of Pope Innocent coerced Sobieski into a mutual defensive alliance, in which both agreed to come to each-others aid, if attacked by the Ottomans. Sobieski agreed to this alliance mainly because it provided the commonwealth support if the Ottomans attacked his southern borders. The alliance agreement was signed on Marcy 13,



Battle of Vienna, painting by Gonzales Franciscus Casteels.

areas of Moldavia, Wallachia, Transylvania, and Upper Hungary. Such victories rekindled the Ottoman age-old dream for Vienna that burst into flames in 1682 when Prince Emeric Thököly de Kesmark, the ruler of the Ottoman vassal state of Upper Hungary, offered his military support to the Ottoman Grand Vizier Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha for another attempt. Kara Mustafa Pasha who had served as the Ottoman ground force commander in a war

1683, and ratified quickly by the Polish Lithuanian parliament. Pope Innocent XI who championed the agreement proclaimed this alliance would preserve Christianity and the beginning of the Holy League of Nations. Even though Sobieski has signed the mutual defensive alliance agreement, he did not readily agree to honor his pledge until Charles V, Duke of Lorraine, the Electors of Saxony and Bavaria and some 30 German princes agreed to join the relief forces and the Pope offered him a large subsidy for his participation.

Mustafa Pasha and his Ottoman army appeared before the walls of Vienna on July 14, 1683, and immediately demanded Graf von Starhember's surrender, but he refused which began what would become a two-month siege. The invading Ottoman force is estimated to



Return from Vienna by Józef Brandt, Polish army returning with Ottoman loot.



Charles V, Duke of Lorraine. By Unknown author.



Great Ottoman siege of Vienna 1683. By Frans Geffels between 1683 and 1694.



Count Ernst Rüdiger von Starhemberg. By Peter Schenk (1645–1715) — scan of *Die großen Deutschen im Bild* "

have consisted of 100,000 to 300,000 infantry, cavalry, and artillery men, which included Crimean Khanate, Moldavia, Wallachia, Transylvania, and Upper Hungary tributary and vassal states forces. Such tributary and vassal states understood when they had earlier obtained military support from the Ottoman Empire, they were obligated to similarly support them whenever called upon.

THE START OF CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM BATTLE

By July 17, 1683, the Ottomans had completely surrounded and cut off the city and their artillery demolished and captured its outer fortifications. The lack of food and supplies and constant artillery bombardment had virtually decimated the city defenders' combative abilities. For some still unknown and still debated reason, Mustafa Pasha chose not to demolish

the city's massive inner bastion walls and allow his superior number forces to overrun and destroy the Imperial stronghold. Most historians speculate, since Kara Mustafa Pasha thought his victory was assured, he chose to dig long lines of trenches towards the city and then tunnel under them, planting explosive, and blowing up large entry gaps in its fortifications. His forces could then take the city intact in a controlled advance that would preserve its riches from being plundered by his own army. The fallacy of this idea was it gave time for the Christian Relief Armies to reach Vienna before it capitulated or fell to the Ottomans.

The Imperial forces soon began regrouping about Győr the capital of the Ottoman established Captaincy, located in the western part of the Kingdom of Hungary along the Danube River, where they anticipated the major Christian-Muslim battle would take place and

waiting for the arrival of the promised relief forces. The Duke Charles of Lorraine's situation was further complicated because Emperor Leopold had forbidden him any attacks upon the Ottomans until the arrival of the relief forces. The battle did not take place at Gyor as anticipated because the Ottoman chose not to engage the Duke but advance directly upon Vienna.

King Sobieski started preparing his relief expedition during the early summer and departed with just the Polish Crown Army from Krakow, on August 15, 1683, without awaiting the arrival of the Lithuanian Army contingent nor seeking the approval of the Commonwealth parliament. Sobieski totally realized the danger that he left Poland in and sent a threatening communication to Imre Thököly, the Ottoman imposed vassal King of Upper Hungary, not to tried to take advantage of the situation. His threat went unheeded as Thököly immediately mobilized his forces and with Prince Mihaly Apafi of Transylvania answered Mustafa Pasha called to join him in his attack upon Vienna.

Some historians with political agenda take pleasure in citing the fact that the Lithuanian Army did not arrive to support the Polish Crown forces until after Vienna was relieved without commenting on the reason. That reason, was Sobieski quick departure left Poland in a dire invasion situation from Thököly forces, that the 10,000 man Lithuanian Army, command by Field Hetman Jan Kazimierz Sapieha the Younger, had to first engage in a bloody punitive invasion of the Hungarian Highlands (now Slovakia) that devastated a Hungarian



Pope Innocent XI (1611–1689). Portrait painted by Jacob Ferdinand Voet.



John III Sobieski (1674–1696). King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania. Portrait by Daniel Schultz.

and Ottoman military force being assembled there before they could proceed to Vienna. Such historians also conveniently fail to mention that Lithuanians were serving in Sobieski's elite Royal Guard, under the command of the King, and directly responsible for the protection of the monarch and his family. Similarly forgotten are the members of Lithuanian magnate families, such as the Giedroye, Konopka, Kościuszko, Norbutt, Niegolewski, Pac, Prozor, Pulaski, Radziwill, Sanguszko, Sapeka, Tyszkiewicz, etc., and their military contingents, which were also part of the touted Polish Relief Force that saved Vienna.

The Imperial Army, under the command of

Duke Charles remained in the Gyor area as directed and did not attack the Ottomans besieging Venice pending the arrival of the Christian Relief Forces. He spent this time training his forces and building bridges across the Danube River that would be need by the arriving forces to liberate Vienna. Although the Duke did not advance against the enemy, his force was routinely attacked in a hit and run fashion by Imre Thököly cavalry units. On one occasion, after Duke Charles received a communication from Starhemberg reporting that the Ottomans had finally penetrated Vienna outer walls in force and the end was approaching, led a large-scale cavalry reconnaissance force in the direction



Polish Lithuanian hussar cavalry. By Produced by Warszawa Salon Kulikowskiego — Scan of old postcard from the private collection of Moonik.



The painting Battle over the Turkish banner (1905) depicts one of the conflicts between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Ottoman Empire in the 17th century. Photo Credit: Józef Brandt / National Museum of Krakow.

of Vienna which was attacked by Thököly cavalry units. In the resulting engagement, Duke Charles soundly defeated a large Ottoman force, which then fled destroying several of his constructed bridges. Charles in obedience to his orders then returned to his original position reconstructed the destroyed bridges and awaiting the arrival of the Christian Relief Forces.

THE FINAL BATTLE

With the arrival of the Polish Army, on September 6, 1683, the Christian Relief Forces finally assembled in mass on the banks of the Danube at Tullin, about twenty miles northwest of Vienna. The Imperial Army under the command of the Duke of Lorraine, consisted of approximately 47,000 infantry, cavalry, and artillery soldiers, from the Archduchy of Austria, Bavaria, Bohemia, Franconia, Saxony, Lorraine, Swabia, and the Ukrainian Cossack Hetmanate, with some 112 cannons. The arriving Polish Army under the command of King Sobieski numbered approximately 27,000 Polish infantry, cavalry, and artillery with 28 cannons, which included contingent forces of Polish hired Lipka (Lithuanian) Tartars and Zaporizhian Cossacks mercenaries. After a couple days of planning, the assembled Christian Relief Force totaling 80,000–90,000 men began moving towards Vienna. Within a few days, the Christian forces took up a high ground position line along the top of the Vienna hills in front of the nearby Kahlenberg Mountain area directly facing the Ottoman entrenched forces



Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha (1634–1683). The land force commander of the Ottoman army.



Jan Kazimiera Sapieha the Younger (1637–1720). The Lithuanian Field Hetman.

defending Mutafa Pasha main camp site.

The historical Battle of Vienna commenced before daybreak, on September 12, 1683, when the Ottomans attacked units of Duke Charles infantry while they were moving into forward positions on the left flank of the Holy Roman Empire line. German units were the first to respond to this attack and were quick joined by the entire Imperial Army, as Charles of Lorraine began his attack on the left and center of the Ottoman line. At the same time, the Polish infantry launched their own attack on the Ottoman right flank. Heavy fight ensued along the entire line with both sides launching attacks

and counterattacks and neither side gaining nor hold ground. Heavy infantry fighting continued for some fifteen hours, which included Mutafa Pasha's grandiose plan for tunneling and blowing up the city's inner wall that same morning, but the explosives were discovered and disarmed before they could be detonated. The Viennese defenders and imperial forces continued to hold their positions, but the Ottomans had been severely mauled both in the field and their attack upon the city. At this point during a lull in the engagement, Mutafa Pasha chose to leave the Ottoman defensive trench positions and return to his main camp headquarters. Many Ottomans saw their commander leave the area joined him in his flight.

At 6 PM, the Sobieski and his cavalry, which had not participated in the fighting, emerged from the nearby forest, and were soon joined by the cavalry units of the Holy Roman Empire that had similarly waited on the nearby hills, to the cheers of the onlooking infantry and turned the tide of the battle. In what has been described as the largest cavalry charge in history, Sobieski led some 20,000-Winged Hussars, Dragoons, Tartars, and Cossacks, formed in four groups into the Ottoman lines which caused the exhausted Ottomans break and flee the battlefield. The cavalry charge was quickly jointed by the infantry and Vienna defenders charging out of the city. The cavalry continued their advance and immediately captured Mustafa Pasha's headquarters. In less than three hours after the cavalry charge, the Christian forces had won the battle and saved Vienna.

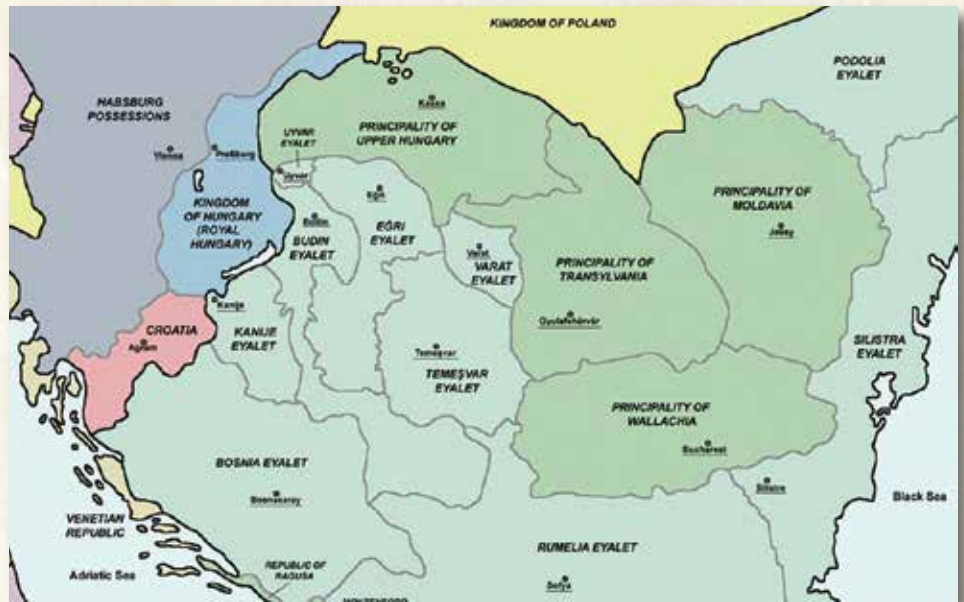
It is estimated that the Ottomans suffered some 20,000 casualties and 5,000 to 10,000 men being captured, the city defenders 12,000 casualties, and the Christian Relief forces 4,500



The Hussar Charge by Stanislaw Kaczor-Batowski.

dead or wounded died in the epic struggle that saved the Europe from Muslim rule. Pope Innocent XI proclaimed Sobieski to be the Savior of Western Christendom. Since then, the Battle of Vienna has been largely depicted through western Christian eyes and dwells upon aspects of the Ottoman invasion of the Holy Roman Empire seeking to spread the Muslim religion throughout Europe overlooking many other territorial, political, religious, and individual reasons reason involved in in the struggle.

It should be noted that both the Habsburgs and Ottomans had been seeking territorial gains from each other in the Ukraine, Hungary, Romania, Transylvania, etc., for centuries. The Ottomans are always depicted as desiring to spread the Muslim religion, but it was the Ottomans who came to the aid of the non-Catholic Christian Habsburg minorities, that included not only Muslim Tartars and Cossacks, but Orthodox Christian Cossacks, Christian Protestants, Jews, Jewish Karaims, etc., who were being persecuted under Emperor Leopold's Counter-Reformation suppression policies designed to exterminate or driven all others his realm. Many of these persecuted fled to the protection of the Ottomans and frequently supported and joined them in their struggle against the Holy Roman Empire. Among the most notable being the Orthodox Cossack Hetmanate leader Petro Doroshenko in the central Ukraine, the Protestant Reformed



Map of Central Europe battle area — circa 1683.

Church leader Michael Apafi, Prince of Transylvania, and the Lutheran Protestant leader Emeric Thököly of Upper Hungary. There is little doubt that many Orthodox and Protestant state leaders would have been glad to see the Holy Roman Empire fall to the Ottomans.

Regardless of causes of the Battle of Vienna, Sobieski and many others deserve credit for the liberation of Vienna that truly curtailed of the Muslim expansion into Europe and preserving Western Civilization. Among those who

also deserve credit is Lithuanian Field Hetman Jan Kazimierz Sapieha the Younger and the members of his Lithuanian Armed forces, who by their punitive action into Upper Hungary, saved Poland from probable large scale destructive or the providing of additional forces that the Ottomans that could have led to their winning of the 1683 Battle of Vienna. ■

By Henry L. Gaidis

Photo credits: www.flickr.com



Sobieski Sending Message of Victory to the Pope. Painting by Jan Matejko, 1883. The Battle of Vienna is a huge, imposing oil canvass that stands 9m by 4.5m in the John Sobieski room of the Vatican Museums. The Polish painter, Jan Matejko, illustrated the victory as a celebration of the 200th anniversary of the liberation of Vienna and on this occasion, the painting was donated to Pope Leo XIII in 1883.



Photo credit: PAO of NATO eFP BG