



"CONGRATULATIONS" ON THE AWARD

The Member of the Conservative and Christian Democratic Parties fraction of the Seimas (Parliament) of Lithuania, Mr. Kzstutis Masiulis, instead of expressing his joy and congratulating her on the occasion of her being awarded by the state of Germany, called Horst Koehler's, the German President's, decision to award her unacceptable. He declared that the award is insulting and humiliating to the Lithuanians.

"We, Lithuanians, have been very sensitive to this kind of things - the Soviet terror wound has been bleeding", said the MP; however, he did not explain what it has to do with Ms F.Brancovskaja's award and "the bleeding wound of the Soviet terror". It seems like Mr. K.Masiulis did not blame Ms F.Brancovskaja. He, as the Chairman of the Lithuanian - German inter-parliamentary group, represents the country President's decision: "To award the people who have the blood of Lithuanians on their hands is an insult and humiliation", said K.Masiulis.

A memorable declaration. Firstly, what Ms. F.Brancovskaja has to do with it? What relates her to the people "who have the blood of Lithuanians on their hands"? Secondly, what "the blood of Lithuanians" has to do with it? Why a MP elected to the Parliament by the people of different nationalities, raises the issue of national blood? Why the Lithuanian blood has been singled out? Why it is different from the blood of the people of other nationalities who voted for Mr. K.Masiulis? Thirdly, was it just the Lithuanian blood that was spilled in Lithuania?

The MP speaks not about a single person but about "the people". It makes one think that it was not only Ms. F.Brancovskaja that he had in mind, but many people allegedly "having Lithuanian blood on their hands". Ms. F.Brancovskaja, as a member of an anti-Nazi partisan platoon, was fighting the Nazis and their collaborators; it makes one think that Mr. K.Masiulis had anti-fascist partisans in mind.

"The Jews applauded the Lithuanian actors" - this is a headline of a news article of one of the biggest national papers of July 23, 2009, about the performance of "Hamlet" staged by a famous Lithuanian director, Eimuntas Nekroshius, at International Theatre Festival dedicated to the centennial of Tel Aviv.

Theatre people know the name of E.Nekroshius well - he is one of the most authoritative directors of Lithuania who is of firm international reputation. It is a pleasure that the audience applauded the actors in the play staged by him.

Something else is difficult to understand: why the author wrote that it was not the audience that applauded but the Jews. Perhaps the Jews are not able to comprehend the Shakespearean passions like the rest of the world?

The newspaper we are talking about is not the tabloid "Respublika" that earns its profit by notorious anti-Semitic articles. Why the reputable paper sometimes is indifferent to an anti-Semitic smell that comes out of this kind of information? How was it possible for the writer to determine that the ones who applauded were the

A famous Jewish writer, who lives in Israel now, was right when he said once: there is no state anti-Semitism in Lithuania; there are many state anti-Semites. Ms. F.Brancovskaja is "guilty" just because she, as a Jew, did not let the Nazi collaborators shoot her at Paneriai and took up arms to fight them.

If we mention the blood of the innocent, the MP should know that not the Jews but the people with white straps instigated by the Front of the Lithuanian activists started killing and robbing unarmed Jews in the first hours of the war; this way it continued to the end of the war. Mainly, due to the national hatred against the Jews and in order to cash in on the occasion.

In the Ghetto, the Jews organized unarmed resistance against the Nazis so that there was no fatal danger for their loved ones. Those who were able to hold a gun in their hand escaped and joined the partisans, and Ms. F.Brancovskaja was among them. Their purpose was not robbery and murder but their own protection and protection of their loved ones in the fight against the Nazis. They escaped and joined the partisans during the third year of the war, at the end of 1943, when they understood that an armed resistance was the only way for the Jews to stay alive and fight superior Nazi and their collaborators' forces.

The war-time massacre of the Jews in Lithuania was of unprecedented scale: the Nazis and their collaborators murdered over 90 per cent of local Jewish residents. There was no other country in Europe where the blood of a single nation was running so freely.

The anti-Nazi movement with active Jewish participation is considered as a matter of immense courage and human honour in France, Italy, republics of former Yugoslavia and other European countries. The former partisans are being honoured today; they are awarded with orders of merit of the European countries. Europe considers has always considered collaboration with the Nazis as sha-

meiful, not the fight against them.

In Lithuania, a member of the European Union, some politicians' "way of thinking" is far from being European. They seek revision of the anti-fascist resistance and revision of the war consequences. They feel sorry that a few hundred Jews, including Ms. F.Brancovskaja, managed to survive in the partisan squads, participated in the crushing of the Nazism, stayed alive until today as the surviving witnesses of the atrocities of the Nazis and their local collaborators. The former anti-fascist partisans frustrate such politicians because those people of immense courage have not cracked; they still are working hard and telling the young generation about the Ghetto, the Nazi collaborators and the war against the fascism.

In this respect, the actions of the prosecutors in a way coincide with the strive of the "politicians" to equal the Soviet and Nazi regimes: for several years the prosecutors have been trying to start a legal trial against the former Jewish partisans anti-fascists and accuse them of crimes against peaceful civilians. So far, the Lithuanian prosecutors have failed in collecting the evidence of so-called "criminal" activities of the Jewish partisans; all this artificially inflated story seems like a disgraceful farce.

There is no doubt that both regimes, either Nazi, or Soviet, are criminal; but they are criminal in a different way, and they have to be assessed by their essence without any party or political notions. It is necessary just in order for neither of the regimes to be revived and their crimes to be repeated.

In the former Soviet Union, which Lithuania became a part of back in 1940, terror was employed for political and social reasons but not for national ones. Thousands of Lithuanian Jews were repressed alongside with the people of other nationalities because they belonged to "the elements hostile to the Soviet rule"; they were all exiled to regions of the Far North. The Jews suffered from the Soviet power in the same way as other na-

tionalties of Lithuania. Their sufferings were also not easier than those of other peoples. The "national" blood composition has nothing to do with it.

The Lithuanian people have not suffered either from the Nazis or the Soviets due to their nationality, while 90 per cent of the Jews who had lived peacefully in Lithuania for centuries were murdered during the Nazi occupation just because they were born Jewish. In the view of the Nazis, their "blood was not of the same composition". Local collaborators were very active in assisting the Nazis in the massacre of the Jews.

The willingness to equal the crimes of the Nazis to those of the Stalinists is an attempt to minimize the scope of the crimes performed by the Lithuanian Nazi collaborators. Mr. Masiulis talks about the Lithuanian people as if it was a monolith, which is united by memory of "the bleeding wound of the Soviet terror" that is offended and humiliated by the fact that Germany ... awarded Ms. F.Brancovskaja. That is a standard propaganda trick: portray the whole nation like a united mass and protect thousands of murderers with the help of honourable and decent people - the murderers who actively participated in the massacre of more than 200 thousand innocent Jews. The Nazi collaborators are responsible for the fact that there are about 200 locations of mass murder of the Jews in Lithuania and the Jewish community of Lithuania that embraced 240 thousand members before the war consists today of only 4 thousand people.

The cruel mass murders of the Nazi collaborators changed the country considerably and the trend of its historic development, damaged the human relationship, affected and is still affecting the modern history and politics of Lithuania. Some "politicians" and "historians" do not recognise the changes; they even try to adopt the law, which will penalize for the negation of the Soviet occupation and the genocide of the Lithuanian people. Such an open attempt on the freedom of history and political science can be understood only as a powerless hys-



On October 28, 2009, Ms. Fania Brancovskaja, the librarian of Vilnius Yiddish Institute, deputy chair of the Union of Former Ghetto and Concentration Camp Prisoners, a former partisan, was invited to the Embassy of Germany. She was presented with the German Federation state award there, "The Cross of Merit". The German Embassy announced that Ms. F.Brancovskaja was awarded "for exceptional merits in strengthening the concord between the Germans and the Jews of Central and Eastern Europe".

The Lithuanian Jewish Community congratulates Ms. F.Brancovskaja and wishes her good health, success in her work and personal happiness.

teria inspired by historical truth.

The reality is sad: only three Nazi collaborators have been found guilty in the independent Lithuania for the participation in the massacre of the Jewish people of Lithuania (just one of them still being alive); However, not one of them paid the penalty for their crimes. This is not something that Mr. K.Masiulis or his cousins resent or feel bad about. Meanwhile, the award to the Jewish woman, who lived in the horror of Nazi occupation for 3 years when she needed heroism daily in order to survive, seems to have insulted them brutally.

Milanas CHERSONSKIS

Jews and specifically the Jews? Perhaps the people had been admitted to the theatre of Tel Aviv only after a scrupulous face control procedure or ID check? Maybe people of other nationalities had not been allowed to enter? Or they had

been banned from applause? What is it? Theatrical apartheid? Thus, why "the Jews" applauded, not the audience?

Perhaps the author was surprised that the Jews were watching "Hamlet" in Lithuanian and understood what was happening on the stage? But, primarily, every somewhat cultured person knows a number of scenes from "Hamlet" by heart in his/her native language (in this case - Hebrew) or even in Old English, which is enough to understand the play about the Danish prince in any other language. Secondly, it is known well that there are many more people in Israel who know Lithuanian well than there people in Lithuania who know Hebrew. It is not difficult to understand "Hamlet" in Israel in any other language the same way as in Lithuania.

However, there is a different difficulty in Lithuania that is created by some journalists and certain media when they focus on the

Millions form Lithuania", "Jews Claim More and Soon", "Jews Unhappy", "Lithuanian Laws Amended by Jews", "US Jews: Give

WHY THE JEWS?

nationality only when they speak specifically about the Jews. They saw endlessly "Jews, Jews" and reveal an old disease of the Lithuanian society that sometimes springs out like fire from the ashes which have nearly cooled down. Some of the periodicals - quite many of them, in fact - saw automatically, without even thinking that this way they are driving a wedge between the Jews and people of other nationalities. However, there are publications that drive the wedge with the purpose of doing business which smells badly.

While leafing those periodicals, one cannot but notice catching headlines: "Jews Dissatisfied with Government Proposals", "Jews Don's Need Property", "Jews Blackmail Lithuania in front of the World", "Jews Again Claim

Property Back Immediately", "Murdered Jews More Valued than People of other Nationalities", "Jews Claim Money Behind Closed Doors", and so on, and so forth.

Essentially, they follow in the footsteps of "Der Sturmer", the propaganda tool of the Third Reich. The mankind knows well that this road leads to millions of victims and destruction; nevertheless, some Lithuanian papers call to take the road as if they have been overtaken by amnesia.

Perhaps it is not worth talking a lot about this kind of short-lived piece of information, but the important thing is the following: if you look at the "Jews" of the insignificant article through a magnifying glass, you can see myriads of the disease carriers that spread the illness called anti-Semitism.

END OF THE CONFLICT

On August 26, when the III-rd Congress of the World Litvaks was in progress in Vilnius, the representatives of the government of Lithuania and the Committee for Preservation of Jewish Cemeteries in Europe (hereinafter - the Committee) signed an agreement on the old Jewish cemetery in Shnipishkes. The Committee called the

agreement on the old Jewish cemetery in Vilnius region of Shnipishkes a historic one. The agreement defines the boundaries of the cemetery and the protected territories around it as proposed by the Lithuanian government. The document was signed at the Ministry of Culture by the representatives of the Committee for Preservation of

Jewish Cemeteries in Europe, the Jewish Community of Lithuania and the Cultural Heritage Department.

The head of the Cultural Heritage Department, Ms. Diana Varnaitė, said to the journalists that the parties "agreed with the boundaries of the cemetery and the protective territory and also agreed about future cooperation in providing conditions for preservation and

memorialize the heritage".

The agreement does not include anything about breaking down or reconstructing of the Sports Palace that was built over the former cemetery or anything about the luxurious residential houses of King Mindaugas, the construction of which created big international resistance four years ago. However, any activity on those territories will be restricted.

The Chairman of the Committee, Rabi Schlessinger, called the

agreement "an especially important event", which will promote friendly relations between the Lithuanians and the Jews. He is convinced that "this place will be put in order so that everyone can see that this is the cemetery. This essential agreement that has been achieved with the help of God will be noticed around the world".

A tender will be announced soon to memorialize the cemetery.

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