

COMMUNISM IN THE BALTIC STATES

ANDRES KÜNG



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- setting up organisational structures
- teaching communication, campaigning and media managing skills
- ideological training
- advice on practical politics and policy.

The Jarl Hjalmarson Foundation is an independent entity closely linked to the Swedish Moderate party.

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By Andres Küng

translated from Swedish by Carl Henrik Ehrenkrona

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Foreword

On April 13, 1999, the Jarl Hjalmarson Foundation arranged a seminar with reference to the crimes of Communism. Lennart Meri, the Estonian President, gave a speech on the consequences of Communism in the Baltic States. Other prominent speakers were Foreign Minister Carl Bildt, at the time the chairman of the Swedish Moderate Party, and Stéphane Courtois, author of the “Black Book of Communism”.

The following text by Andres Küng was presented on the initiative of the Jarl Hjalmarson Foundation. For many years, during the Soviet era, Andres Küng was instrumental in leading the support for freedom in the Baltic states. He was also a well known writer focusing primarily on the subjects of democracy and freedom.

Since 1999 a lot has changed in Europe. A new Europe has emerged out of the shadows of the old. In 2004 ten new members states, of which eight are former Central and Eastern European countries, joined the European Union, and in 2007 two additional member states were accepted, Romania and Bulgaria.

What began at the outset of the first World War -- leading up to World War II, followed by decades of Communist dictatorship which isolated half Europe behind the Iron Curtain -- finally came to an end in 2007 with the remarkable implication that rule of law, democracy and freedom are standard virtues unquestioned by 500 million European citizens.

With the shadow of the totalitarian rule behind us, the risk is evident that the history will be forgotten as well as the reality of the previous dictatorships, including the steps that once led to serfdom. Totalitarian societies do not appear out of the blue. They are brought forward by people like you and me. They are defended by men and women just like all of us living in Europe of today. If we believe that the European past is implausible and exaggerated, we are leaving the door open for the shadow of the past to invade our future.

This book is a contribution to the remembrance of the past and for the defence of the future freedom and democracy. We must not let it happen again, due to lack of knowledge, what should never have happened in the first place.

Stockholm, December 7, 2008

Gunnar Hökmark

*Chairman of the Jarl Hjalmarson Foundation 1994-1999 and
Vice President of the EPP-ED Group in the European Parliament*

Introduction

“All of us have been horrified by the recent events in Kosovo. But we in Estonia look on the discovery of mass graves containing civilians with particular horror and concern. We should never forget that it was here in our country, in the village of Palermo near Rakvere, not far from Tallinn, that the first mass graves of this new kind of horror were uncovered in December 1918. It was then that the public first heard this word and saw the pictures of mass graves. These graves contained the bodies not of military combatants but of ordinary men, women, children and elderly people, whose only crime was membership in a community that some had defined an enemy. And the appearance of such graves ushered in a period of total war and totalitarianism, the twin evils of our time that gave birth to these and other crimes against humanity.”

These were the opening words of Lennart Meri, the Estonian president, when an international commission – tasked with the investigation of Communist and Nazi crimes against humanity in Estonia – first convened. A number of well-known and highly respected figures/individuals assembled under the chairmanship of the Finnish diplomat Max Jakobson during its first session on January 26, 1999, in the Estonian capital Tallinn.

“The work of this commission reflects our common conviction that we cannot build a free and democratic future without facing up to the past. Trying to sweep past events under the rug of collective forgetfulness will not help us to achieve either reconciliation nor progress toward a better future. Doing so will not prevent such horrors from being repeated. Instead, ignoring what happened in the name of whatever short-term goals would guarantee that we will be living in a house built on sand, one certain to collapse during the next storm.”

The task of the commission should, according to president Meri, be the thorough and lucid documentation of the crimes against humanity committed in Estonia. “This commission is committed to setting out in as clear terms as possible what crimes against humanity happened in Estonia. It is committed to overcoming the stereotypes about groups that were the basis of many of these crimes: After all, most of these crimes were possible only because some governments and movements used stereotypes in place of the uniqueness of the human beings in their dealings with others. It is committed to eliminating any double standards in the assessment of particular events. Crimes against humanity are crimes against humanity regardless of perpetrator. And the Commission is committed to compiling a record sufficiently well-documented and complete so that no one will be able to deny what happened or to avoid facing up to the facts.”

This report is not tied to the inquiry made into the crimes against humanity in Estonia by the international commission. However, my work has been guided by the same basic values and aspirations as those of President Meri and the commission. I will therefore chronicle some of the crimes committed in Estonia in the name of Communism. The fate of Latvia and Lithuania will be touched upon, along with an investigation of crimes committed by the Nazis in the Baltic States. In a concluding chapter, I will put emphasis on some of the questions posed to all of us by the crimes against humanity committed in Estonia.

Communist crimes against the peace in the Baltic States

During the Interwar Years, the balance of power between the major nations of Northern and Eastern Europe became the chief determinant of the security of the Baltic as well as the Nordic states. A shift toward totalitarianism in both Germany and the Soviet Union in the '30s increased the risk of war and posed a threat to the Baltic society. In an attempt to alleviate political tensions, the Baltic governments signed multilateral agreements on the prohibition of war and in 1932 they signed non-aggression pacts with the Soviet Union. Two years later, these pacts were extended by ten years. Of course, a couple of years down the line, the very same pacts would prove to be void.

In 1939, negotiations between the western powers and the Soviet Union came to a standstill. The Soviet Communists responded by approaching the German national socialists and a non-aggression pact were promptly signed. In a secret supplementary protocol, Hitler and Stalin outlined the partition of Poland and the annexation of Finland and the Baltic States. This accord was to be known as the Molotov-Ribbentopf pact (MRP), named after the Soviet foreign minister Molotov and his German colleague von Ribbentopf – the two principal signatories of the pact on August 23, 1939. Now the stage was set for the Second World War and only a few weeks later, Poland was invaded by Germany. The Soviet Union soon followed suite and the country was effectively split between the two powers. Ten days after the Soviet attack on Poland, a new pact was signed in Moscow with yet another secret supplementary protocol. This protocol stated that the sovereign state of Latvia would pass under Soviet control in exchange for German influence over Warsaw with surroundings, along with another Polish province. Neither Latvians nor Poles were asked for their opinion ...

Furthermore, Stalin decided to force mutual assistance pacts upon the Baltic governments. A treaty with Estonia was signed on September 28, 1939, entitling the Soviet Union to station 25 000 troops at the naval base of Paldiski by the Gulf of Finland. Furthermore, Soviet gained access to various air bases on and off the Estonian mainland. On October 5, Latvia was forced to a similar agreement granting 30 000 Soviet troops access onto Latvian soil. Five days later, Lithuania was forced to welcome 20 000 soldiers from its powerful communist neighbour.

In theory, the Baltic autonomy was respected in the mutual assistance pacts in terms of civil policy, economic and political systems as well as military operating freedom.

In practice, however, the Soviet general staff printed maps denoted the Baltic States as part of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics. Moreover, on the day after the last mutual assistance pact was signed, General Ivan Serov – who would later become Deputy Commissar of the NKVD – issued a secret order stating that “anti-Soviet elements” were to be registered and then deported. So much for Baltic autonomy.

On November 30, 1939, Communist Russia attacked Finland. Finnish resistance was unexpectedly fierce and it probably delayed the Soviet occupation of the Baltic States. However, once the Winter War was over, Soviet Russia proceeded with its plans for the Baltic States. Benefiting from allied attention being focused on the western front – where Nazi forces had taken Paris in June 1940 – Soviet Russia seized the opportunity and demanded a new, pro-Soviet Lithuanian government. On the following day, the Red Army occupied Lithuania. Having successfully subjugated Lithuania, the Soviet government continued with Estonia and Latvia, demanding that they too should appoint pro-Soviet Union governments willing to faithfully honour the mutual assistance pacts. Naturally, giving in would open the floodgates to an unlimited amount of Soviet soldiers but the senselessness of military resistance left the countries with no real choice. On June 17, 1940, Soviet forces occupied Estonia and Latvia.

The occupation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania was a violation of at least 15 international agreements – ranging from the interwar treaties on the prohibition of war (where Lenin had promised to respect the sovereignty of the Baltic States “for all eternity”) to the non-aggression pacts of the ‘30s, as well as the League of Nations charter. What was a blatant disregard for international law was celebrated in Soviet propaganda as a major victory for Baltic society and its Communist parties. Considering that no Communist party in the Baltic States during the summer of 1940 had more than 200 members, one could see the need for military assistance ...

Only a few days after the arrival of Soviet forces in the Baltic States, all three countries got new governments appointed for them. Special Soviet emissaries selected the ministers. Most ministers were non-Communists but politicians loyal to the Party held all key positions – such as the Ministry of Interior. This technique was designed to delude the public and would be used again in Eastern Europe after the war.

One month later, general elections were held on premises violating existing electoral laws on several counts. For instance, only Communist candidates were allowed to run (one oppositional candidate was actually allowed to run in one constituency in Estonia by mistake, but he was arrested on the first day of the elections charged with bank paper fraud). Since the turnout of voters was extremely low, elections were prolonged one day. Those insisting on putting their ballot in a sealed envelope were taken in directly for interrogation by the security police and were accused of being anti-Communists and enemies of the people. Thus, elections were held in a style, which came

to be known as Baltic elections among political scientists. This was before it became standard practice in the whole of Eastern Europe after the war.

According to official statistics, the “working people’s faction” was supported by 92.8 per cent of the voters in Estonia, 97.6 per cent in Latvia and as many as 99.19 per cent in Lithuania. The Soviet news agency TASS announced the results of the election twelve hours prior to the closing of polling stations. Apparently, the news agency officials were unaware of the fact that elections had been prolonged due to poor turnout of voters. Thus, Baltic voters got to know the result of the election before their votes had been tallied ...

The newly elected parliaments decided to transform their respective countries into Socialist Soviet republics and to apply for membership in the USSR. On the 3rd, 5th and 6th of August respectively, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were granted admittance by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.

In an address to the Swedish parliament on August 16, 1940, Östen Undén, a professor of law and Swedish MP, commented:

“In a matter of days, three states, that were previously autonomous, have been liquidated. No observer can be deluded by the ostensible voluntariness. Today, we know all too well how such voluntarism is created... Those of Europe’s small states that are still free have been taught a valuable lesson by witnessing the tactics employed against the Baltic States.”

Thus, the stage had been set for another genocide in the name of Communism – this time directed towards the Baltic peoples – while their neighbours looked away, refusing to be witnesses or even spectators. Maybe now is the time, after 60 years, to learn from the Baltic peoples’ experiences of Communist theory and practice.

The age of genocides

The first order of business for Communists in all countries has been to select various social groups destined for internment in forced labour camps, political retraining or execution. It started with the “de-cossacification” in Russia and the Ukraine under Lenin and continued with the “de-kulakification” in the same countries under Stalin. This pattern was to be repeated in the Baltic States as part of an ideological assumption that people could be reduced to proponents of certain “interests” or to members of certain social classes, resulting in mass executions, arrests and deportations during the ‘40s.

During the first Soviet occupation, 1940-41, 179 people were sentenced to death in Estonia by Soviet (people’s) tribunals, while approximately 2 200 were killed without prior sentence. Most of them were killed by the so-called destruction battalions or by the security police, the NKVD, in places such as the prisons of Tartu and Kuressaare.¹

In Tartu, Communists hid 190 bodies in a well in the police station courtyard. Decades later, in the same place, specially trained dogs were kept, ready to be deployed against Estonians demanding independence and an end to Communist terror. Not far from the police station, the Meat Square (Liha turg nr 7) is situated, where Communists murdered 19 prisoners, one of whom was the Greek Catholic bishop Platon, in January 1919. In Kuressaare, the murders were committed in the courtyard of the town’s medieval castle.

During the Soviet era, it was strictly forbidden to write or speak about the Communist killings. In the autumn of 1988, however, a newspaper on Ösel/Saaremaa managed to publish an eyewitness report from a survivor.

“As far as I know, only three of those found in the well were shot. The rest were tortured to death. They were about a hundred in total, though no one knows the exact number. The methods of torture employed were numerous; one man got his lips cut off, another his nose, tongue and ears. Many had their feet boiled, some just one, others both. There were also victims that got their backs flayed or their hands pinioned with barbed wire. Others got their eyes gouged out. A woman got her breasts cut off. I was there when the bodies were carried out of the cellars. During day-time, thousands of people would come looking for their relatives. Many found them. It was a horrible sight, one that I will never forget.”

The destruction battalions' reign of terror was not a response to Baltic armed resistance, as some Communists have claimed. In fact, it was the other way around. The Baltic militia was a reaction to the terrorisation of civilians perpetrated by the Communist – and later Nazi – occupants. To the list of atrocities committed in the last century – with names such as Lidice, Oradour and Babi Yar – the international community could add, from Estonia alone, the names Kabala and Kautla. In Kautla, for instance, every villager that the Soviet destruction battalions could get their hands on was tortured to death. The youngest of the victims was two months old, the oldest 78 years.

In the autumn of 1939 – almost a year before the occupation – Ivan Serov, a high-ranking NKVD official, had signed an order dictating the eventual mass deportations from the Baltic States. According to this order – number 001223 of October 11, 1939 – a selection of allegedly anti-Soviet elements was to be deported to Soviet forced labour camps. Among the groups singled-out were members of all the non-communist parties (ranging from the right wing to Social Democrats and independent Socialists) as well as ex-members excluded from different Communist organisations. But political affiliation was not the only criterion for deportation – policemen, soldiers and fencibles, high-ranking civil servants and diplomats, judges and prosecutors, merchants, major landlords and hotel-owners, priests, relatives of those having fled to the West, employees of foreign companies along with a disparate group of people presumed to have extensive contacts with abroad (such as Esperantists, philatelists and members of the Red Cross) were also designated for deportation.

In concordance with Ivan Serov's order, 38 000 Baltic citizens were deported in a matter of 24 hours. The Estonian deportees numbered 9 250, those from Latvia 15 081 and the Lithuanian ones 13 600.²

The security police would come in the middle of the night, arresting a suspect without giving any reasons. A suspect's family members – including infants, the elderly and the ill – would also be rounded up and together they would be driven in trucks to the nearest train station. Here, men were separated from women and children, a separation that most likely would last for ever.

It would often take days before the trains departed for the Siberian camps. The deportees were contained in barred boxcars or stock cars with no sanitary facilities and the stench rapidly got nauseating. Most of the elderly and the ill, as well as the infants, died during the week-long haul to the Soviet Gulag archipelago.

The Soviet Union as well as Communists in other countries have brought forward different rationales in defence of the deportations. First in the line of naïve and often fallacious arguments is the claim that the non-Socialist governments in the Baltic

States during the Interwar Years persecuted Communists and that therefore communist retaliation against the bourgeoisie was, if not justified, at least understandable. Apart from being a cynical argument, it is also flawed in that the analogy is false. The “non-Socialist” governments, which were in reality led, on occasion, by Social Democratic prime ministers, did in fact arrest some few Communists. However, these were Communists who acted on a Soviet initiative to overthrow the country’s lawful and democratic government – for instance during the Communist coup of 1924 in Estonia. Altogether, 258 people were arrested in Estonia during the Interwar Years on grounds that could possibly be considered political. In contrast, 7 043 Estonians were deported by the Communists during the first two months of the occupation of 1940. Their crime – belonging to the “wrong” group in society. In other words, the Communists arrested, in a matter of two months, 27 times as many people as the non-Communists arrested in two decades. Furthermore, the victims of the Communists were innocent.³

The second justification for the deportations holds that it was necessary to purge the Baltic States of “anti-Soviet elements” in anticipation of the Nazi attack. However, on the very first day of the deportations, a message from the Soviet news agency TASS was printed in Pravda, which “firmly dismissed any rumours of a Nazi attack on the Soviet Union as provocations”. Additionally, 28.4 per cent of those deported from Estonia were less than 14 years of age and 17.3 per cent were aged 50 and above and could hardly be expected to cause much trouble in the event of war. Only 21.5 per cent of the deportees were men aged between 20 and 49. In reality, it was these mass deportations that, more than anything fuelled, anti-Soviet and anti-Communist sentiment in the Baltic States. This is illustrated by the initial perception of the Germans as liberators – despite the fact that most Estonians and Latvians considered them their sworn enemy ever since the days of the Teutonic Order. This impression, however, did not last long – the Nazis soon revealed themselves to be just as ruthless as the Soviet Communists and were accordingly equally loathed by the Baltic peoples.

There were 400 Jews among the Estonian deportees. As is often the case under dictatorial regimes, Jews were persecuted more severely. According to the most recent census at the time, Jews accounted for 0.4 per cent of the Estonian population but their share of the deportees was ten times that number – 4 per cent. In Lithuania, 1/12 of the population was Jews while their share of the arrested and deported during the first Soviet occupation was 1/5.

The first mass deportation was supposed to be followed by two more. Only one month after the first wave of deportations, in July 1941, the second wave was to commence. However, the Germans advanced so quickly that the Soviet destruction battalions failed to initiate the second and third wave of mass deportations. The exception was the island Saaremaa, which the Germans reached only after having occupied the Estonian mainland. If the Communist activities on Saaremaa were representative of their

plans for the rest of Estonia, one can conclude that the second and third wave were intended to be far more extensive than the first. According to the list of names compiled by the Soviets with meticulous care of those destined for deportation, the number of planned deportees matched that of the 1949 deportations ensuing the forced collectivisation of Baltic agriculture.

The fate of the Estonian deportees can be followed in the form of administrative orders, prison records and witness reports. But there is also a first-hand account of everyday life as a deportee in the form of a diary kept by a young boy. The first entry is from a spring day when he and his parents were sent on their way to Siberia, the last from the day when he ran out of paper in 1944. As was customary, the boy and his mother were separated from his father and this separation is a recurring theme in the diary. Every third or fourth entry ends with the question: “Father, where are you? Why don’t you take me away from here? Please, God, send my love to my father”. But the cries for help are in vain, the father is already dead. Additionally, the young boy writes of how one friend after the other dies from malnutrition, of how he and his mother survive by eating nettle soup, of how a fellow deportee pinched a potato in order to not succumb to starvation and how he was punished with solitary confinement for doing so. A book such as this – an Estonian “Diary of Anne Frank” – would raise awareness in the West of the crimes committed against the Baltic peoples, if any publisher would be interested, that is.

Among the deported was the Estonian president Konstantin Päts, who was delocalised in July 1940 and formally arrested in June 1941. He was then incarcerated in various Soviet prisons until his death in a Russian mental institution in Burasjevo in January 1956. In June 1977, three of the President’s letters reached the West. They were written in Soviet captivity – probably in 1953 since Päts makes a reference to his upcoming 80th birthday. The letters carry his thumb print and signature.

The last president of inter-war Estonia told of the humiliations he had experienced and the threats that had been made to his life. He wasn’t allowed to use his own name and was instead referred to as “number 12”, nor was he allowed to write to his relatives or receive any help from them. In one of his letters, Päts addresses the international community in a plea on the behalf of the Baltic peoples:

“I turn to the United Nations and the entire enlightened world in a request for help to the peoples of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, against whom the Russian occupants use such force as to make them succumb. I declare the annexation of the Baltic States, carried through in 1940, a brutal crime against international law and a false representation of the true wills of these annexed peoples. Save these peoples from complete annihilation and allow them to decide their own destinies. Establish a UN authority in the Baltic States to supervise a referendum in

the aforementioned states where their citizens would be able to express their true wishes. May Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania be free and independent states! K Pāts (signature) (finger print)⁵⁴

Faced with these letters, politicians in neighbouring countries such as Sweden remained silent and no reaction came from the UN. President Pāts' remains were found in 1990 and reburied in Tallinn.

All in all, eight former heads of state and 38 ministers were deported from Estonia. Three former Latvian heads of state and 15 ministers suffered the same fate, along with five prime ministers and 24 other ministers from Lithuania.

Among those deported and later executed were many officers and no less than 79 generals and colonels from Estonia. In Latvia, every high-ranking officer was ordered, on the eve of the mass deportations of 1941, to undergo "supplementary training" in Moscow. On their arrival, however, most of them were arrested, later to be shot or sent to the Gulag. The Soviet Communists used similar methods in neighbouring countries such as Poland, where they liquidated almost every Polish officer captured during the invasion of Poland between 1939 and 1940. About 4 500 of these officers were executed in Katyn and their fate would later be brought to the attention of Western governments, ironically enough, through the propaganda of Goebbels.

In the time running up to the large mass deportation in 1941, in Latvia alone – according to incomplete statistics from the Red Cross – 7 020 Latvians were arrested and sentenced. Out of these, 980 were executed and buried in eight mass graves. The remaining individuals were sent to camps in Siberia. Then the first major mass deportation came about in June 1941:

"The shock to the Latvian people was terrible. After June 14 people were afraid to stay at home, many spent the nights with acquaintances in distant places or ran off into the woods, desperation was the prevalent emotion. One macabre detail was that the authorities pretended that nothing had happened, the newspapers contained nothing on the deportations, nobody had any information on those who had disappeared and there was nowhere to go for help or information. The world was silent."⁵⁵

During the Nazi occupation of the Baltic States, around 6 600 Estonian citizens were killed. Amongst these were 1 000 Jews and 243 Romani.⁶ The Nazis also executed the better part of the 36 000 Soviet POW: s captured when fighting in Estonia.

In Latvia around 80 000 people were killed – including almost every single one of the 70 000 Jews having remained in Latvia until then. The additional 10 000 executed

were mainly Latvians or Latvian citizens of different ethnical backgrounds. Between them, the Nazi and the Communist occupation forces mobilised around 250 000 Latvian citizens, of whom 100 000 died in combat.⁷

In Lithuania more than 100 000 Lithuanian Jews were killed by Nazi occupants and their henchmen. Prior to World War II, Jews made up 8 per cent of the population. Afterwards, their share was below 1 per cent. Only 20 000 out of the 150 000 Jews residing in Latvia before the war survived the Holocaust.

In anticipation of the second Soviet occupation in the autumn of 1944, almost 300 000 Balts fled to the West. While most of the about 70 000 Estonian refugees went by sea to either Sweden or Finland, the Latvians and Lithuanians chose Germany. Many thousand refugees perished during the perilous flight – one of the greatest tragedies being when the ships “Moero” and “Nordstern” were wrecked in the Baltic Sea. Tens of thousands of refugees were repatriated by the Western powers after the war. According to Soviet statistics, 31 000 people were sent back to occupied Estonia. Out of these, roughly 12 000 were prisoners of war, the rest civilians.

Sweden accepted almost 25 000 Estonians and 7 000 Estonian Swedes, close to 5 000 Latvians and roughly 400 Lithuanians. The Balts made up the first major group of refugees arriving in Sweden and taking up residence there. On a humanitarian level, they were met with deep sympathy but politically it was a different matter. Initially, the Baltic refugees were subjected to a prohibition of propaganda which prevented them from bearing witness publicly to the Communist (and Nazi) oppression. As frustrating as Western political disinterest may have been to the Baltic refugees, they were undoubtedly better off than those of their compatriots having remained behind – they had decades of genocide, oppression, russification, militarization, environmental destruction and general lack of freedom in store for them.

During the first decade of the second Soviet occupation – 1944 to 1953 – 20 000 people were arrested on alleged political grounds. Out of these, 13 000 were sent to forced labour camps where most of them would eventually die. According to Soviet statistics, around 1 500 guerrilla fighters – the so called Forest Brethren – were killed in Estonia.

The anti-Communist guerrilla war in Lithuania was to develop into the most extensive and prolonged one in post-war Europe. This, however, is a little known fact outside of Lithuania. Around 25 000 members of the Lithuanian guerrilla were killed by the Soviets troops. In an effort to curtail the operations of the guerrilla, 41 158 Lithuanians were deported in May 1948.

On the night of March 25, 1949, almost 100 000 Balts were dragged from their homes and put in boxcars headed for Siberian camps. This time around, the deportees were mostly minor farmers and relatives of people previously deported. The makeup of the deported in terms of nationalities was roughly 20 500 Estonians, 40 500 Latvians and 33 500 Lithuanians.⁸ Nearly forty years later, the Estonian historian Evald Laasi presented a chart containing figures of planned and realised deportations from Estonia in the spring of 1949. The chart was based on information provided by Major-General Boris Kumm – the then Peoples’ Commissar of State Security – to the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee:

Victims of Deportation in Estonia, March 1949

	Planned	Actual
Males	7 582	4 507
Females	9 935	10 274
Children (under age 15)	4 809	5 717
Total	22 326	20 498

Table 1. Victims of deportation in Estonia, March 1949, planned and actual numbers.
 Source: The Estonian Paper “Kodumaa” (Motherland/Homeland)
 November 16, 1988

Evidently, actual deportations fell almost 2 000 short of the planned number. This is due to the fact that many men fled to the woods during the night of arrests with the intention of joining the guerrilla. In order to compensate, the Communists had to round up more women and children than they had previously planned but they failed to arrest enough to meet their quota. Communist planned economy had failed again...

The share of the population deported varied across the country but on average 7.6 per cent of the population was sent away. The deportations were, according to the Estonian researcher Aigi Rahi, who has specialized in the study of the deportations carried out in and around the university town of Tartu, aimed “directly at children, women and the elderly. The share of men of working age was only 12 per cent.”⁹

According to estimates, every tenth of the deportees of 1949 died in Siberia. Admit-

tedly, due to the over-representation of the elderly, this figure probably overstates the hardships of Siberian camp life, since many of them would have died in Estonia as well. However, this cannot excuse the fact that these people were denied the right to die as free men in their home country. Those who survived were eventually allowed to return to their countries of origin, but they were not allowed to take up residence in their former home towns, nor were they allowed to settle in any of the major cities. Additionally, finding employment was hard. Rahi comments:

“The wounds inflicted by the mass deportation in March 1949 cannot be estimated in numbers and percentages only. It is just as much a matter of thousands of years of creative work lost, of crushed families, unborn children and closed educational opportunities. Those sent to Siberia as children spoke no Russian and were faced with difficulties in the Russian schools. Younger children learnt Russian well but were forced, once having returned to Estonia, into Russian schools. The deportation also meant the end of private farming and the beginning of forced collectivisation. Oppression infused the population with hate and fear and practices such as denunciation became pervasive ... In the aftermath of the deportation of 1949 and the forced collectivisation, a sentiment of hopelessness and despair got hold of the rural population – a sentiment reflected by lower birth rates, increasing rates of suicide and the gradual depopulation of rural areas. Additionally, the mass deportation fundamentally altered the demographic makeup, not least by creating favourable conditions for immigration.”

In the year of 1950 another 1 415 Estonians and Latvians were deported from the parts of Estonia and Latvia that had been incorporated with Russia in 1945.

In the following year, several hundred members of prohibited religious communities were sent to Siberian camps.

In the spring of 1950, the Baltic Communist parties passed resolutions, on order from Moscow, sanctioning the eventual arrest of intellectuals such as teachers, authors, artists, musicians, lawyers and doctors. Even local Baltic Communist leaders were accused of being “bourgeoisie nationalists”. Among them were the First Secretary of the Party, the head of government, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Estonian Supreme Soviet and other prominent “June Communists” – that is, Communists having arrived in Estonia from Russia after the occupation in 1940. Towards the end of the ‘50s, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Latvian Supreme Soviet was purged together with the head of government, several ministers, party secretaries, editors-in-chief and other leading party officials, all because a group of Latvian “National Communists”, led by the deputy head of government Eduards Berklavs, had managed to gain majority in the Politburo – the most important political organ of the Latvian Communist Party. Berklavs had acted on the belief in Nikita Chruschev’s sincerity in

his “secret address” to the Soviet party congress of 1956 where he had expressed the right for all people to seek their own road toward Socialism. However, he was wrong. Instead he and his followers were arrested and the minister of education, the rector of the Riga university and a number of Lithuanian professors were removed from office – all accused of being “bourgeoisie nationalists”.

Under Stalin, approximately 139 700 people were deported from Latvia. During the whole post-Stalin Communist era, 51 973 Latvians were arrested and 1 986 of these were executed, according to official figures. In totality, the number of known victims of the Communist genocide in Latvia – arrested, executed and deported – equals 191 673 people. This amounts to roughly 15 per cent of the country’s population as of the 1959 census. In reality, the number is probably higher since far from every arrest, execution and deportation was documented and stored in different archives. Additionally, many Latvians were killed in Russia, but no one knows for sure how many: among the Latvians residing in the Soviet Union before World War II, approximately 70 000 were hit by the wave of terror of 1937-39 and 25 000 were killed.¹⁰

According to the same method of calculation, the known victims of Communism in Lithuania number roughly 360 000. The makeup – 130 000 deportees (out of which 28 000 died in Siberia), 200 000 arrested (out of which 149 741 were later transferred to Communist concentration camps), 25 000 resistance fighters killed in action and 2 747 prisoners killed in Lithuanian prisons.

In Estonia, victims of Communism can be summarized in the following manner: 30 000 deportees, 80 000 arrested, 2 000 executed and a corresponding number of civilian victims of Soviet terror bombings, 10 000 soldiers mobilised by the Russians (and 8 000 mobilised by the Germans). However, the actual depopulation of Estonia was somewhere between two and three times this number. The sum can thus be expanded by roughly 70 000 refugees, 20 000 Baltic Germans who immigrated to Germany before and during World War II, 80 000 people evacuated or mobilised and then sent to Russia, 70 000 inhabitants of regions forcibly incorporated with Russia, et cetera. Furthermore, if you count the relatives of all the arrested, executed and deported, then the tally of the victims of Communist crimes reaches half that of Estonia’s population.¹¹

Concurrently with the deportation of Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians many Russians and some Belarusians, Ukrainians and other nationalities were sent to the Baltic States – they too presumably, to some extent, against their will. Consequently, the communistically induced migrations led to a steady decrease in the share of Baltic nationals of the total population in the Baltic States.

According to the census of 1938, Estonians constituted roughly 93 per cent of Esto-

nia's population. Half a century later, Estonians made up less than 60 per cent of the population. No other European country had suffered such extreme rates of depopulation as Estonia (and Latvia). The Estonian population had not, as of the early '90s, recuperated to the levels before the war and the occupations and deportations.

“The rest of Europe has never seen such dramatic changes in population and may therefore find it difficult to grasp what the Estonians have been subjected to”, Lennart Meri stated in an interview I made with him in the early '90s. Meri was by that time a well-known author and film maker and would later become minister of foreign affairs and president. Meri again: “There are no comparisons. But you could try to imagine Moscow with 15 million inhabitants, half of them Chinese, where for instance the police officers working with road safety demonstrated their authority by speaking only Chinese. And in the restaurants, the cutlery would have been replaced with chopsticks”.¹²

The situation was no better in Latvia, at least not from the Latvian point of view. By the early '90s, there were almost 100 000 fewer Latvians living in Latvia than before World War II and their share of the total population had decreased from 82 to 52 per cent. In the capital of Riga, only one in three inhabitants was Latvian and in the second largest city Daugavpils only one in eight.

By Swedish standards, the depopulation of the Baltic States during World War II would correspond to over a million Swedes arrested or deported. Furthermore, Stockholm would be populated by 50 or 66 per cent Russians, depending on whether you draw on the Estonian or Latvian experience. Street signs would be bilingual, most cab drivers, postal-workers, cashiers, as well as the population in general would speak Russian. In every administrative meeting, in all the organisations and in all the workplaces a Russian-speaker would be present as to force everyone to speak Russian as best they could. Using the reactionary argument that one ought to be able to speak Swedish in Sweden would be cause for being branded as a “bourgeois nationalist” and “anti-Communist”. Most likely such behaviour would arouse the suspicions of the secret police and one would most certainly have to offer explanations to the Communist Party representative at one's workplace.

Those who, in a state of drunkenness, or for that matter when completely sober – sang the prohibited national anthem “Du gamla, du fria” or hid the old blue-and-yellow flag in their attic faced, in the event of exposure, one year of forced labour or incarceration in a mental institution. Those dreaming of travelling abroad or buying their own car at the end of a ten-year wait would do well in abandoning such dreams if they had received a bad mark in their work book. Or even worse, they might be related to someone having escaped over Öresund at the time of the Communist “liberation” or who had been sentenced to the “Swedish punishment” – that is 25 years of forced

labour in the iron mines in Lappland followed by 5 years of exile in the inner regions of Norrland.

During the Communist era, Estonia was forced to accept roughly 7 million immigrants – mostly Russians – who had no plans of a permanent residence or interest in the local language. In Swedish terms, this would correspond to 30 million immigrants temporarily staying in the country along with 5 million taking up permanent residence. These 5 millions would then enjoy a number of advantages in terms of language as well as in other matters.

Immigration to a free society, where the indigenous population has not been subjected to genocide and does not fear for its future existence, is one thing. However, mass-immigration without the control of a country's own authorities and where newly-arrived enjoy privileges in terms of employment and lodging over the indigenous population is a completely different matter.

In hindsight, it emerges as quite an astonishing fact that Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians – after decades of russification and oppression – managed to break free from the Soviet Union without any harm befalling a single Russian immigrant. Maybe this is due to the insight that most Russians were victims of Communism as well, rather than its active henchmen or opportunistic followers.

Book burning and cultural murder

Wherever Communists have ascended to power, genocide has been followed-up with cultural murder. The Baltic States are no exception.

On the anniversary of the Nazi-Communist treaty, the Communist Party newspaper in Estonia, the “Rahva Hääl” (the Voice of the People), proclaimed that the government had decided to “withdraw from sale and general circulation all anti-Soviet literature with defamatory and agitative tendencies, literature advocating and legitimising the bourgeoisie ideology and its exploitive practices, chauvinistic literature promoting enmity and hatred between peoples as well as all kinds of religious literature with political aims appealing to the religious sentiments of the people. This decision concerns newspapers, magazines as well as fictional and non-fictional literature.”

A month earlier, Communist security forces had decided to confiscate and destroy any “recreational literature” that they for some reason disliked – ranging from Edgar Rice Burroughs’s “Tarzan” to the “Count of Monte Cristo” by Dumas. It is hard to understand what Communists might have found provocative in Tarzan, except maybe the fact that he was an individualistic hero without any professed interest in either Communism or Socialism. As for Dumas, the fact that the protagonist assumed the title of Count might have been enough to affront Communist sensibilities ...

Later in the year, the Communists established an Administration of Literature and from then on, no more lists of forbidden literature were published. Instead, black-listed books were silently removed from libraries and bookstores. Books disliked by the Communists were torn apart, slashed with knives or chopped to pieces with axes. During a period of two weeks, books were destroyed in the publishers’ central storages by 23 employees using these primitive methods.

Additionally, during the Nazi occupation, almost 400 titles were destroyed – most of them having been published during the preceding Soviet occupation.

When the Soviet forces returned in the autumn of 1944, the search for inappropriate literature was resumed, but this time the search was more systematic and extensive. After the war, in a matter of a few years, roughly 150 000 titles were withdrawn from

the main library in Tallinn. At the time, no one outside the Administration of Literature – and today still – knew what criteria the Communists used when determining the degree of “enmity toward the people” that various books might represent. Many were the books whose fate was determined by such arbitrary factors as the mood and private tastes of the Communist “literary policemen”.

Not until 1950, did this arbitrary selection give way to an official method of selection in the form of “list number 1 of obsolete editions no longer allowed in libraries and bookstores”. This definition of obsolescence encompassed any “newspaper or magazine published in Estonia during the bourgeoisie era or under the Nazi occupation” along with all textbooks from the same time. On the list were also 3 000 explicitly named novels, collections of poems and non-fiction books. Two years later, a revised list was published containing an additional 2 000 forbidden titles.

Among the forbidden and destroyed books were major titles such as “the Estonian Encyclopaedia” and biographical reference books, “the History of Estonian Art” and the “General History of Art” along with series such as “Nobel Prize Winners”, “the Nordic Novel”, “the Masters of the Written Word”, the works of Dostoyevsky, “Today’s Novel”, the low-priced novels of the Loodus publishing house as well as “Living Science”. In addition, hundreds of children’s books were banned – many of them classics of Estonian as well as world literature.

A contemporary Estonian author and cultural journalist, Aivo Lõhmus, spoke softly yet poignantly when he in the early ‘90s looked back on the Communist cultural murder: “Such an annihilation of a large part of a people’s cultural heritage cannot be ascribed to the spirit of the times or to the mistakes of individuals. The act was systematic – our culture and history was combated as were they mortal enemies. This too, in addition to the liquidation of tens of thousands of people, must be remembered as an unforgivable crime.”¹³

Altogether, in Estonia, 10 000 book titles and 5 000 annual volumes of magazines published before and during World War II were destroyed. All the books published during the years of independence were practically impossible to get hold of during the Communist regime. The exception – politically reliable researchers who occasionally were granted access to the special archives for forbidden literature.

The rationale for this Communistic cultural murder was that people bereft of their history could more easily be deprived of their future. In Latvia and Lithuania the development was similar:

“The destruction of the Latvian cultural heritage has been systematic. The methods of

the party officials were directly comparable to those of the Nazis. Latvian books published during the years of independence were taken to shredders or incinerators. Many German books – and foreign books in general – were burnt, since the party officials seldom spoke any other language than Russian. One of the major “operations” was the destruction of the monastic library of Algona with its 50 000 volumes – including the irreplaceable collection of documents and the antique folios. The books were heaped onto bonfires that illuminated the sky for miles around. Problematic and prohibited books and documents were continuously destroyed all through the ‘70s and even for parts of the ‘80s. Additionally, many books ended up in the so-called “special funds” – i.e. archives closed to everyone but a selected few. The point of it all was to annihilate the historical consciousness of an entire people.”¹⁴

While Communist henchmen were busy shredding and burning old masterpieces, the censorship under Stalin made sure that nothing new of value was created. In the year before Stalin’s death, 1952, all that was published in terms of new Estonian literature was two propagandistic collections of poems and a play critical of the United States.

One can readily assume that had Stalin lived much longer than most of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian literature – along many others of non-Russian origin – would have been lost. Luckily enough, however, the ‘60s and ‘70s were decades of cultural revitalization where authors and other cultural professionals took pride in fooling the Communist censors and thereby succeeding in communicating with the people. Many years later, during “the Singing Revolution”, cultural professionals were among the first to confront Communism with its crimes against people as well as ideas.

Religious beliefs and persecution

During the first Soviet occupation, religious education was prohibited in schools. The theological faculties at the universities were closed. Those who had their children baptized or administered Confirmation was branded as “enemies of the people”. Christmas and other Christian holidays were turned into working days and you were, for instance, no longer allowed to have a Christmas tree in your home.

The priesthood was one of the groups hardest struck by the Communist terror. In Estonia, there were two Lutheran, one Catholic and one Orthodox bishop among the deported. The Catholic Church, small as it was, soon ceased functioning with its bishop Eduard Profitlich lost without a trace in Siberia. In anticipation of the second Soviet occupation, many leaders of the Lutheran church and about 70 priests fled to Sweden. Half of the congregations were left without a vicar after the war. They were forced to pay three times the normal rent and electricity fee since their income was seen as “not pertaining to work”.

In Latvia, there remained, after the war, but a 100 of the original 250 Lutheran priests. The Arch Bishop Teodors Grünbergs had been deported by the Nazis – as had been the Orthodox Metropolitan along with three Catholic bishops. In addition many priests had fled to the West. Out of the priests having remained, five were murdered and 35 deported. Convents were dissolved and monks, nuns and laymen were shot on the spot, arrested or sent to Siberia.

In Lithuania, by 1946, three out of five bishops were imprisoned in Soviet forced labour camps. A fourth had been executed and the fifth – the Arch Bishop – was arrested after having declared in front of his congregation that he had not made a pro-Soviet statement printed by the Communist Party paper Pravda (“Truth”). As was customary, he was sentenced to the “Baltic punishment” – 25 years of imprisonment and an additional five in exile. He later died after only a few years in Communist captivity.

Among the 1 100 churches in Lithuania, 400 would gradually be put to other uses than that of places of worship: in the capital, the John cathedral was transformed into a furniture storage, the Casimir cathedral into a museum of atheism, the Bernhard cathedral and the Catherine Church into storages for art and fruit and vegetables respectively. The St Michael’s church was put to use as a workshop and the Jame’s church as storage for the ballet and so on.

In Lithuania, all of the roughly 70 Catholic monasteries were closed along with three out of the four priest seminars. Admission to the fourth seminar was reduced considerably and the security police monitored the priests, teachers and other parochial worker. Similar restraints and controls were implemented in Latvia and Estonia as well.

In the wake of Stalin's death in March 1953, Communist oppression of religion was temporarily moderated. Believers were allowed to print a few books of hours and religious calendars and once again administer Confirmation. However, during the last years of Chruschevs reign, 1959-1964, a new wave of the closing-down of churches, atheist propaganda and abuse of religious believers struck the Baltic peoples. While Communist oppression directed at believers and religious congregations once again intensified on the home turf, dialogue was encouraged with more or less gullible Western Christian Marxists.

In place of the old ecclesiastical ceremonies, the Communists introduced, toward the end of '50s, so called atheist summer days. Additionally, pupils of religious inclination would get lower grades in general conduct were it to be known that they frequented a church in their spare time. Furthermore, they could be kept out of universities and colleges on the very same grounds. Those aspiring to an academic degree would first have to pass the test in Marxism-Leninism, a test that included questions such as "how can you know that God does not exist". These kinds of pressure tactics was very successful in promoting Communist religious policies, but it hardly induced the Baltic Christians to respect or sympathize with these policies.

In Lithuania, in particular, Communists continued to hand out severe sentences to out-spoken priests. Evidently, they feared that the "religious scourge" would spread from the predominantly Catholic Poland to Lithuania and from there on to the rest of the Baltic States and then perhaps to the rest of the Soviet Union. A couple of controversial Lithuanian priests were murdered or killed in mysterious circumstances, as was father Jerzy Popieluszko in Poland. The persecution of out-spoken priests and the general Communist oppression of religion led to several public protests; around 17 000 Lithuanian Catholics complained in a letter over the fact that Catholics had been systematically dismissed from their workplaces without any new jobs being open to them. In another letter, 14 000 school pupils protested against mandatory atheist instruction in schools.

According to the Soviet constitution, the church had been separated from the state already under the reign of Lenin. In reality, the Communists had a much firmer grip on the single congregation than any country with a state church.

Communist laws on religions were passed in the Baltic States. Every congregation had to be approved by and registered at the ecumenical authorities, which in reality

meant the Communist Party. As a member of an approved congregation, you could go to church in order to sing, pray, read the bible or listen to a sermon – any religious activity outside the church, however, was forbidden. One can get a glimpse of the nature of Communist religious policy, not only through the examples above, but also from looking at the statutes governing the office of the pastors in Free Churches. The Communists in all of the Soviet Union implemented these statutes in the early '60s. Here are a few examples: “the leader of the congregation must remember that the purpose of the service in our day is not to attract new members” (§1), “the leader of the congregation is to discourage any vicious missionary tendencies” (§2), “the leader of the congregation must not allow any deviations in the service and must not allow himself to be ravished by his own sermon” (§4), “the quest for numbers in our congregations must come to an end. Baptizes of people between 18 and 30 years of age must be kept to an absolute minimum” (§11).¹⁵

The Church in Estonia was not allowed, during the entire Communist era, to print a single bible or any other books with spiritual content. In Latvia, Christians were allowed to print small editions of first the hymnbook and then the New Testament in 1956 and 1960 respectively. Religious literature was also forbidden in Lithuania, but the Catholic Church remained relatively strong in the opposition of Communism and managed to covertly circulate a number of magazines with nationalistic and religious content.

Gradually, the Communists realized that the Church could not be crushed by means of desecration alone and thus the intensity of the persecutions eventually decreased. Religious freedom was an integral part of the general struggle for liberation from the Communists toward the end of the '80s. Many priests joined the struggle for the freedom and independence of the Baltic States.

The economy – a colossus with clay feet

The Soviet Union was a super-power by virtue of its military strength, but this strength was only sustained by great sacrifices outside of “the military-industrial complex”. Every society is subjected to the same basic economic laws – the more you spend in one area, the less can be spent in other areas at any given time.

Farming for instance, was, ever since the extermination of the kulaks, in a deplorable state all over the Soviet Union. In the Baltic States as well, freehold farmers were deported to Siberia. The authorities imposed heavy duties on incomes pertaining to farming and large delivery quotas to the state in order to cope with falling production.

Following the introduction of collective farming, in the form of the kolkhoz, private ownership for kolkhoz farmers was limited to 0.6 hectares (1.5 acres) of land. Employees of the state-owned farms – the sovkhoz – were entitled to a mere 0.4 hectares for their own use. Both kolkhoz and sovkhoz farmers were allowed to keep their private livestock – one milk cow, one calf, two pigs, five sheep at a maximum along with an unlimited number of chickens – in the communal pastures.

Over the years, fewer and fewer farm workers chose to exercise their right to keep private livestock. However, they still relied heavily on their private allotments for their sustenance. These plots of land made up no more than 3 per cent of the total Soviet Union acreage but contributed to 60 per cent of the production of potatoes, 40 per cent of fruits and 30 percent of milk and meat. Without these private plots of land, the supply of food would have been even more dysfunctional.

Another problematic sector of the economy was housing. The Swedish economist Assar Lindbeck remarked that there are two ways of destroying a town. One is bombing, the other is rent control. The Estonian capital of Tallinn had a taste of both during the Communist era with predictable results ...

The Soviet terror bombings of Tallinn on March 9, 1944, cost the lives of 463 city-dwellers and 659 were injured. 8 000 buildings were destroyed, and thereby 40 per cent of all living floor space resulting in 20 000 homeless. Soviet bombers had a few

days earlier reduced the exquisite Swedish baroque architecture of Narva to ashes.

After World War II, rents in the Baltic States were kept constant throughout the Communist era. This, in conjunction with the neglect of the economic planners of house building, led to such cramped living conditions as are scarcely imaginable, even for the oldest and poorest of Swedes. Prior to World War II, average living floor space per Tallinn citizen was 17 square metres. After decades of Communist rule this figure had been reduced to 8 square metres. This was in part due to Russian mass immigration, but also a consequence of inadequate maintenance of existing buildings and insufficient construction of housing.

The criterion for access to the fast track of the housing queue was less than 4 square metres of living space per person. For example, a family of two children living in a 24 square metre apartment had practically no means of acquiring a larger dwelling – except if they were well connected or could afford the bribes. Immigrants, however, were often fast-tracked in the housing queue, which fuelled local animosity toward them. Later, toward the end of the Communist era, the criterion for access to the fast track of the housing queue was increased to 6 square metres, with marginal effects, however, on the housing situation. Many families were still forced to share kitchen and bathroom with several of their neighbours.

Communist planned economy gave rise to many bottlenecks throughout the economy, which induced individuals as well as businessmen to act on the principle “better safe than sorry”. Industrialists would ascertain access to more labour and capital than necessary and would stock-up on raw materials and components. Individuals, in their turn, added to the inefficiency of the system by hoarding consumer goods whenever they were available in stores. The implication of the Communist economic policies for consumers was hours of queuing and perpetual shortages of goods.

In this context, corruption emerged as a short-term solution. Practices such as dishonesty, selfishness and mendacity became prevalent in every-day life, all the while politicians proclaimed the virtues of decency, unselfishness and honesty. A symbol of these double standards was the Communist Party secretary who held a heart-warming speech on equality and solidarity on May 1, only to send his sub-ordinate the day after to one of the party stores where potentates such as him could shop for subsidized goods of which the ordinary citizen could only dream.

The failure of Communist economic **bureaucrats in responding to consumer preferences** and the inability of the manufacturing industry to meet consumer needs, led to an exaggerated appreciation of everything foreign. This was a tendency, which I could witness already during my first visit to the Communist Estonia in the early ‘70s. On the first day of my visit, I discovered a line several blocks long. My journal-

istic curiosity led me to investigate what could possibly lie at the end of such a long line. As it turned out, it was a shoe store.

“They have just received a delivery of Czech boots”, a girl standing in line told me. “They are much better than ours, although they are nowhere near those of yours in the West.” The girl told me of how a friend of hers working in the store had phoned her just as the shipment came in. The girl in turn had phoned all of her friends and so on, until this line had been formed in the middle of a workday.

People used to tell anti-Soviet, anti-Socialist and anti-Communist anecdotes as a pastime, while queuing. Most of these anecdotes were about the dysfunctional Soviet planned economy. I still remember the first jokes I heard outside the shoe store:

“Where would you rather go after death, to Capitalist hell or Socialist hell? – To Socialist hell of course. There is always hope that they haven’t got enough coal or tar for the pots”.

“What is the difference between Capitalism and Socialism? – Capitalism makes social mistakes but Socialism makes capital ones”.

A third standard anecdote was about the difference between Socialist fairy tales and Capitalist ones. The Capitalist, of course, start with the words: “Once upon a time there was ...”. The Socialist tales on the other hand start with the words: “Once there will be ...”

I also recall how I tried to preach some kind of “gospel of contentment” to my fellow Estonian countrymen. Back then, in Sweden, the debate was raging over the flaws and excess of the modern welfare society. Thus, I tried – as I realize today in a rather patronizing manner – to explain that their poverty was a source of proud.

Most of the people I talked to of matters such as the advantages of not having 15 different brands of toothpaste to choose from must have been either appalled or perplexed. One acquaintance remarked with irritability: “In any case, 15 brands of toothpaste must be better than one, when that one brand is always out of stock.”

Certainly, toothpaste was generally readily available in most Communist stores, but there was always one staple commodity – and often several – missing. These matters may sound like trivialities to Swedes spoiled by their welfare society where the only limit to consumption is the size of your wallet. For Balts, however, the constant queuing, the perpetual scarcity of goods along with their poor quality made life troublesome.

The Swedish author Per Olov Enquist had, during his travels in the Baltic States in the '60s and '70s, noticed a tentative accumulation of wealth. When he returned in the early '80s, however, he was chocked. He described his impressions in a series of articles in the Swedish daily newspaper, Expressen, in April 1983:

“Riga, the place I frequented most often, was a vivid and beautiful city worthy of much love. And with every visit, it grew even lovelier. The changes of this early spring in 1983 came as a shock to me. The degeneration of all aspects of the city was so obvious, ranging from the long queues in the streets, the scarcity of goods, the empty counters in the stores, and the dilapidated buildings to the lack of urban renewal. However, the most striking difference pertained to the concrete, mundane aspect of people’s consumption – everything had suddenly gotten very expensive.”

Rationing was imposed on several basic goods toward the end of the '80s. The ration per person was 150 grams of bread per day (the same amount as in Stalin’s camps), 200 grams of butter per month, 400 grams of macaroni and 600 grams of coffee every quarter of a year. This equates to one cup of coffee every week.

Communists, Eastern and Western ones alike, could still be heard defending this system, using such arguments as guaranteed work and price stability. However, this too, soon changed.

Inflation arises in every economy when demand exceeds the supply of goods and services. Price rises (or decreasing purchasing power) is only one manifestation. Others are queuing and rationing. The Soviet economy displayed all the classic manifestations of inflation, as well as a new one – decline in quality instead of price increase.

Granted, nominal prices were constant. For instance, the price of sausage did not change in the Baltic States between the early 60s and the late 80s. However, the share of meat and other nutrients in any given kind of sausage decreased to half the original level – the rest was flour and water sold at the stipulated price for sausages. On the limited, free market where collective farmers could sell the produce from their private allotments, you could still get hold of the old-time sausages; however, the price was four times that of the official price.

Perhaps the least harmful of the Communist economic policies might have been that of guaranteed employment. However, many jobs were pointless and did not contribute much to the general welfare of society. An example of this, that many Western tourists got to observe and undoubtedly found a bit peculiar, was the three-fold “service” in stores. First you had to stand in line in order to point out the goods you

wanted, then you paid for them and finally you got to collect your paid-for goods. This procedure had to be repeated in every store – someone shopping for food would have to queue separately in the milk store, bakery and butcher (if the shopper was so lucky that any meat was available, that is). Sure enough, this system guaranteed employment but it hampered productivity and efficiency, which contributed to a lowering of living standards of the Baltic peoples compared to their neighbours.

It does not take an economist to conclude that the Baltic States lagged far behind the rest of the Nordic countries during the Post-war Years. The difference is obvious if you consider Finland and Estonia – countries that were comparable in most aspects prior to World War II but with Finland ending up with a drastically higher standard of living than Estonia. One reason for Estonia lagging behind is, of course, the ineffectiveness of the economic system forced upon the country by the Communists. Another is the systematic exploitation of the country by the Soviet Union. The gap between the Baltic States and the rest of the Nordic countries will not close for many years, although growth rates have been higher in the Baltic States in recent years.

Environmental destruction

Possibly the biggest environmental problem in the Baltic States during the Communist era was the waste of raw materials. The Soviet planned economy needed, in general, twice the input of raw materials and energy in order to produce the same output of goods and services as the Capitalist American economy. Clearly, the Soviet economy was incredibly wasteful and it was more a question of when, rather than if, the economy would collapse.

We who dwell around the Baltic Sea should be particularly interested in the way the Soviet planned economy affected the environment in our neighbouring countries. In a book published in 1981 under the pseudonym Komarov, one could read of how Swedish scientists had registered high levels of PCB off the Baltic coast. The reply from the Soviet authorities had been that no plastics harmful to the environment were produced in the Communist Baltic States. Later, it turned out that PCB had indeed been manufactured and leaked to the environment in large quantities. The producers were part of the military-industrial complex and were not subjected to any environmental considerations. They did not even have to inform locals of their pollutive practices.

The secretiveness and the opaqueness of the Communist system were factors that undoubtedly contributed to environmental destruction. Baltic environmentalists also lacked the possibilities to easily form pressure groups an alternative available to their counter-parts in the West. A green party of western model or a popular movement against the use of nuclear energy would have been considered as an “anti-Soviet organisation” by the Communists and treated accordingly; the organisation would soon have been disbanded and the security police would have imprisoned the leaders.

The Soviet Union ruthlessly exploited natural resources and caused much pollution during their reign of the Baltic States. This led to many protests from, among others, local natural scientists. In 1977, 18 prominent Estonian scientists convened and produced a detailed document on the environmental destruction and the threats to the environment in their country. According to them, the expansion of quarries, mines and thermal plants would “inevitably lead to dramatic disruptions of the ecological balance, not only in northern Estonia, but also in the whole of the Baltic Sea”. The scientists continued:

“Due to the extensive mining of oil shale, north-eastern Estonia has, to a considerable extent, been reduced to a lunar landscape. Huge piles of ashes and barren rock tower above a grey and practically lifeless landscape. Large areas of fertile soil and unkempt

vegetation have been destroyed; the air has been polluted by dust, smoke, sulphurous contamination, nitrogenous compounds, phenols and other toxic substances. Rivers such as Purtse and Pühajõgi, which were once abundant with trout and salmon, are today void of life. In addition, they poison the environment for kilometres around their outlets. The groundwater is heavily contaminated. This is the landscape of north-eastern Estonia.”¹⁶

The scientists were also worried by the plans for enormous phosphorite mines in the same area. There is in north-eastern Estonia – in the vicinity of the first Communist mass grave discovered during World War I – a large deposit of phosphorite. This is a raw material that the Communists needed for their production of phosphate fertilizers. The mining of phosphorite would, according to the scientists, lead to “a ravaged landscape on a large scale” and would further contaminate the Baltic sea with increased emissions of toxic substances, some of them radioactive.

Many Estonians perceived the plans for phosphorite mining as an issue crucial to the nation. First of all, mining operations on the proposed scale would lower the ground-water level significantly and the leakage of phosphates would lead to eutrophication in rivers and lakes, further deteriorating the living conditions of animal and plant life. Secondly, some of the by-products of phosphorite mining combust spontaneously in contact with air and are soluble in water thus contaminating bodies of water as well as soil with radioactivity. A third worry was that the mining would take place in the area where most Estonian rivers originate. Phosphorite mining would therefore render the rivers of northern and western Estonia unfit as sources for drinking water for both man and beast, incapacitate farming and pollute neighbouring parts of the Baltic Sea. The struggle against these Communist and colonial plans were an important part of what would later turn into the peaceful disengagement from the Soviet Union known as the Singing Revolution.¹⁷

Estonian concern over these matters is easy to understand given that the Communist planned economy had transformed large parts of Estonia, and other Baltic States for that matter, into ecological disaster areas. In Narva, for instance, air pollution emanated from the enormous smokestacks and basins of cooling-water of the thermal plants. The two plants taken together ranked four on the list of European emitters of sulphur dioxide. Instead of purifying the gases, the Communists built large enough smokestacks for some of the emissions to spread to Finland and Sweden. Traces of Narva-emissions during the Communist era could be found as far away as the Swedish northern Baltic coast.

Next to one of the plants, there is a mountain of ashes with a base covering several square kilometres. The ashes contain compounds of lime and sulphur as well as heavy metals, some of them radioactive. In order to clean the ovens, the Soviets used water,

which in time accumulated ashes until it got a yellow-green tone. The “water’s” pH value was about 12 – indicating an alkalinity high enough to burn through skin.

96 per cent of the children in Narva were, according to local environmentalists, sick. The rate of premature births was twice as high as in the rest of the Soviet Union and citizens of Narva were the most likely to develop lung cancer in all of the Soviet Union. The Communists wanted – despite these obvious health hazards and despite the fact that the government of the Soviet Union had signed an international commitment stipulating a halving of the emissions of sulphur by 1995 – to build a third huge power plant in Narva. This third plant would produce 2 500 Mw, to be compared to the two old ones that produced 1 600 Mw and 1 435 Mw respectively. Had this third plant been built, Narva would have been the single largest source of emissions of sulphur oxides in Europe. Part of the business plan for the new plant was to sell electricity to Sweden, in case the country faced electricity shortages having dismantled its nuclear reactors too early. However, the plans would never come to fruition since the Communists lost power in Estonia. The emission of sulphur oxide has been halved since the independence – mostly due to lowered production of electrical power.

The large phosphorite mines that had already been built by the Communists – six subterranean mines and three opencast mines – emptied all their sewage water, without any purification, into the Gulf of Finland and the Lake Peipsi (which constitutes a part of the Estonian-Russian border). An even greater, environmental hazard was and is still, the radioactive peninsula by Sillamäe near Narva. This is where the Communists built an enrichment plant for uranium, thorium and other radioactive isotopes. The facility was top-secret and not even Estonians could visit Narva without special permission. All the radioactive waste from the enrichment process was deposited on the nearby beaches. This is still a problem today – no one has found a permanent solution to the storage of all the radioactive material at Sillamäe. For the time being, a low embankment contains the waste – a very precarious arrangement since a collapse of the embankment would leave the waste gushing into the Finnish Gulf.

In Latvia, the environmental situation was just as bad as in Estonia. The Communist economic planners only cared for the quantities produced, not for methods used. Companies were awarded bonuses if they surpassed targets – no matter of how wasteful or polluting their industry may have been. In Latvia, as in Estonia, environmental destruction was a taboo.

“During the ‘60s and ‘70s, all the problems were suppressed, denied and classified in spite of the obvious damage to the environment visible everywhere. Managers and Party bureaucrats were only interested in the plan and regarded environmental problems as a disturbing side issue or as an obstacle in terms of the fulfilment of the plan.”¹⁸

Most of sewage from Riga – a city with a million inhabitants – was released directly into the Riga Bay. As a result, all the fish died and at the end of the ‘80s you could no longer go to the famous beaches of the Riga Bay for bathing.

“Another heavily polluted part is the Ventspils area, opposite Gotland, where a huge oil port as well as facilities for the production of, among other things, ammonium are situated. The whole area is considered hazardous to the health, due to the carelessness in dealing with the oil and its derivatives and because of the toxic waste from the ammonium production. The ammonium facility was built in cooperation with Occidental Petroleum – a company owned by the American multimillionaire Armand Hammer (“Lenin’s friend”) – and its production was primarily intended for the American market. Local perception of this Russian-American joint venture is that it contributed to environmental destruction as well as immigration and that it has brought nothing but trouble to Latvia and the Latvian people. The vernacular for Ventspils is ‘Latvia’s Chernobyl’.”¹⁹

The greatest threat to the environment in Lithuania is the nuclear power plant in Ignalina, which is the same kind of plant as the one that broke down in Chernobyl. Safety has been increased by means of international efforts, however, to all but the overly optimistic, the danger of a second Chernobyl still lurks over Ignalina. To everyone in the Baltic States and in the neighbouring countries, the Ignalina plant should be a matter of concern – it is, after all, a part of the heritage of Communism that threatens us all.

Conclusion

No decent person can, today, question the crimes committed against humanity by Communists in the name of Communism in the Baltic States. Therefore, the question is rather whether these crimes should be forgotten and forgiven or whether they should be punished. And if so, who is going to judge whom and how?

In Nuremberg 1946, several prominent Nazis stood trial for war crimes, crimes against humanity and against the peace. As of yet, however, not a single Communist has been tried on similar counts, not in the Baltic States, not in the rest of Eastern Europe. If crimes against humanity are morally wrong – irrespective of what ideology the criminal may be guided by – then it is only logical to start a second Nuremberg trial, this time, at least initially, for Communist war criminals in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. This could easily be done by expanding the mandate of the International Court in the Hague – a court that has already sentenced war criminals from former Yugoslavia – to encompass all of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

The Baltic peoples are – according to their respective national laws – able to prosecute those who have committed crimes against humanity on their soil. In Latvia, one of the leaders of the “secret police” during Stalin’s reign – Alfons Noviks – was arrested in March 1994 and consequently sentenced to life-time imprisonment in December 1995. He died as an 88-year-old in a prison hospital in March 1996. Alfons Noviks was appointed head of security in the town of Daugavpils during the Soviet occupation of Latvia in June 1940 and when the Communists returned he had advanced to the position of minister of security and head of the NKVD (or later KGB). During the trial, he confessed to his actions but still maintained his innocence by arguing that he had only followed orders. This was the same the defence used by many Nazis during the Nuremberg trial – a defence deemed, just as in Nuremberg, inadequate by the Latvian judges.

In Estonia, a few security officials have stood trial for their participation in the mass deportations during the Stalin era. The first one to be prosecuted was the then 85-year-old Vassili Riis. The trial, however, was postponed on several occasions due to his fragile health. Vassili Riis died before the trial could start. He had been chief of security on Saaremaa and had signed arrest warrants for 340 people – all of whom were later executed. Michail Ryzjkov – a soviet official responsible for a large part of the deportations from western Estonia – also died before he could be tried in court.

The first person to be sentenced in Estonia was the 73-year-old Johannes Klaassepp, who, on January 22, 1999, was sentenced to eight years of imprisonment with the possibility of parole in two. Klaassepp had been found guilty of deporting and trying to deport 10 families to Siberian camps. On March 10, 1999, another former Soviet official – the then 80-year-old Vassili Beskov – was sentenced to eight years of imprisonment with the possibility of parole in three. Just as Klaassepp, Beskov was found guilty administrating deportations. Beskov had deported or tried to deport nine families. Several other deporters are awaiting their trials.

The Estonian security police have not been able to afford employing any more than five or six people, among them four historians, to study the mass deportations of 1941 and 1949. The researchers are browsing tens of thousands of documents from old Soviet archives in order to build cases against individual officials. This is very time-consuming work. For example, for two years, 8 570 pages worth of material had been accumulated on the infamous deporter Idel Jakobson. Jakobson had been in charge of the NKVD investigative department in Estonia in the '40s. However, a psychiatric evaluation indicated that Jacobson was not able to assume responsibility for his actions and just as Riis and Ryzjkov, he died before any trial could start.

Estonian opinion is divided as to the purposefulness of these trials. For example, many politicians were asked for their opinion on the matter when the security police presented their case against Klaassepp. The chairman of the (as of today) only Russian party in the parliament answered that the mass deportations had to be investigated but that he was unsure whether the security police was the right institution to conduct such an investigation. He also maintained that there was no point in punishing individuals. The liberal political scientists, on the other hand, considered it self-evident that those having committed crimes against humanity should be tried, even if, due to humanitarian concern, the punishment could not be enforced. A third opinion was voiced by the conservative MP Enn Tarto, who was only 18 at the time when he was first arrested by the Soviet forces and who had been sentenced to 25 years of imprisonment altogether. Tarto maintained that Estonia had an obligation to prosecute anyone who had willingly and knowingly participated in the deportations due to the fact that the country had signed the UN conventions on war crimes and crimes against humanity stating that there are no statutes of limitations on such crimes. Furthermore, these conventions had been written into Estonian law in 1994. Yet another conservative politician, the lawyer Urmas Arumäe, held that it would be better to forgive than constantly tearing up old wounds and thereby keeping tensions alive, especially since Estonians have already pronounced their verdict by democratically choosing a different path than that of their Communist past. The Prosecutor-General admitted that the parliament was the proper place for dealing with Communism as a political system, but he also maintained the opinion that the courts were the proper place for dealing with the crimes committed by individuals. President Lennart Meri, proclaimed, in the wake of the first deporter having

been sentenced: “We can forgive everything, on the sole condition that we get to know all about it”.

Anyone running as a candidate in a general election in any of the Baltic States must sign a declaration stating that they have never worked for any foreign secret service organisation hostile to the country’s people. These declarations can only be annulled in a court of law. Neither the former Soviet secret service organisations, nor their Western equivalents, have provided any information on Soviet agents in the Baltic States to courts or mass media. Therefore, many former (?) KGB-agents and GRU-agents have managed to get themselves elected for seats in the Baltic parliaments.

In Latvia, the names of five MPs were found on discarded KGB file cards. The Prosecutor-General considered them authentic but added that they were not evidence of “any close ties to the KGB”. The parliament voted 46 to 17 on a proposal to suspend the MPs until their case had been tried in a court of law. Four of the accused were acquitted on the ground of insufficient evidence, while the fifth – the foreign minister Georgs Andrejevs – resigned voluntarily in June 1995. Andrejevs declared in a newspaper article that he had joined the KGB as an agent in 1963 in order to facilitate his career as an anaesthesiologist and in order to more easily get to travel abroad. Andrejevs also said that his cooperation with KGB had not hurt anyone; on the contrary, he had used his position in order to warn people under surveillance. However, he still saw it fit to resign because he had broken the country’s law when he failed to disclose his ties to the KGB.

In May 1994, the Latvian parliament decided that individuals have the right to scrutinize their personal KGB file. Additionally, it was decided that personal records could only be accessed by someone else than the individual by means of a court order, that companies with access to KGB material were to hand it all over to a public “Centre for the Documentation of the Consequences of Totalitarian Regimes” and that no publication of an individual’s ties to the KGB was allowed for ten years. This last measure was taken in order to prevent such information from being used for political goals or extortion and in order to assure that people were not accused without any prior investigation.

In Estonia, former Soviet agents had to report to the security police on April 1, 1996 at the latest. Those who failed to do so would get their names publicized, if the security police had evidence of their previous activities. Only 1 150 out of the estimated 10 000 agents had reported themselves when the time limit expired.²⁰

Hardly any supporter of democracy in the Baltic States question that the secret service organisations of occupants – the NKVD and later the KGB as well as the military’s GRU – are to be considered criminal organisations and that working for them is to be equated to an act of treason. But is it feasible or even sensible to criminalize the Com-

munist Party and its followers? If the party is deemed a criminal organisations, are then individual ex-members to be considered criminals as well – or would it take, in addition to membership, concrete and provable criminal acts for such a judgement to be passed. And are all ex-members to be ineligible for candidature in general elections and for offices within the public administration?²¹

The Communist Party was banned in Latvia on August 23, 1991, after the parliament had once again declared Latvia independent following the failed coup of the reactionary Communists two days earlier. People who were active members of the Communist Party after January 13, 1991 – when Gorbachyov sanctioned the attack on Riga by Soviet security forces – or in the pro-Soviet organisations Interfront and National Salvation Committee (who supported the coup in August 1991), are not allowed to run as candidates in general elections. The leader of the reactionary Communists, Alfreds Rubiks – who was the last Communist mayor of Riga – was sentenced in June 1995 to eight years in prison for his part in the attempt by Soviet security forces to overthrow the Latvian government during the years 1990-91. As a result of this attempted coup, six people were killed in January 1991. Having served the majority of his sentence, he was released in the autumn of 1997. In the parliamentary election the following year, Rubiks party merged with two other leftist parties and together they won 16 out of the 100 seats. In Estonia, the old Communist Party changed its name to the Democratic Labour Party and merged with a Russian party, thereby succeeding in winning a few seats in the parliament.

In Lithuania, an ex-Communist leader, Algirdas Brazauskas, managed to, incredibly enough, be elected president, thereby succeeding the hero of struggle for independence Vytautas Landsbergis. In turn however, a Conservative Lithuanian succeeded Brazauskas from the United States, Valdas Adamkus. On December 10, 1998, the Lithuanian passed a resolution – with 68 votes to zero – condemning the Communist ideology and its consequences for the country. The parliament also concluded that the former Communists were morally and politically responsible for the crimes against humanity committed in the name of Communism. Therefore, the resolution demanded that the future political activities of these Communists would be restricted. However, the following day, the parliament decided to remove this demand, while still pronouncing Communist moral and political responsibility for crimes committed.

Despite all this, in all of the Baltic States, several ex-members of the Communist party have been elected MPs as members of new parties.

Personally, as a pronounced anti-Communist (and anti-Fascist), I have still been prepared to cooperate with ex-members of the Estonian Communist Party and on a few occasions with former KGB and GRU agents. In part, this is due to the fact that most of them seem to despise Communism (and Fascism) as much as I do, but also because

I will not allow myself to pass judgment on people who have been forced to live under more difficult conditions than I have. What I fail to understand, however, is that politically aware individuals in countries with a tradition of freedom, such as Sweden, joined Communist parties in the past and, even more incredibly, how some today – ten years after the fall of the Berlin Wall – call themselves Communists.²²

The responsibility of the international community

Those familiar with the Communist genocide and cultural murder in the Baltic States, might wonder why the international community has remained virtually silent.

One explanation is that the Communist crimes in the Baltic States were committed at the “wrong” time by the “wrong” people. When the Baltic States were occupied in June 1940, the international attention was focused on Paris, which was about to fall into the hands of the Nazis. And when the first mass deportations were about to begin, the international community was more interested in the German attack on the Soviet ally.

After World War II, many policy makers conveniently forgot that the communist Soviet Union had been an ally of Nazi-Germany for two of the five years that the war lasted. The fact that millions of Russians had lost their lives in the fight against Nazism made it harder for the Balts to draw attention to the many hundreds of thousands of its nationals that had been killed by the communists. Few cared for the leaders of the small Baltic States when they accused a super-power and an ally of the West in the crucial stages of World War II. Those responsible for the Communist genocide in the Baltic States and Eastern Europe were even represented at the Nuremberg trial as judges of Nazis responsible for similar crimes against humanity.

Stéphane Courtois remarks, in his “Black Book of Communism”, that “while the names of Himmler and Eichmann are known all over the world as symbols of contemporary barbarism, most people have never heard of (the leaders of communist terror) Dzerzhinskij, Jagoda or Jesjov”.

Since the victors write history, words such as Auschwitz and Buchenwald entered our vocabulary – quite understandably – as synonyms of cruelty and barbarism. However, few in the West are aware of Kolyma and Magadan – despite the publication of such books as “the Kolyma Tales” by Varlam Shalamov and Aleksandr Solsjenitsyn’s epic Gulag Archipelago. Despite the fact that the Communists pioneered the concentration

camp and used them to murder more people than the Nazis, many, still today, do not know much about them, if anything at all. And how many have even heard of researchers and authors such as Rudolf J Rummel who has, in numerous books, documented these mass murders, which were sanctioned by the government and motivated by ideology.²³

The Commandant of Auschwitz remarked in his memoirs: “The security police had sent us a detailed description of the Russian camps. Based on witnesses’ accounts, the conditions in those camps had been described in every detail. Special emphasis was put on the Russian extermination of whole ethnic groups by means of forced labour”.

One must never allow one/any kind of dictatorship to defend, ignore or play-down the abuses and cruelties of another dictatorship. Therefore, it is now high time to remember the victims of both Nazi and Communist crimes against humanity – and to any possible extent bring those responsible to justice.

The Communist accession to power in Eastern Europe after World War II was described by many as a Soviet “liberation” of these people. In reality, however, it was oppression in a new disguise. Whether due to cynicism or naivety, the fact of the matter is that politicians in the West, such as Roosevelt, sacrificed Eastern Europe and the Baltic States to Stalin at the conference in Yalta in 1945.

Initially, one could attribute the silence about the Communist crimes against humanity in the Baltic States during and immediately after World War II simply to general ignorance. Undoubtedly, in Sweden, feelings of guilt over the extradition of Balts in 1946 along with the hasty recognition of the Communist occupation contributed to the silence. Sweden had recognized the lawfulness of the Communist occupation of the Baltic States in the spring of 1941 as the first country in the world, after the then Soviet ally Nazi-Germany.

After the war, the Baltic States were practically off-limits to Western journalists. For instance, how many Swedes, even to this day, know of the Baltic guerrilla warfare against Communist occupation – the bloodiest and most prolonged such fights in all of Europe after the war?

When Baltic guerrilla soldiers were imprisoned, tortured, executed or sent to Siberian camps, their names remained unknown for many years to people in the West. At the most, unknown exile historians would relegate their names to footnotes in obscure books.

But for those truly interested, there were always bits of information around about the atrocities and inefficiency of Communist rule – both in general and concerning the Baltic States in particular. Many former party members such as Arthur Koestler, Igna-

zio Silone and Stephen Spender bore witness to the discrepancy between Communist theory and practice in for example the anthology of Richard Crossmans “The God that Failed” (1949; in Swedish “Vi trodde på kommunismen”, or “We Believed in Communism”, 1950). Additionally, several dissidents and refugees witnessed chillingly of Communist practices, for instance Viktor Kravtjenko in his book “Jag valde friheten” (“I Chose Freedom”, 1947). Instead of being taken seriously by Western Communists he was calumniated in the same way as David Rousset. This ex-Trotskyite depicted in his book “L’univers concentrationnaire” (“The World of the Concentration Camp”) his experiences in a Nazi concentration camp and demanded an investigation into the corresponding camps of the Communists. French Communists, led by the (in) famous poet Louis Aragon, denied the very existence of such camps – at a time when millions of innocent people, Communists included, slowly perished in camps all over Siberia. As for the Baltic States, there were many Baltic interest groups in countries such as Sweden and the US, who tried to spread information about the situation in their countries. This information would later turn out to be amazingly correct. The American Congress also contributed with the very thorough publication “Nazi-Soviet Conspiracy and the Baltic States. Diplomatic Documents and Other Evidence” (1948) detailing the Nazi-Communist plans that had paved the way for the occupation and the subsequent genocides.

During the seventies, it was hardly possible for the Soviet secret police to conduct a house search at the residence of dissenting Balts without either Amnesty International, the Swedish Assistance Central for Estonian political prisoners, Latvian Social-Democrats in Sweden or Lithuanian lobbyists in the Vatican or in the US getting wind of it and then spreading the information to anyone who cared to listen. However, most people found the fate of Nelson Mandela or the Palestinian partisans more engaging issues than the fate of freedom fighters and democrats such as Mart Niklus in Estonia, Fricis Menders and Linards Grantins in Latvia and Balyš Gajauskas in Lithuania.

Individual reporters made brilliant contributions, but there was no systematic coverage of the development in the Baltic States. All throughout the ‘70s, the media reported of the Israeli occupants and their abuses of Palestinians. People were outraged when demonstrating Palestinians were expelled and the Swedish parliament debated this issue in a special session. But when the Communist occupants in the Baltic States imprisoned or exiled proponents of freedom and independence, the media remained mostly silent. No TV-images, no radio coverage, no special debates in the parliament.

“Were it not for the disinterest of the international community in our fate, the situation might have been slightly better”, remarked the chairman of the Estonian Culture Council Ignar Fjuk when we spoke toward the end of the ‘80s. “But it is not too late for the world to – on a Swedish initiative – assume its responsibility.”

However, reality would eventually impose itself and thereby defeating “the conspiracy of silence” against the Baltic freedom fighters. In Sweden, it all started with a series of news stories in the TV2 news program Rapport during the spring of 1988 where Göran Sjöstrand reported on the expulsion of Baltic protesters. These stories were followed-up by initiated journalists such as Kent Wännström working for the Swedish television, Kjell-Albin Abrahamsson and Anders Eriksson at the Swedish radio as well as representatives from newspapers such as Harald Hamrin at Dagens Nyheter, Elisabeth Crona at Svenska Dagbladet, Sten Sjöström at Dagens Industri, Tommy Svensson writing for A-pressen and Aftonbladet, among others.

The sudden media attention induced or forced an increasing number of politicians to pronounce their support of the peaceful struggle for freedom in the Baltic States. But the Swedish Communists, who, by means of their contacts with their counterparts in the Soviet Union, could have been the most useful, were reluctant to assume their political and moral responsibility in terms of the Baltic issue.

Swedish Communists and the Baltic States

Many of the Swedish soft, armchair Communists of recent years – like the former party chairman C.H. Hermansson – joined the Swedish Communist party at the time when it vigorously defended Hitler’s and Stalin’s occupation of the Swedish neighbouring countries – Denmark and Norway in the West and Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland in the East.²⁴

While Hitler and Stalin were allies, the Swedish Communist party – which in reality was nothing more than a subdivision of the Communist International – paid a tribute, in its party magazine Ny Dag (New Day), to the Nazi-German occupation of Norway in April 1940. On the 24th of April 1940, Ny Dag announced: *“There is no hatred towards the German soldiers. Norwegian workers and German soldiers are often seen in friendly discussion on street corners and in pubs.”*

Swedish Communists rationalized the foreign oppression of the Baltic States in pretty much the same way. Already on October 5, Ny Dag assured its readers: *“The Soviet Union poses no threat to the sovereignty of the small states. On the contrary, it safeguards their integrity. None of Europe’s small countries can at present be as sure of their future as Estonia.”*

When Stalin nine months later realized the plans he and Hitler and drawn up for Eastern

Europe—by annexing Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Eastern Poland and the Romanian Bess Arabia (today's Moldavia) and by trying to annex Finland—Ny Dag was jubilant. The following was printed in the Swedish Communist party magazine on the 26th of July 1940: *“The great Socialist workers’ state has helped in liberating the border states from the dependency on the imperialist super powers.”*

The mock elections held by the occupants were termed by Ny Dag on July 8, 1940, *“the first free people’s elections”* and on July 22, the same year, the paper reported *“limitless jubilation when the Baltic States became Socialist”*. The editor in chief at Ny Dag, Gustav Johansson, who would later serve a long term as a Communist Party MP, wrote after a round trip through the recently occupied Baltic States: *“I have seen three countries, which used to be some of Europe’s most reactionary terror regimes, transformed into free Soviet republics by means of a peaceful revolution.”*

This quote is an excerpt from his pamphlet *“Resa i Baltikum”* (*“Travel in the Baltic States”*), published by the party’s own publisher in 1940. He termed the Communist occupation as the *“Red Army’s reinforcement of the garrisons”* (p. 11) – a veritable understatement, if ever there was one.

From then on, Swedish Communists would for decades defend the oppression and the russification, the militarization and environmental destruction as well as the economic system – a system that for every year that passed made the Balts worse off than their Nordic neighbours. When Stalin – the greatest mass murderer in history – died, then the Swedish Communists arranged a meeting in order to commemorate the dictator. The central committee proclaimed: *“Stalin is dead. The greatest popular leader and statesman of our time, the brilliant architect of the Socialist community, the standard-bearer of Communism, has left us. May the Swedish Communists be an example to all when it comes to honouring the inheritance from the greatest Marxist of our time, Joseph Stalin. May the Swedish Communists commemorate Stalin by improving their knowledge of Stalin’s brilliant teachings and let them guide all our political activities. Under the honourable standard of Stalin, onwards, toward Socialism!”*

One of the members of the central committee was C.H. Hermansson who would later become one of the, by the media, most appreciated chairmen of the Swedish Communist Party. To the committee’s proclamation, he added: *“Stalin is one of the most brilliant scientists of all times. He continued the work of Marx, Engels and Lenin. He systemized, deepened and developed the Marxist theory in accordance with the new circumstances brought about by development. During his revolutionary struggle, Stalin made groundbreaking theoretical contributions to as diverse fields as economics, politics, philosophy, the art of war, linguistics and culture et cetera. In each of these domains, his contribution is immense. Nobody can*

understand the problems of our time without studying the works of Stalin. Those not familiar with Stalin's theoretical works are "illiterate" in areas such as economics, politics, philosophy et cetera... Stalin has been the leader and the teacher, not only of the people of the Soviet Union but of the working class in all countries of the world. In our party we must learn to better put to practice the teachings of Stalin. Lenin and Stalin remain the greatest teachers for the Swedish working class."

Only three years later, Stalin's successor, Nikita Chruschev, made his famous "secret speech" to the 20th Soviet Party Congress, where he exposed Stalin as the periodically insane mass murderer he actually was. Chruschev condemned Stalin mainly for the mass murder of other Communists, but he also touched upon the deportation of whole ethnic Soviet minorities. This speech, however, did not in any way mean that Chruschev was not capable of cracking down on dissenters, as illustrated by the bloody Hungarian revolt in the autumn of 1956. In any case, the death of Stalin marked the beginning of a process that eventually led to the re-examination of the Leninism, Stalinism and Communism toward the end of the '80s.

When Soviet officials stopped signing Stalin's praises, the obedient Swedish Communists fell silent. But Stalin's fall from grace did not mean the end of Communism in Sweden. For example, in a speech held by Lars Werner in 1976 at a Soviet party congress, he proposed a toast to "the friendship between the Soviet and Swedish Communists" and to "our joint struggle for peace, democracy (!) and Socialism". Later in the same year, Werner represented the leftist party Vänsterpartiet kommunisterna at the world Communist congress in Berlin. Lars Werner stated: *"Communists have always fought for the democratic liberties and rights against anyone that may attack these rights."*

Apparently, as far as Lars Werner was concerned, these rights did not seem to concern the Baltic peoples. Eventually, the Swedish Communists learned not to openly defend the oppression of the Baltic States. This did not mean, however, that they supported the Baltic struggle for freedom against the Communist super power. As an example, Vänsterpartiet kommunisterna (VPK), refused to participate in the Baltic Peace and Freedom Cruise in the summer of 1995. And when the then party chairman Lars Werner was asked by the Swedish daily newspaper Expressen on June 27, 1988, whether he thought that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania should enjoy the status of free and independent countries, he answered: *"Yes, if it is provable, by means of a referendum for example, that they want to secede from the Soviet Union."*

On the following question, whether he was prepared to demand of the Soviet leaders that such a referendum should be held, he replied: *"I don't give any advice to others. I am too busy getting advice myself."*

Granted, Lars Werner was at the time under fire from party colleagues for his boorish behaviour and liquor habits. But internal party conflicts, however, can hardly be regarded as an excuse for not actively supporting the Baltic peoples' struggle for liberation after years of genocide and oppression. Additionally, Lars Werner had in the past been very keen on handing out advice on international matters. For instance he had demanded that the US should stop supporting the Nicaraguan Contras guerrilla. It seems as though Werner tacitly made a difference between violence sponsored by western capitalists and oppression in the name of Socialism.

In another interview for the Swedish News Agency (TT) in 1987, Werner was asked why Communism, wherever it had been implemented, had curtailed individual freedom. He answered by referring to the development in the Soviet Union. *"In the first Eastern European Communist states, internal lack of freedom was motivated by external threats. There is no excuse for allowing such a system to prevail when it was no longer necessary."*

This is a curious definition of necessity. When were ever-mass murder, mass persecution and oppression necessitated? And for whom was it necessary – other than the party and the regime? This raises the question, as to why Swedish Communists found it necessary for them to defend an inhumane and thereby unjustifiable system that was Soviet Communism.

When the Baltic cause gained momentum in Sweden during the late '80s, many left-wing politicians adopted a more mellow rhetoric. The then vice chairman of the party Gudrun Schyman expressed her support of the Baltic struggle for freedom. Even Bertil Måbrink, a Swedish MP educated in Moscow, spoke of how the "national, democratic and cultural rights" of the Baltic peoples could be secured.

If these rights were not – and had not – been secured, why had Vänsterpartiet not previously shown any interest in these matters? And why did the party wait for a cue from the Moscow Communists before they dared utter their opinion?

How many of today's sympathisers of Vänsterpartiet – nurses, pre-school teachers, actors and cultural workers among others – know that their party officials used to, on Stalin's orders, defend Hitler's occupation of our neighbouring countries Denmark and Norway along with the genocides in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia?

How long will it be before today's members of Vänsterpartiet deal with the party's drawn-out silence and thereby its joint responsibility for the crimes committed by their Communist comrades in the Baltic States?

And how can you explain, albeit not defend, that an increasing number of young members of Vänsterpartiet are prepared to call themselves Communists and defend at least Lenin.

Communist theory and practice

It has been said that Nazism and World War II could have been avoided if the leaders of the world would have read the Nazi writings and taken them seriously. Maybe this is true of Communism as well.

Karl Marx prophesized that capitalism would give way to the dictatorship of the proletariat, however, he did not detail what this would imply.

Lenin declared in his book “The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky” that “the proletarian revolution is rule conquered by force and maintained by proletarian violence against the bourgeoisie, a rule that is not subjected to any laws”.²⁵

In the same book, Lenin admitted that “when necessary for the revolution, the working class should deprive capitalists of their suffrage and dissolve any counter-revolutionary parliament”. According to Lenin, this was “the only position in concordance with Marxism”.

In these matters, Lenin practiced what he preached. When his party got a mere fourth of the votes in the November elections of 1917, this precipitated the dissolution of the parliament on the day of its first session in January 1918. Thus, the first free election in the history of the Soviet state would also be the last. Later, Lenin admitted:

“The dissolution of the constituent assembly by the Soviet government was a complete and open liquidation of the idea of democracy.”²⁶

In the party programme of the Swedish Communists – and later of Vänsterpartiet – it was declared that “the workers and peasants of Russia took power by means of the October revolution in 1917”. But what was to the members of Vänsterpartiet – among others – a revolution, was in reality a Communist coup against the democratic interim government of Russia. Lenin and his Communists did not overthrow the Czar but rather the bourgeoisie Kerenskij-government of the 1917 February revolution. Nor was it workers and peasants who rose to power. Instead it was a small number of red guards under the leadership of Lenin’s elitist party. The so-called October revolution did not even take place in October, according to the western calendar, but in November.

Lenin never pretended to be a peaceful, democratic Socialist. He had nothing but contempt for universal suffrage, parliamentarianism and the rule of law. Also, he did not think much of civil rights, calling them bourgeois. However, this did not keep him from demanding these very rights with the intention of facilitating the Soviet ascent to power – once in charge, these rights could, after all, be easily suspended.

Prior to the revolution, Lenin demanded of the Russian authorities that they “immediately and without limitations acknowledge ... the freedom of the press”. After the Communist coup, he dismissed the notion of freedom of the press with the following statement: “We do not wish to commit suicide and therefore we will not introduce freedom of the press.”

For Lenin, this was not hypocrisy. He never concealed the fact that moral actions for him were actions that benefited the Communist revolution and the interests of the proletariat (as he interpreted them).

1904, Lenin proclaimed: “The foundation of our belief is that there are no such things as truth, righteousness and virtue. To us, everything is relative; except for Communism which we hold as the source of everything that is true, righteous and virtuous”.

In his address to the Russian Communist youth association in 1920, Lenin added that “our moral is completely subordinated the interests of the proletarian class struggle”.

Therefore, disciples of Lenin – as opposed to the Jesuits, who falsely have been credited with this practice – often let the ends justify the means. Long-term strategy has often suffered for the benefit of short-term tactics, something that has bewildered outsiders. One example of these kinds of tactics was the Nazi-Communist pact of 1939.

This pact illustrates the basic Communist tactic of cooperating with ideological opponents until they’ve grown too strong to crush or ignore. Already prior to the Communist coup of 1917, the Russian Social Democrat Plechanov saw through what Lenin and his disciples meant by Socialist unity. He said that “the Communists want unity in the same manner as people want to unify themselves with bread – they swallow it.” He based his suspicion on such statements by Lenin on the Social Democrats as the following: “Their place is in prison, whether they act openly or as free radicals”. In anticipation of the 11th party congress, he added “our revolutionary courts should execute anyone openly professing his Social Democratic alignment”.

Lenin and his Communists had no objections to cooperating with Socialists and Social Democrats as long as they needed their support against the Czar. But as soon as they gained power, cooperation ceased. Many Social Democrats and libertarian

Socialists were executed when they no longer were need for the Communist agenda. Others were incarcerated in concentration camps, according to the same principles later used by the Nazis.

The rest ought to be generally known. The dictatorship of the proletariat which Lenin wanted to put in the place of political democracy developed into the Party's dictatorship over the proletariat and everyone else – and during Stalin, into the Chairman's dictatorship over the Party and the proletariat and the rest of the citizens.

Prior to the Communist ascent to power in Russia, Lenin promised that Socialism was a precondition for peace and freedom for the different ethnic groups. He promised to liberate the “captivated” nations in the Czar Empire, sometimes known as the “prison of the people”.

After the Communist coup in November of 1917, the new revolutionary government declared that all non-Russian peoples had the right to independence. Those who wanted would get to/could secede from the Russian empire.

Lenin is on these grounds sometimes portrayed as a proponent of the ethnical autonomy. However, he viewed this right to national sovereignty only as a tool for instigating the “world revolution” and the “dictatorship of the proletariat”.

As long as the Nationalism among the non-Russian peoples was directed against Czarist rule, it was encouraged. After the coup, however, Nationalism was not allowed to interfere with the march toward a Socialist society. The Red Army was deployed and succeeded in incorporating Georgia, Armenia, the Ukraine, Belarus and Central Asia with the Communist Soviet Empire. Lenin also encouraged local Communists in the Baltic States to grab power by force toward the end of World War I. The attempts failed, but Communist infiltration continued. However, after a failed coup in Estonia, directed from Moscow, in December 1924, the Communists were obliged to wait until World War II before Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania could be occupied.

In the meantime, Stalin executed most of the leaders of the short-lived Commune of the Working People of Estonia of 1919 along with 16 of the 21 members of the “Latvian” Soviet government and Communist central committee. Additionally, seven out of eight ex-members of the “Lithuanian” Soviet government of 1918-19 were executed.

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were granted a grace period of a couple of decades before they were occupied, while Finland and Poland (except for during World War II) has remained sovereign states until our day. The newly incorporated Soviet republics were not allowed any autonomy in terms of representation in the most important

political organ – the Communist Party. The main enemy of the Communist nationalist policy was not Russian chauvinism but the “bourgeois nationalism” of ethnic minorities. During the whole history of the Soviet Union, not a single Russian was sentenced for nationalistic crimes, as opposed to the many Balts, Ukrainians and Caucasians et cetera who were sentenced to 25 years of imprisonment for having demanded the same civil rights as the Russian “Herrenvolk”.

Lenin viewed religion and Nationalism similarly. As long as Communists benefited from the support of gullible Christians, he enticed them with promises of religious freedom. After the Communist ascent to power, however, religion was termed a relic of capitalism and thus it was doomed to wane. To be safe, Lenin and his disciples employed euthanasia in order to accelerate the process. Atheism became an integral part of Communist theory and practice – except for when entertaining relations with non-Communist countries and organisations valuable to foreign policy such as the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches.

With all that in mind, which Lenin and his successors have written – and carried out – it is incredible that young people today call themselves his disciples. Were it the case of a handful of deranged individuals, one could possibly understand them, but how to explain that people such as the chairman Jenny Lindahl of the political youth association Communist youth profess herself a Leninist?

To those having experienced Communism in practice, it is just as shocking to hear a young person calling herself a Communist as it is for Jews, Romani and other victims of the Nazi concentration camps to hear Swedish skinheads calling themselves Neo-Nazis. Instead of proudly calling oneself Communist and claim that “Communists have always fought for democratic rights” it would be more fitting if today’s Communists would learn a thing or two about their party’s shameful history and then apologise.

The Swedish Social Democrats and the Baltic States

Before and during World War I, Social Democrats such as the chairman Hjalmar Branting spearheaded the initiatives in support of Baltic refugees. After the war, the “Baltic sympathizer” Branting propagated for the Nordic states to recognize the newly established states in the Baltic. The right wing was, however, more cautious, fearing the Socialist tendencies of the young, radical republics to spread. The Social

Democratic mayor of Stockholm proposed an association consisting of all the states around the Baltic Sea, but this initiative failed to gain momentum.

After World War II, Social Democrats were seldom seen on the Baltic barricades. There were, however, even during these decades, politicians who supported the Baltic demand for freedom – among them party leaders such as Jarl Hjalmarsson, Bertil Ohlin and Per Ahlmark.

Most politicians remained silent, most conspicuously the internationally oriented Social Democrat Olof Palme. His grandfather had been the rector of the technical college in Riga and his mother had grown up in Latvia. Olof Palme himself had spent the summers of his childhood in Latvia. In the mid-seventies, the democratic resistance movement of the Baltic States elected Palme and me as honorary members. Apparently, the Baltic democrats were under the impression that Palme's beautiful words of the "rights of the small nations" applied to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. However, as far as I know, Palme only once stated his support of the Baltic struggle for freedom publicly. This was in February 1980, when he as a leader of the opposition in Sweden, gave a speech at a celebration of the Estonian Independence Day in the concert hall in Stockholm.

Because of Palme's speech, the Social Democrats were caught between a rock and a hard place in terms of the Baltic issue. On one hand, Palme had demanded "national independence" for the Baltic States, effectively undermining the possibility for Social Democrats to criticize anyone demanding that the national and human rights of our neighbouring Baltic peoples should be respected. On the other hand, Palme was reluctant to disturb the Soviet leaders by articulating what he probably thought privately. Therefore, he never answered any of the innumerable articles that others and I wrote during the '70s and '80s calling for his support of the Baltic struggle for freedom.

In the parliament debate on foreign policy on March 16, 1983, Olof Palme accused the Moderate party of "... relapsing to the Conservative Cold War mentality of crusades for the 'liberation' of Eastern Europe, according to which one of the systems was doomed and where there was no place for neutrality." In the same debate, Palme accused the Moderate party of "being a security risk to Swedish security policy."

The following year, Olof Palme addressed the Social Democratic party congress stating: "We do not indulge in anti-Sovietism". But considering that the Soviet state – which was the first state to be based on Communistic principles – was more or less a constant threat to external as well as internal peace and freedom, it would be just as natural for serious democrats to be anti-Soviet Union and anti-Communists as anti-Nazis and anti-Fascists.

Palme also warned of the “defamation and persecution of the Soviet Union”. In hindsight, it is evident that even the most ardent critics, in Sweden and abroad, were too mellow – the reality was much worse than we could imagine. During the ‘70s and ‘80s I was accused, by various Socialists, of exaggerations concerning the Baltic States and the Soviet Union. Today, when I leaf through what I then wrote, I think it’s more a matter of understatements.

In his first speech as leader of the Liberal People’s party, on October 1, 1983, Bengt Westerberg declared: “Nothing would do more for a sustainable peace than the replacement of the Communist regime in the Soviet Union with a democratic government.” As far as I know, this statement did not draw any criticism from Social Democrats. Nor did they object when Westerberg in August 1985 addressed Olof Palme directly on this matter in an article in Svenska Dagbladet: “You, who so free-spokenly condemned ‘those satanic murderers’ all around the world, when will you dare speak clearly on the matter of ‘these satanic colonizers’ across the Baltic Sea?”. However, when Westerberg reiterated his demands in a speech he gave in January 1986 to his party’s youth association, one of Palme’s staff members, the former cabinet-secretary Sverker Åström and his successor Pierre Schori, protested.

On a number of occasions, leading Swedish Social Democrats criticized other politicians and opinion-makers. In the parliamentary debate on foreign policy in 1988, the then Social Democratic spokesman on security policy, Sture Ericson, made an unexpected attack on the then Moderate MP and later party secretary Gunnar Hökmark. The reason was a series of articles in regional newspapers and a parliamentary motion advocating increased engagement with the Baltic States and support of their struggle for freedom. The Socialist Democratic spokesman declared Hökmark’s statements as “buffoonish foreign policy” and “absurdities naturally maintained by extreme-Moderates in the hope of catching a few exil Baltic votes in the upcoming elections.”

When representatives of the People’s Movements in the three Baltic States explicitly stated their demand for complete independence, Sture Ericson and Pierre Schori explained that this was not really the case. Schori added in a later interview that he would not “contribute to any separatism over there”. Schori along with other Social Democrats, among them the foreign minister Sten Andersson, admonished the Balts in an interview for the news programme Rapport on the 2nd of November 1988, to not “go forward too hastily” and to not be “impatient” (as if 50 years of genocide and oppression was not already enough). Instead, they were to “coordinate” and “confer” with Moscow. A more patronizing attitude to a country’s struggle for freedom is scarcely imaginable.

Sten Andersson would deliver more memorable statements on this matter during a roundtrip in the Baltic States and Moscow in the autumn of 1989. The one that attract-

ed the most attention was the comment that “Estonia is not occupied”, a statement that prompted the Estonian head of government Indrek Toome, at the time a member of the Communist Party, to openly disassociate himself from his Swedish guest’s views. In Moscow, Andersson declared that the Soviet central power would have to remain in charge of the extraction of raw materials, in spite of the fact that, at least in Estonia, the “singing revolution” was sparked by the fear of Soviet’s plans for an increase in the production of phosphorite by a multiple of 40 with ensuing pollution of much of Estonia’s land, air and water.

Sten Andersson’s comments were, at least in the short-term, a backlash for the Baltic struggle for freedom. In the long-term, however, these comments clarified the absurdity of the Social Democratic policy and prompted a drastic shift to a more friendly approach to the Baltic States – much due to Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson’s strong reactions and Sten Andersson growing understanding of how unfortunate his statements had been. This shift in policy meant that, while previously Social Democrats had been disinterested or sometimes outright hostile to the Baltic struggle for freedom, they now supported it with increasing ardour.

However, this raises the question of why it took the Swedish Social Democrats so long to openly speak of the Communist crimes in the Baltic States? And also, what was the reasoning behind these warnings and admonishments of not progressing too swiftly? And why was the debate dominated by anxiety and reluctance rather than joy and hope, when our Baltic neighbours were about to cast off the yoke of Communism.

One reason was the natural fear among the leaders of a small country having lived under the shadow of a super power with a history of occupying and invading neighbouring countries. It was simply less risky attacking oppression in the distant regions of Southern Africa, Eastern Asia and South America than the Communist oppression in our own backyard. This is not cause for moral outcries; after all, leaders of small countries have as a priority to safeguard the peace and freedom of its inhabitants. However, it is cause for ridicule when these policies are portrayed as more moral than those of others. To many recent generations of Swedes, it came as somewhat of a moral shock that the supposedly superior morals of Swedish foreign policy were more than once suspended for the benefit of pragmatism, as is illustrated by, for example, the appeasement of our powerful neighbours during World War II.

Another reason for Social Democratic scepticism was probably the bad impression the Baltic States had made on Swedish politicians during their brief independence of the Interwar Years. Also, few Social Democrats of the post-war era had personal experiences of the Baltic States and were therefore susceptible to Soviet propaganda. This mentality is illustrated by foreign minister Undén who, in a parliamentary speech, commented that “the political maturity of these peoples is not particularly striking”.

If by this Undén meant that the Balts – along with most of Eastern Europe – had succumbed to authoritarian dictatorships in the wake of the global economical crisis, it still does not justify surrendering them foreign totalitarian powers as was the case during and after World War II. Additionally, some Swedes (and Balts too for that matter) have had a hard time reconciling themselves with the fact that some Balts participated in the Nazi extermination of the Jews – again, this can never be a reason for accepting Communist genocides and oppression.

A third rationale was that some Social democrats – along with other “leftist people” – refrained from supporting the Baltic struggle for freedom since they thought of it as a “right-wing issue”. Of course, the matter of a whole people’s thirst for freedom should never be divided into an issue of right and left. And enlightened people should be capable of maintaining political standpoints based on their idea of right and wrong rather than on the basis of who says what. However, all too often “running with the right crowd” has been more important than actually supporting the right things. Olof Palme, for instance, made several statements in this spirit such as his warnings of “embarking on a crusade of the kind that reactionary forces are always prepared to organize”.²⁷

A fourth reason was the readiness to believe most anything the Communist leaders – from Stalin to Gorbachev – might say. Stalin’s assistant foreign minister Vysjinskij had been chief prosecutor at the Moscow Trials where he had called the accused Communists “mad dogs” who had to be killed. After the war, it was he who declared that Raoul Wallenberg – one of the few Swedes who had, at his own peril, opposed the great totalitarian regimes of the 20th century – had not been imprisoned by the Soviet. Wallenberg’s half-brother, among others, confronted Undén with their suspicions of the Soviet explanation. The foreign minister’s response was one of outrage: “What? Do you think Mr. Vysjinskij is lying?” When the committee answered yes, Undén replied: “This is unheard of, absolutely incredible”. However, the only incredible thing was the credulity of the experienced and educated Social Democratic foreign minister. After all, his counterpart in this affair was the infamous Vysjinskij who was notorious for his double-dealings ever since the Moscow Trials to the Nazi-Communist pact and the ensuing occupation of the Baltic States.²⁸

The Balts on the other hand were met with scepticism when they warned of Michail Gorbachev’s non-democratic alignment and lack of support for the Baltic struggle for freedom. Western leaders were more inclined to listen to Gorbachev’s beautiful words of glasnost (openness) and perestroika (change). While westerners were to a large extent blinded by Gorbachev couple’s international appeal and their sweet talk of democratisation, most Balts realized that the extent of Gorbachev’s reforms were simply elections between different candidates within the same single party – the Communist Party. When the Balts demanded their independence, the Soviet Communist

Party Central Committee, under the leadership of Gorbachev, issued threats of renewed genocides. Gorbachev also had Soviet security forces attack unarmed civilians in Vilnius and Riga in January 1991 – just as he had done earlier in for instance Baku and Tbilisi.

A fifth reason for Swedish political inaction might have been that many people in the East despised all that was Socialism. For instance, the Polish cultural minister declared in an article in the cultural section of the Swedish daily newspaper *Expressen* that Sweden had gone too far on the Socialist path. Also, leaders of the Baltic People's Movement wanted to increase their cooperation with Sweden on different issues, but they feared the Socialist scourge.

A sixth reason might have been the realization that “the Swedish model” would no longer be portrayed as a “golden middle road” between Capitalism and Communism, were the Communists to disappear from the European political map. The Swedish Social Democrats would no longer serve as the example of the “third road” if the abyss to the left were to be uncovered. People might after all be reluctant to identify themselves with a movement on the very edge of that chasm.

A seventh reason for the Social democratic ambivalence might have been the dread that people would learn perhaps a bit too much from settling the score with Communism, thereby undermining the rationale for Socialism in Sweden. Even the convinced democrat Ingmar Carlson declared, in a pamphlet “What is Social Democracy?” written as late as 1983, that only the means used, not the goals pursued, was the difference between Communists and Social Democrats. In this pamphlet Ingvar Carlsson further explained: “The Soviet Union and the countries in Eastern Europe have enjoyed rapid industrialisation and high rates of GDP. There are many objections to the system governing these countries, but it does show conclusively that Capitalism does not have a monopoly in terms of creating material welfare.”

Anyone who has, for an extended period of time, indulged in political or journalistic activities is likely to have made less sensible statements. However, the above quote might tell a whole lot about the credulity associated with the concrete examples of Socialism that many sympathetic Social Democrats were victims of. Even among the deeper ranks of non-Socialists, similar views are occasionally held – that is, the notion that the Soviet Union after all was a Socialist state striving for equality and that it just had not managed to “reach its goal”. I have had a hard time explaining to people in the Baltic States and in Eastern Europe how such ideas have been able to emerge in the West, due to the fact that these societies were marked by inequality and ineffectiveness.

An eighth reason for many Socialists and others who did not support the Baltic strug-

gle for freedom might have been that they simply did not expect it to succeed. A political assessment of probabilities was put in place of the moral judgement. Eventually, when it seemed increasingly likely that the Balts would succeed, most of the fiercest critics and sceptics started showing their support.

When the Monday movement in support of the Baltic struggle for freedom held its 79th and last Monday meeting in Normalmstorg in Stockholm in the autumn of 1991, the leader of the Moderate Party, Carl Bildt, took the opportunity of thanking the initiators of the movement – two moderates and two liberals. The next speaker was the Social Democrat's Pierre Schori who joined in, while adding that "it was pleasant to have company on the barricades". This comment sent a murmur through the crowd of several thousands – they knew all too well that until recently it had been nigh impossible to attract Social Democrats to these opinion-making meetings. But now, over one and a half year since the initiative started, the opinion had shifted and Schori might very well believe sincerely that he always had been standing on the Baltic barricades. Pierre Schori, it is to be said, was not alone in his conversion – never have I and other Balts had so many political friends as at the time of the Baltic independence ...

While all too many Social Democrats betrayed the Balts during the post-war ear, there were always those who understood that the Labour Day slogan "the freedom of all people – the peace of the world" should be applicable to Balts as well. Among these Social Democrats heading their inner voice rather than the commands of their party were authors such as Alvar Alsterdal (who, in spite of objections from zealous party comrades, did not hesitate to write an approving foreword in my book "What Is Happening In the Baltic States", 1993) and Staffan Skott who, in numerous publications, depicted Soviet every-day life as well as attacking Swedish Communists for their habit of hiding under umbrellas whenever Moscow was in for bad weather.²⁹

What can we learn

Dictators have always been able to rely on the support of famous authors, journalists, artists and others who should have known better – or acted on this knowledge. The greater the cultural personality, the less suspecting have some of them been in terms of Communist or Fascist oppression. One thing, though, they have in common – in their yearning for an earthly paradise they have been prone to defend totalitarian regimes, long after these very regimes had turned life into hell for their citizens. When the truth finally emerges, they have denied it, or refused to believe it by discrediting the witnesses. Those who claimed "not to know", knew all too well, but pretended otherwise until everyone else knew that they knew.

In the Swedish debate, anti-Communism has often been more controversial than Communism itself, which is remarkable since it ought to be self-evident to any democrat that anti-Communism is equivalent to anti-Nazism in terms of the inhumanity of these two violent and oppressive ideologies.

Those fighting for a better tomorrow ought to be wary of turning into the enemy of what is good and into the ally of what is evil. Maybe the safest way of attaining the “maximum happiness for the maximum number” is by ascertaining the “least possible suffering for everyone one”. This is the advice of Karl Popper – a philosopher deplorably neglected in Sweden.³⁰

World history is littered with all too many who follow the Marxist and Leninist example by focusing on the big picture rather than its humanitarian components. All too many are those who have justified the abuses of dictators determined to build their ideal society – whether it be based on Nazi, racist or Communist principles – by arguing that collateral damage is unavoidable. One such argument is “you cannot make an omelette without breaking a few eggs”. Vladimir Bukovkij, a Russian democrat, heard this argument during a meeting in Stockholm and succinctly replied: “I have seen the broken eggs, but where did the omelette go?”

We need more of the classical humanism espoused by the French Nobel laureate Albert Camus and less of the intellectual betrayals of his counterpart and long-time detractor Jean-Paul Sartre. Sartre, more than most others, epitomized what the American author Peter Viereck called the honour and shame of the intellectuals. Their honour was the ability to expose Fascism (and Nazism) for what it was, their shame was the inability to renounce Communism.

Of course, we are entitled to our dreams of a better tomorrow, and also to try and realize them. But in struggling for the best, we cannot allow ourselves to become enemies of the good. We must avoid the illusions in order to not be disillusioned by the development in totalitarian states such as Hitler’s Germany, Stalin’s Soviet Union, Mao’s China and Castro’s Cuba. The cultural journalist Arne Andersson commented that “after ideological intoxication the hang-over is imminent”. Andersson was one of the few outspoken journalists during those dark years when dictators were acclaimed politicians and Lenin was hailed as a political role model.

However, whenever the interests of the State, the Race or the Class have been more important than the rights of the individual, it has always ended in extensive oppression. What begun as threats to individuals, soon cascaded into threatening all humanity.

In a Nazi concentration camp, there was a poem written by an ordinary German who died in the gas chambers. He was one of those, in whose interest, supposedly, that Hitler had established these camps:

*“When they came for the Jews
I remained silent
When they came for the Communists
I remained silent
When they came for the Catholics
I remained silent
When they came for me
There was no one left
Who could break the silence”*

All political systems responsible for engendering camps have had supporters on the outside of the camp gates. But when history and its intentions are used in the defence of oppression, the false Messiah has to be exposed. After all, the real one sacrificed himself rather than others.

What we in Sweden can learn from the crimes of Communism and Nazism against humanity committed in for example the Baltic States, is to never defend any form of oppression. The Russian democrat Vladimir Bukovskij once said that it is of little interest knowing in what ideology’s name people are burnt in incinerators or sent to camps in Kolyma. Debating the relative demerit of one or the other is, according to him, tantamount to having a discussion on cooking with a cannibal.

When Baltic democrats gathered toward the end of the ‘80s in order to openly condemn the Nazi-Communist pact, which meant the end of their independence and freedom, they emphasized that the party book of the oppressor was irrelevant. However, while the Nazi crimes against humanity are universally condemned, almost no Communist executor has been tried. According to them, condemning Nazism but not Communism, was equivalent to 50 per cent righteousness.

Additionally, the historical ignorance and lack of historical perspective in our society means that an ever increasing number of young people today know very little of Communism – and for that matter of Nazism too, as has been demonstrated lately. School pupils could naturally not be expected to possess any own memories of the inhumanity and ineffectiveness of Communism. The high school graduates of today were in elementary school when the Berlin Wall was torn down and the Baltic States gained their independence. However, one is inclined to wonder whether the subsequent years in the Swedish schools were of much use, considering that many young people today sing the praises of Hitler and Lenin and in some cases even Sta-

lin. One would think it is high time for an information campaign about the crimes of Communism similar to that exemplary state campaign about the Holocaust.¹

The fact that so many young people perceive Communism as nothing more than an ideology among others does little credit to the Swedish school system. And how should a convinced democrat grade the education of journalists when every fourth journalist described themselves as sympathizers of the Communist party in 1989 – the same year that Communism collapsed in Eastern Europe.

However, governments, political parties and other organisations can only do so much. We all have a personal responsibility in educating the young of the ideological pitfalls of our continent during the 20th century – Communism and Nazism.

When Estonian democrats convened in August 1987 in a park in the middle of the capital Tallinn in order to demand the long overdue publication of supplementary protocol to the Nazi-Communist pact, they quoted a few lines of the Estonian poet August Sang: *“Nothing changes in the world, unless we alter something. You must do all you can, even if you cannot do much.”*

The words are reminiscent of a classic quote of Jewish rabbi when he answered the doubts of a more cautious brother of the faith:
*“If you do nothing, who shall then do it?
If you do nothing now, when shall you do it?”*

But it also brings to mind the words of the English philosopher Edmund Burke:
“Evil needs but one thing to prevail, that good people remain idle!”

In conclusion I would also like to remind our Swedish society, which is so lacking in moral courage, of the wise words of the author Olle Hedberg from his novel *“Bekänna färg”* (1947): *“There is an excuse for every tyrant. It is not their fault that they are surrounded by cowards!”*

Footnotes

1) Most numbers concerning Estonia in this chapter are taken from the overview “Estonian researchers’ data about actual human losses in Estonia from 1940 to 1956”, compiled by Toomas Hiio in the Estonian president’s office, who is responsible for the commission investigating Nazi and Communist war crimes in Estonia during World War II.

2) Sources: on Estonia Toomas Hiio in the president’s office in Tallinn, secretary to the international commission investigating crimes against humanity in Estonia during the World War II, on Latvia Kaspars Ozolins at the Latvian Embassy in Stockholm and on Lithuania Dalia Kuodyte at the Centre for Genocide in Vilnius. Another meticulous researcher, Aigi Rahi at the university of Tartu, who works together with the 1993 domestic Commission for the investigation into crimes against humanity in Estonia during the war, supplies the following numbers that have been used in official documents in later years – Estonia 9 156, Latvia 17 171 and Lithuania 15 851. That gives a total of 42 178 victims of deportation from all three Baltic States during this fateful night.

3) The development in the Baltic States before and after the Communist take-over can be compared to the political oppression in Czarist Russia and Soviet Russia respectively. According to Stéphane Courtois in “Kommunismens svarta bok” (DN-förlaget 1999) a total of 6 360 persons were sentenced to death because of their political opinions or actions between 1825 and 1917 and 3 932 of them were executed. This number was surpassed by the Bolsheviks (i.e. the Lenin Communists) as early as in March 1918, after no more than four months in power. During the reign of the Czar political prisoners were allowed to bring their families to their place of deportation, they were allowed to read and write nearly whatever they wanted and they could live as almost free men, while the prisoners of the Communists were incarcerated in prisons and camps and made to work or starve to death.

4) Andres Küng, “En dröm om frihet. Om passivt motstånd i dagens Baltikum” (Libris, Örebro 1978), p 11.

5) The Latvian historian Agnis Balodis, “Lettlands och det lettiska folkets historia” (Lettiska Nationella Fonden, Sthlm 1990), p 359.

6) Prior to the Communist occupation around 4 500 Jews lived in Estonia. Around 500 were deported by the Russian Communists and around 3 000 were evacuated to the East when the German troops attacked. Out of the 1 000 Estonian Jews that remained in Estonia 963 were killed, according to the German commander of Special Commando 1A, Walter Stahlecker, 963 Estonian Jews were killed. The “grand dame” of Estonian Jews, Evgenia Gurin-Loov, said in her book “Eesti juutide katastroof 1941. Holocaust of Estonian Jews 1941” (Tallinn 1994) that 929 were killed. In addition around 5 000 Central European and 2 000 Lithuanian Jews, brought by the Nazis to Estonian camps, were assassinated.

7) The numbers are taken from the Commission of Latvian historians’ Report on March 16, 1999 – the day when the Commission want to honour the memory of all Latvians that were hit by the occupations of World War II. The person to contact in the Commission is Armands Gutmanis, Ph D, who can be reached on the phone, +371 378 546; his equivalent in Lithuania is Julius Smulkstys who might possibly be reached through the homepage of the president’s office <http://www.president.lt>. One of the members of the Latvian Commission is the Swedish-Latvian historian Karlis Kangeris.

8) The numbers differ somewhat between different sources. An overview in the Estonian magazine “Luup” (the magnifying glass) on March 22, 1999 gave the following numbers: Estonia 20 480, Latvia 41 708 and Lithuania 28 656. In an e-mail to me on March 31, 1999, the Estonian researcher Aigi Rahi gave the numbers 20 702, 42 322 and 29 180 respectively. Ten years ago the Estonian historian Evald Laasi gave the number 20 498 for Estonia. In an e-mail to me on March 25, 1999, Kaspars Ozolins from the Latvian embassy in Stockholm gave the number 40 374 for Latvia. The

difference between for instance "Luup" and Ozolins might be that Ozolins only gives the number of those deported during the first night while "Luup" includes those who the Communists managed to find during the four following nights. In the case of Lithuania I have found the researcher Dalia Kuodyte at the Centre for Genocide i Vilnius to be the person with the best and most updated numbers and IO have therefore used her information to me on March 25, 1999. All this numbers should really be seen as approximate/in proportion because of the vast amount of insecure factors in the material.

9) An English summary of Rahi's thesis about the mass deportations from the area around Tartu in 1949 can be found at <http://history.ee/Elraa.htm> or <http://www.history.ee/ajak.htm>.

10) The numbers have been given to me in March 1999 by Kaspars Ozolins at the Latvian embassy in Stockholm.

11) See "Repressioonide all kannatas pool Eesti elanikkonnast" (Half of the Estonian population were victims of the transgressions), summaries in numbers made by the victim organisation "Memento" in the newspaper "Rahva Hääl" on October 19, 20, 10 and 22, 1991 and the unpublished article "Bevölkerungsveränderungen in Estonia 1940-46" by Vello Salo, chairman of the 1993 state commission for investigation into the repressive policies of the occupation powers.

12) See the chapter "Vi vill inte bli en minoritet i vårt eget land!", p.26-33 in Andres Küng, "Estland vaknar", (Sellin & Blomquist, 2 edition, Stockholm 1990)

13) See Küng 1990; p. 75

14) See Balodis 1990; p. 359

15) The entire religious law and the pastoral statutes can be found in Andres Küng, "Fallet Engström-Sareld" (Libris, Örebro 1977).

16) The entire document can be found in Andres Küng, "Baltikum lever!" (Timbro, Stockholm 1984), p. 129-136.

17) See Ülo Ignats' book "Fosforitbrytningen i Estland" (Phosphorite mining in Estonia), (MH Publishing, Göteborg 1988). Ignats was chairman of the Committee for solidarity with Eastern Europe and is now editor-in-chief of Estniska Dagbladet and active in the organisation for friendship between Sweden and Estonia.

18) Balodis 1990: p. 361

19) Balodis 1990: p. 362

20) Baltic Appeal to the United Nations (=BATUN) Baltic Chronology, April 1996, p. 1.

21) If Baltic Nazi parties had ever existed the same would naturally apply to Balts guilty of crimes against humanity in the name of Nazism. No such parties have ever existed and hopefully will never exist – which is not the case in Russia. In all three Baltic States the question whether Nazi war criminals are still alive and living there has been examined but no such persons have been found in Estonia or Latvia. Lithuania has seen a long argument/dispute about whether Aleksandras Lileikis, who was head of security in the Vilnius area during the Nazi occupation, should be extradited from the US so he could be prosecuted in Lithuania as guilty of participation in the Holocaust on Lithuanian Jews. When Lileikis had been deprived of his American citizenship he returned to Lithuania in June 1996, but the trial has been postponed repeatedly, for reasons of health and because the court wanted to check statements by an American Jew that during the war Lileikis had/was said to have saved from being arrested and executed. Jewish organisations in the US and a large number of Israeli MPs have protested against Lithuanian authorities' unwillingness and tardiness in prosecuting the now 91 year-old Lileikis. On October 26, 1998 the Lithuanian Prosecutor general's office decided to prosecute one of Lileikis's subordinates, the at the time 90 year-old Kazys Gimzauskas, for his participation in the arrest of several persons, among them many Jews, during the German occupation. The Lithuanian president Valdas Adamkas showed his – and official Lithuania's – attitude when he on September 17, 1998 awarded the Lithuanian Life Savers' Cross to 31 Lithuanians who had saved Jews during the German occupation; out of these 31, 21 were

already dead. On November 17, 1998 an international commission, appointed by the president, decided to appoint two sub-commissions to investigate crimes against humanity in Lithuania as a consequence of the Nazi-Communist pact of 1939. Among the members are representatives of the American Jewish Committee, several Lithuanian institutions, Russian and British historians. The chairman of the commission, the (Lithuanian-Jewish) parliamentarian Emanuelis Zingeris declared: "This commission is a serious signal to the whole world that our society is mature and that we are determined to create an open society in Lithuania". (BATUN, Baltic Chronology, november 1998, p.6).

22) See also Per Ahlmark's brilliant showdowns in recent books, "Vänstern och tyranniet. Det galna kvartsseklet" (Timbro, Stockholm, 1994) and "Det öppna såret. Om massmord och medlöperi" (Timbro, Stockholm 1997). In a chapter of the latter book Ahlmark asks who is morally most guilty – the camp guard in a totalitarian state or the journalists, authors and others who live in free countries and deny or defend him, even though they should know better and usually do.

23) In "Det öppna såret" Per Ahlmark introduces Rummel and his most important books: "Lethal Politics: Soviet Genocide and Mass Murder since 1917" (1990), "China's Bloody Century: Genocide and Mass Murder since 1900" (1991), "Democide: Nazi Genocide and Mass Murder" (1992), "Death by Government" (1994) and "Statistics of Genocide: Estimates, Sources and Calculations on 20th Century Genocide and Mass Murder" (1997). According to Rummel these four regimes have murdered the largest amount of people: the Soviet Union 62 millions, Communist-China 35 millions, Nazi-Germany 21 millions and Nationalist China 10 millions. If the number of years in power and the number of citizens in the country are taken into account the Communist Pol-Pot regime in Cambodia is the worst since it during its barely four years in power killed a couple of millions of people – more than eight per cent of the population for each year in power. There are no big surprises on this list of the greatest mass murderers of the 20th century, at least not to those who know something about history and politics: Stalin killed more than 42 millions of people, Mao Tse-tung more than 37 millions, Hitler ca 21 millions, Chiang Kai-shek and Lenin ca 4 millions each.

24) For a more thorough description see my report "Vpk i rätt kraftfält?", Timbros skriftserie Fakta & citat, January 1990 and my book "Vindens barn – om medlöperi förr och nu" (Timbro, Stockholm 1983) where in the footsteps of Paul Hollander and others I try to show how a number of famous authors, journalists and others have been fascinated by Fascist as well as Communist dictators, past and present. In their search for paradise on earth and their need for personal recognition they have been led to defend yesterday's (alleged) freedom fighters long after they have become today's oppressors. See also Anders Johnson/ Käärik, Andres (red) "Husbondens röst. En kritisk granskning av den svenska kommunismen" (Akademilitteratur, Sthlm 1981) and Staffan Skott, "Liken i garderoben" (Tiden, 1991) for more examples of the fellow-travelling of Swedish Communists.

25) Quotations and facts in this chapter are mainly from Bertil Häggman/ Jon Skard, "Så arbetar kommunistpartierna" (Sthlm 1979) and Stéphane Courtois "Black Book on Communism".

26) David Shub's biography of Lenin, p. 310 in the 1947 Swedish edition.

27) The books by Per Ahlmark mentioned above have a number of examples of how the company has been more important than the truth to opportunistic opinion makers in Sweden. Some of the examples are almost comical, if that expression may be allowed even though the people involved ordinarily are sensible persons who have been tragically wrong on morally exemplary opinion makers such as Ahlmark himself and his mentor Herbert Tingsten, one of the greatest in 20th century Swedish debate.

28) See Andres Küng, "Raoul Wallenberg. Igår, idag" (Timbro, Stockholm 1985), p. 80.

29) See books such as "Liken i garderoben" (1991) about Vänsterpartiet kommunisterna and "Sovjet från början till slutet" (1992), "Slutet på den sovjetiska parentesen. Tio år som skakade världen" (1995) and "Aldrig mer" (1999).

30) See Karl Popper, "The Open Society and Its Enemies", in Swedish as "Det öppna samhället och dess fiender", Akademilitteratur, Sthlm 1980 and 1981. Two parts.

Andres Küng

(1945- 2002) was an Estonian entrepreneur, journalist and writer, born in Sweden by Estonian refugee parents in 1945. During his lifetime he published more than 50 books, mostly about the Baltic States. He also wrote thousands of articles and held, he explained “lectures on why Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania should (and would) become independent again”.

In addition to his devotion to the fight for freedom and independence of the people in the former communist states, Andres Küng established a business group in Estonia.

COMMUNISM IN THE BALTIC STATES

Author of this book is Andres Küng (1945-2002), a journalist and writer, born in Sweden by Estonian refugee parents. He published more than 50 books, mostly about the Baltic States.

The preface is written by Gunnar Hökmark, former chairman of the Jarl Hjalmarson Foundation and one of the

initiators of the “Monday movement” -- in support of the independence of the Baltic States.

To learn more about communist crimes please visit <www.communisterimes.org>, a web site established in 2008 by the Foundation for the Investigation of Communist Crimes (FICC).

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Jarl Hjalmarson Foundation

Box 2080
SE-103 12 Stockholm

Phone: +46-8-676 80 00

Fax: +46-8-676 80 86

www.hjalmarsonstiftelsen.se