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V. Lyp lra Rajamaa.

Tervist Lõuna maakeral! Näib nii
olevat, et peale AABS konverentsi Kalifornias,
tähtsaima mees Washingtonis. H. J.
Kanaadas ja Inglis maal, jõuan 12-13.
maail Stockholmi.

Kuna näib olevat ka seldas Hägersteni
tulekaks, siis kohtuksin meeldis. Opetaja-
tega on ühte ja teist muljetest rääkida.
Eesti olen aga huvitatud Rootsi u-u.
Rehabilitatsioon koolidest ja meetodidest
jne., kuna see on mu tegu ja võimalik
lasevate rakendamise laialdas korres-
pondents kooli näol.

Kuid usun, et ka on võimalik tulla-
vaid. Tundub, et lra William Gross tal
ole pärit Varudist - mu lähikonnast, kellega
seavad mõnedki suhtumised.

Oleks ehk kena temaga kohtuda.
Saadan ka kaasa mu ettekanne.
Usun, et see sisaldab rea vabatahtlikke
mida meie noored peaksid teadma.

Pealgi Tartu vabastamine algatajad
ole ka osa 16. algk. end. SARIPO - spordi-
pöörde.

William Gross tal pool olen pesdas enne
tegevuse astumist 1941.

Polun võimalust mööda ette
kirjutada kas U.S.A.-sse

c/o. J. K. Koort 88-04 146th St
(olen 20-26.4) Jamaica N.Y. 11435 U.S.A.

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Ksr. tervitusega

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ESTONIA'S "LITTLE KNOWN" ROLE IN THE II WAR FOR FREEDOM

1940 - 1944

A. A. B. S. Conference, San Jose University, April 14th, 1973.

After the outbreak of the 2nd World War on 1.9.1939 the Gov. of the Republic of Estonia declared her neutrality in the looming conflict. However, her eastern border facing the U.S.S.R. was manned (28/8) already by the troops for any eventuality. Estonians well understood, that the Molotov-Ribbentrop Agreement (23/8) had made the war inevitable, but they did not know at that time, how they were to be involved. The dark uneasiness became more pointed, when it became known as a precaution, that shale-oil refineries had been mined.

However, only few knew that Estonian State, British Goldfields and Oilfields, as well as Swedish owned shale-oil refineries produced a very special kind of (diesel) oil, which was somewhat heavier than the ordinary types. Estonia's shale for its radioactive basic contents, obviously made the refined oil heavier than water. It sank to the bottom, rather than floating to the surface. As shale-oil leakages would pass unseen by air reconnaissance, Germany had bought this commodity for his submarines for years.

In the fall of 1938, Estonia's President K. Pats's threat before the Munich crises had inadvertently postponed the beginning of war, when he had threatened to cancel the shale-oil deliveries, and offer it to the world market.

It had been a counter to the threats (22/8/38) by the Executive Board of the Germans' Cultural Autonomy to seek Hitler's far-reaching reprisals. Unlike the other Cultural minorities (Jewish, Russian and Swedish), Germans felt offended by the new promulgated University By-Law, which required, that all Minorities' High School graduates should attain the equal standard with the Estonian High School graduates in spoken and written Estonian language to qualify for the University entrance examinations.

President's Pats threat seemed to be real, for Sweden had already lowered the import duties in spring on Estonian shale-oil for the maintenance of her dirt roads. Presumably, this threat lessened Hitler's war-making potential, and hopefully he became content with the Munich gains. However, he soon felt cheated, when he made out that the threat had been a mere gesture. Feeling secure again, in March (15/3) occupied the whole of Czecho-Slovakia, and on 22/23 3, Lithuania had to cede Klaipeda (Memel) to Germany.

The U.S.S.R. countered the Germans' moves with a note (by Maxim Litvinov) to Estonia on 28/3 accusing Estonia of British and German sympathies, threatened to abrogate the Peace of Tartu (1920) and the Non-Aggression Pack of 1932, and virtually proposed to become the military ally to Estonia. The accusations and the proposal were rejected by the Estonian Government, which now agreed to sign the Non-Aggression Agreement with Germany (7/6), and also rejected the offered Three Powers Guarantee (England, France and the U.S.S.R.). The reason was very simple; both the Western powers were too far away. However, the Estonian Parliament did not ratify the said Non-Aggression Agreement owing to a certain British encouragement and move on 27/6/1939.

Already the U.S.S.R. had taken up the direct contacts with Germany after the replacement of "Western-minded" (Jewish) Litvinov with Molotov as the Commissar of Foreign Affairs (3/5), which obviously led Hitler to direct on 5/5, "To roll out the Baltic (Estonia, Latvia and Finland) and Baltic Sea problems".

Further in August (21/22. 8) before the Molotov-Ribbentrop (23/8) Agreement, President K. Pats rejected another move through the Secretary of Comintern, C. V. Kuusinen, and by a well-known Estonian statesman, that Estonia should allow to station a very substantial number of Soviet soldiers, "commanded" by the Estonian C. O. Gen. J. Laidoner, as for Estonians it meant instant occupation.

Altogether there were a number of rather dramatic moves and dodges to avert the war, which was born by the Hitler's grand design - The World Conquest. Attached to it was Stalin's and Comintern plan - The

World Revolution, paved by various approaches to Germany. Especially by Stalin's ruthless chase and liquidation of German, Polish, Finnish, Estonian and Yugoslav (old-guard) Communists from 1936-38.

The placating of Hitler was carried out because of the conviction, that at a certain stage the war-weariness, on the skillful behest of Comintern, could be converted to the Communist World Revolution,

The Estonia's shale-oil was the handy trigger for Germany's supremacy on the seven seas. Anyhow, its continuous flow was not so secure for Germany, owing to the Estonia's youth intense hatred of Germany for the 700 years long German Balts estate owners landlord-ship. Germany had already learnt a very bitter lesson on 23/6/1919, when Estonian troops nearly annihilated the German elite all-volunteer Ex-Servicemen Iron Division, and Baltic Germans' Landeswehr at Vonnu. This significant victory over the historic suppressor is still celebrated by Estonians as THE VICTORY DAY (23/6).

In case of hostilities between the U. S. S. R. and Estonia, the shale-oil refineries in North-Estonia, could have been destroyed. Consequently the whole of Germany's submarine armada would have been decimated, with the realisation of Stalin's ambition - The World Revolution.

However, the pending destruction of the shale-oil refineries was made uncertain by a student's over-done and incautious prank, an ambitious mis-message, printed in the local newspaper "Postimees" (1/9), but broadcast as the late news 31/8. Namely, on the very night before the outbreak of the world war, Estonian Students' Rep. Board conducted the negotiations between the Conservative and Liberal fraternities' delegates, whether to participate from the scheduled patriotic Festival Review before the visiting President K. Pats (1/9), as a whole Student Body or wage a demonstration? Conservatives held the ground on patriotic reasons, as the Liberals returned for further discussion, their sails rather empty. They had then no knowledge that already before the meeting a note on demonstration, written on a cafe serviette, had been sent for the publication to the newspaper.

As the Estonian male students were nearly all Commissioned or Non-Commissioned Officers of the Reserve, the obvious inference from the false message meant simply that Estonia's Government could be in difficulties in case of sudden mobilization.

Truly, Hitler's hesitancy evaporated suddenly at a late night command to his war-horses, and the Polish campaign and World War II was on. Naturally, he soon learnt his mistake, and after the Polish campaign a drawnout lull followed.

Hitler's next advance became only then evident (April 1940 Denmark and Norway; June Holland and Belgium), when the Soviet troops, now stationed in Estonia, had a firmer grip.

Ultimately, Estonia had been forced* to sign (28/9/39) the Mutual Assistance Agreement with the U. S. S. R., and agree that some 20,000, actually 30,000 Soviet soldiers, were to be moved to the strategic bases in Estonia. A Brigade of Tanks had been demanded to be stationed in the centre (Paide) of Estonia to seal off the shale-oil refineries from the expected English landings. It was later modified when the shale-oil trains to Germany became directed through the Soviet mainland, which could not be reached by the feared English and Estonian saboteurs.

Next was the Finland's turn which did not yield to the U. S. S. R. demands with the result of the Winter War (30/11/39) between the gigantic U. S. S. R. and the valiant Finns. The whole world sided with Finland after the wholesale condemnation by the League of Nations. A division of Volunteers was sent by the Sweden, and Australia's P. M. Menzies asked that R. A. F. should bomb the Russian Baku oil wells.

* On 17/9/39 about 1 million Red Army attacked Poland

On 24/9/39 Estonia's 16,000 troops faced 160,000 Red Army soldiers, 600 tanks and 600 planes.

Estonian had to watch when from the Soviet newly built bases in Estonia, the Soviet "Red-eagles" launched their bombing raids on Finland. Many Estonians managed to escape by small canoes to Finland where they joined their Finnish brethren, who had helped Estonia in the I War for Freedom, 1918-1920. Despite of the most heroic stand, Finland had to seek peace (13/3/40), for the munition and material ran out. In nearly every Finnish family there was either a killed husband, brother or even a sister.

Estonia's turn came in June, 1940, when the U. S. S. R. troops, breaking the solemn treaty of the previous fall, with the stipulations to honour the mutual sovereign rights and not to mix in the other's inner affairs, occupied the whole country on 16th June 1940. The first fire exchange occurred on 17th June between the U. S. S. R. and the Estonian units at the Raua Street Public School, at Tallinn.

The next U. S. S. R. moves, delegations, elections etc., etc., were nothing but stage-managed affairs, examples of Stalins cult and methods, and violations of the Estonian laws and Constitution,

They were followed by stern measures, selective and mass-arrests, confiscations, nationalizations, and then deportation of the most active Estonian patriots and independent-minded people to Siberia wastelands (14/4/1941).

At the beginning of the suppressive measures, Estonia's Merchant Fleet were pressured to return to Estonia. However, the Estonian Maritime Service managed to pass an order, that they should reach the English and Irish ports instead. Thus, in Dec. 1940, 56 Estonian ships were congregated in these ports. Only one ship chose to return, but even her crew returned from Murmansk to England. Most Estonian ships acquired Union Jacks, and only some few Panamanian and Swedish flags. Altogether, 5,000 Estonian sailors, about a third of her Army, manned these other ships in service of the Western Allies. During the war some 500 were killed, and 6 ships lost during the Battle of England with a tonnage more than 20,000 br. reg. tons.

After the big deportation of 10,000 Estonians (14/6/41) the Estonian forests became the hiding place for men folk. It was the same as Pearl Harbour was to the U. S. A. Old guns from World War I were dug up. Some even had managed to hide the former Home-guard weapons and munitions. Organised in small units their total number amounted to 15-20,000 men.

The atmosphere was electric, as Estonians strove to free the land with the landed help from air and by sea from Finland to restore the liberty and statehood before the arrival of the German troops, as the outbreak of the hostilities between the two Allies, the U. S. S. R. and Germany, became most obvious.

On 9/7/41 at Tartu, Estonia's University town, a band of determined High School boys and school cleaners, led by a couple of teachers, took the initiative, and in early dusk occupied a munition depot at Ropka. It became a signal to the surrounding locations of the Brethren of Woods (Estonian Army), who poured to Tartu, and managed to establish mastery over the Southern side of the city of Tartu (and the South Estonia) after the retreating Red-Army had blown up the bridges.

During the ensuing battle, which lasted for more than a fortnight (9. 7-25. 7) half Tartu was burnt down. On 18th July Estonia's Prime Minister, Prof. J. Uluots, reached the Estonian Army's Fighting Command and now he became the Estonia's President in Charge. The new Estonian's Government was declared on 22nd July. Regrettably, it coincided with Hitler's orders, to use strict suppression on any attempt to re-establish the former statehoods in the Baltic. On these orders the Prime Minister elect's execution by the Germans was announced to the members of Cabinet on 2/8/41. In defiance of the threats of execution by the German S. D., the youthful Cabinet members strove to follow the chosen course now in underground.

Their first step was to recover from the national shock by organising the first Tallinn (capital)-Tartu Soccer city competition in October, and develop it into a spark for independent youth and cultural work over the country. Incidentally, from that point onward, the spark of SELF-HELP has continued up to the present in any location where we find Estonians. It is a deep-seated tradition which goes back to the dark ages.

Germany incorporated, and in doing so, broke International Law, Estonia's armed units into its eastern war effort. Wisely, the Germans did not ask Estonians to take an oath to fight the Western Allies.

Further Estonian (underground) Gov. established links with the Finnish C. O. (Paamaja) already in Nov. (18/11) 1941, as well in April 1942 by Special envoys. It culminated by an Agreement (28/1/43) that Estonians should get military training in Finland to be ready for the expected Western Allied Landing in Finland. (Also Finland never proclaimed was against any Western country). Altogether 5,000 Estonians escaped to Finland, obviously with the help of C. S. S. On 8/2/44 an Estonian Infantry Rgt. (200) was formed, commanded by Col. Eino Kuusela, a graduate of Estonian Higher War School.

The mass escape of Estonians fighting men to Finland, forced Germany to bring to Estonia The Estonian Legion, the elite unit of 5,000 men. Further, on insistence of Prof. Uluots (the greatest authority on Estonia to Estonians) to mobilise 45,000 men, only 15,000 were allowed to be mobilised in the Border Defence Regiments. However, their weapons were inadequate, obsolete, boots miserable. Their own clothes were soon worn to rags. It became obvious, that the Germans and the Soviets were conducting, reportedly in Stockholm, negotiations for a separate PEACE. Presumably the separate Peace would have restored the Molotov-Ribbentrop lines of interests of 1939, i. e. the Baltic states would have disappeared again behind the IRON CURTAIN. The crack German troops then would have been stationed along the Atlantic Wall in readiness to jump at any invader. New versions of the V weapons on getting a ready stage, would have devastated the British islands crammed full with Western Allied troops and material.

Why this bleak outlook did not eventuate? First, Estonian nor Finland did not cave in after the terror bombing raids (using probably the U.S. ordinance) by the Soviet Air Armada against Tallinn (9/10.3.44) and Helsinki (6/2/44), when remarkably, Germany's anti-aircraft arm showed little resistance. Further Estonians repulsed the Soviet landings in the late winter at Meerapalu (13-15.2) - to cut off Tartu, and then at Mustvee (14-15.2) (across the frozen Lake Peipsi) - to reach the all important rail junction at Tapa. Estonian Legion and Border Defence Regiments managed to hold ground at Krivasoo (15.1-15.3). Then the help came by a long and early drawn-out thaw (Truce for 4 months) in spring, and in July (20.7) by the attempted attack against Hitler's life by his Gen. Staff Officers.

The German Gen. Staff plotters had already advanced their plans to England S. I. S. in 1943 and 1944, which envisaged a Common Alliance with the U.S.A. and England against the U.S.S.R., and handed them over to Kym Philby in Charge of British Intelligence for the Iberian Peninsula. Dr. John, a Liaison Officer, who, working for Lufthansa, managed to escape over Madrid to England, later learnt, that Philby had never passed these plans to his Security Chiefs.

Characteristically, in early spring 1944, the legendary Admiral Johan Pitka, (who had built the crack armoured trains in the I War of Liberation, 1918-20), arrived from Finland to Estonia with the task of organising the resistance against the Germans, as well against the advancing Red Army. Estonian troops swore allegiance to him. According to the rumoured plans, the remaining German troops would have taken the Estonian insignias and badges, thus to be incorporated in the Western Allied troops to enforce the Atlantic Charter, (14.8.1941), which Estonian Government had joined already on 17.8.41. Only after the end of the war, it was learnt that the Atlantic Charter was a mere Declaration, a pipe dream of sorts between Churchill and Roosevelt sailing off the Potomac.

Admiral J. Pitka's troops opened the warfare against the Germans on 17. 6. 44 (the date to abandon Estonia), and a day later O. Ties's Government, by Prof. J. Uluots as President, was declared. However, the situation was most desperate. The Red Army (on U. S. rations) was already close to Tallinn, which was taken on 22/9/44. Also Ties with his Cabinet Ministers was captured, except Prof. J. Uluots, Prof. J. Klesment, J. Holberg and A. Rei (the former Estonian Ambassador in Moscow, who managed to escape to Stockholm).

Uninformed, and afraid about the impending revolutions at home, the Western Allies were not in the position to enforce their original (1939) stand in respect of defence of freedom and liberty re Poland and re Baltic states (1941). Probably they were trapped by the propaganda accusations of interventionist policies by the Soviets since the 1918-21 wars.

60,000 Estonians managed to escape from Estonia to Sweden and to Germany, as only some 40,000 reached the Western Allied lines at the end of the hostilities in 1945.

The Western Allies soon attained their status quo ante, and the Western help assisted even the original attacker - Germany, to build up their tremendous economic growth.

Estonians, as well as Latvians, Lithuanians and Finns paid most of the bill, that on the most decisive point of TIME, they managed to tilt the scales for the sake of Western world and their victory.

As at present the Western oil situation is getting more desperate, the abundance of the Estonian shale deposits and other forms of energy could be an answer. It might be well advanced if their ex-soldiers, sailors and their widows, who fought for the freedom and restoration of Republic of Estonia etc., could be compensated for their sacrifice.

The whole Baltic Alliance, which in conjunction with the Finland followed the same political aim since 1918-1939, to stay neutral in the struggle of the Big Powers, if set free now, could be a most prospective solution for a long-lasting Peace, Equity and Justice.

Edgar E. Aavik.

CONSENSUS OF ESTONIAN RESISTANCE - 17. 6. 1940 - 22. 9. 1944

17. 6. 1940 U.S.S.R. violates the Mutual Assistance Agreement of 28. 9. 1939 by military occupation of Estonia by Red Army.
9. 7. 1941 Emerging of Estonian Army C. O. (Ensign O. Reintalu), at Tartu; Col. V. Koern as Plenipotentiary of Estonian Republic at Parnu.
16. 7. 1941 Major F. Kurg declared as C.O. over the liberated Estonian areas.
18. 7. 1941 Prime Minister Prof. J. Uluots (since 12. 10. 1930) became President in Charge of the Estonian Republic.
21. 7. 1941 Oath by the Cabinet members to the Estonian Constitution.
22. 7. 1941 Declaration of (Tartu) Government:
- (a) Begin of war dated to 17. 6. 1940.
- (b) Restoration of Freedom Cross medals on military deeds from 17. 6. 1940.
9. 8. 1941 Announcement of execution of P. M. elect (J. Meig-Meibaum) by German S. D. In defiance of threats by S. D. Tartu Cabinet goes underground.
- October 1941 Restricted Collegium (equal to Government) 5 Men Assembly -
- Prof. J. Uluots
- Prof. J. Klesment
- Prof. E. Kant
- Prof. N. Kaasik (In Charge of Foreign Affairs)
- J. Holberg C. O. of Armed Forces.
- " " Tallinn-Tartu cities Soccer competition as SELF-HELP for the begin of cultural and sport organisations.
18. 11. 1941 Appointment of Special envoy to the Finnish C. O.
- April, 1942 Appointment of another envoy to the Finnish C. O.
- 1942 Foundation of Committee of Actual Estonian History:
- Prof. J. Vasar, President
- Prof. J. Uluots
- Prof. J. Klesment
- Prof. E. Kant
- H. Tarm - Secretary after his arrest by Germans
- Dr. I. Arens.
28. 1. 1943 Agreement with Finnish C. O. on Estonians military training in Finland.
- Feb. 1943- April 1944 5,000 Estonians escaped to Finland by small boats.
20. 10. 1943 German Gen. Commissar Litzman invites Prof. J. Uluots and Prof. E. Kant to accept autonomy.
- 21-23. 10. 1943 Meeting by the reps of all political parties re offered Autonomy.
29. 10. 1943 Declaration on the sought Estonian Independence.
16. 12. 1943 German Gen. Both's public denial of Independence.
1. 2. 1944 Mobilization of 15,000 men to Border Def. Regiments.
8. 2. 1944 Foundation in Finland of Infantry Regt. 200
20. 4. 1944 Meeting of Constitutional Electoral Assembly:
- Prof. J. Uluots - President in Charge
- J. Holberg - C. O. of Estonian Army
- O. Pukk - Speaker of Estonian Lower House (Riigi volikogu)
- A. Maurer - Speaker of Second House (Riigi Nõukogu)
- A. Klassen - President of State Court. (Riigikohus)
- Appointment of A. Rei for Minister of Foreign Affairs (in Sweden)
- April, 1944 Mass arrests by the German S. D. of Estonian Leading statesmen and nationals.
17. 8. 1944 Return of Inf. Regt. 200 stationed in Finland to Estonia re agreement of 28. 1. 1943.
17. 9. 1944 Decision Germany will abandon Estonia.
17. 9. 1944 Admiral J. Pitka begins war-like operations against Germans.
18. 9. 1944 Declaration of O. Tõst Government.
22. 9. 1944 Red Army re-occupies Tallinn: 60,000 Estonians, who managed to escape vouch to continue the fight for the liberation of Estonia.

ESTONIAN POLICY (by Prof. J. Klesment) during the War:

- (1) To undertake anything and everything to avoid the new U. S. S. R. occupation of Estonia;
- (2) To stay permanently on the platform for the restoration of Estonian factual independence and Estonian legal state organs;
- (3) To keep correct relations with Germany and not to undertake steps which might weaken the German war potential; that not to participate from the German war aims except the war between the U. S. S. R. re liberation of Estonia from the U. S. S. R. occupation and avoidance of the U. S. S. R. new invasion of Estonian territory;
- (4) To avoid most scrupulously to be involved in any action aimed against the Western Allies.