

NATIONAL

Lithuanian-American groups protest Soviets nationwide

CHICAGO (AP) — Lithuanian-American leaders from around the nation held an emergency meeting in Chicago Sunday and urged immediate sanctions to punish the Soviet Union for its violent crackdown in their independence-minded homeland.

They encouraged Western leaders to respond forcefully against the Soviet Union after Red Army troops stormed the Lithuanian republic's broadcast station, killing up to 13 people and injuring at least 130.

Protesters were shot by soldiers or crushed by tanks. The Baltic republic, annexed by the Soviet Union at the start of World War II, declared independence in March.

Soviet authorities said at least 10 people died and about 130 were injured. The Lithuanian count put the death toll at 13 and injuries at about 140.

"This is outrageous," said Rim Dirvonis, a vice president for the national chapter of the Lithuanian-American Community Inc. "The freedom of the Baltic states is at risk. The word is being spread and we are going to do everything possible to help our brothers and sisters in the old country."

Members of the Lithuanian-American Community, Lithuanian-American Council and Supreme Committee for Liberation of Lithuania met for more than three hours Sunday to draft a plan to take to their constituents. Other groups in 76 cities were in contact by telephone.

"The attention is on the Persian Gulf, but we're a large nation, not a small country that cannot deal with two crises at once," said Regina Narusis of the local Lithuanian Information Center.

The leaders called on the estimated 1 million Americans of Lithuanian descent to telephone their congressmen and send telegrams to the White House.

Lithuanian-Americans demonstrated in Philadelphia and Los Angeles Sunday. Rallies at the Soviet embassy in Washington, at the United Nations and at the Soviet consulate in San Francisco were planned for Monday, group officials said.

The United States and the

European Community condemned the crackdown and high-ranking NATO officials held an emergency meeting in Brussels to discuss the situation.

Secretary of State James Baker said the attack "contradicts the basic principles" of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Vaclovas Kleiza, the Lithuanian consul general in Chicago, said diplomats from his country were asking President Bush and other leaders to penalize the Soviet Union with more than words.

"For example, rescinding U.S. grain credits or European aid to Moscow would make an immediate impact," Kleiza said. "Our representative in Washington is in constant contact with the State Department."

Lithuanian-Americans have responded to Soviet moves this week against Lithuania by holding rallies in Washington and Chicago. About 100,000 Lithuanian-Americans live in Chicago, making it the largest Lithuanian enclave outside the Baltic state.

More than 1,000 people, many carrying lighted candles or yellow, red and green Lithuanian flags, marched through downtown Chicago Saturday.

People of Lithuanian descent around the world fear Gorbachev has lost control to elements in the army and KGB, Kleiza said.

"Just hours earlier, he said he would no longer use force in Lithuania," Kleiza said. "We feel that this has been planned, just like the occupation of Hungary, but we're not really sure who's in charge there."

In Philadelphia, the Lithuanian-American Community's communications center on Sunday monitored the broadcasts of ham radio operators in Lithuania to learn more about the military crackdown.

Center spokesman Linas Kucas said the ham operators based in and around the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius told of crowded hospitals and how Soviet troops tried to blind people with spotlights before shooting at them with automatic weapons.

Newspaper union settles

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Union negotiators accepted an 11 percent pay cut for most employees at The Tribune in a tentative contract settlement, officials said Sunday.

Preliminary agreement on the one-year contract was announced Saturday and one of six unions involved voted to accept it that night. Union leaders, representing 450 workers, said other votes will be held early this week.

"It's not an easy thing for unions to negotiate reductions in pay," said Doug Cuthbertson, chairperson of the Conference of Newspaper Unions. "However, this settlement keeps The Tribune alive, it preserves jobs, and it should give

the company what it needs to grow during these difficult times."

Publisher Robert C. Maynard said, "Together, we are making some difficult personal sacrifices, but the bottom line is, we shall all have a paper to work for this Monday and beyond."

Maynard warned recently that the financially ailing newspaper, with a circulation of 125,000, might not be able to meet its payroll this month if wage cuts were not made. Under the agreement, the 11 percent cut will apply to all workers making more than \$13 per hour or \$25,000 per year.

More than 200 jobs have been eliminated at the 116-year-old paper since May, through buy-outs and attrition.

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