

# Washington Digest

## Ghost of Latvia Recalls Memories of Better Days

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WASHINGTON—At the end of one of those few pleasant summer days which Washington gives us, I was walking homeward from a mission in a part of town which I hadn't visited recently. I found myself in a neighborhood which seemed to produce a slightly nostalgic feeling.

The street took a quick up-turn and, for a short block, was quite steep. Most of the houses were new but there was one with a colored glass window such as graced many a home that I visited as a child. Such windows were usually on the staircase landing, at the turn, and when the sun shone through them it tossed a handful of jewels on the carpet. I always wanted to pick them up. That, I thought as I walked along, is nostalgic—childhood memories.

But I was wrong. Soon I realized that the memory which the stained glass window evoked was much more recent. But it did stir ghosts, the ghost of a man and the ghost of a nation, for there is no reason why dead nations, which really never quite died, must not live on in some form.

And Washington is not without such disembodied sovereignties. I had seen the man whose memory the multi-colored window had stirred for the first time when he was descending a staircase with just such a window behind him. He was Alfred Bilmanis and he died in July of this year. He was the minister of the republic of Latvia which had "died" eight years ago but according to the state department was and is of such corporeal quality that, along with its sister republics of Lithuania and Estonia, it still possesses diplomatic representatives who are recognized on equal terms with those of living nations.

It was in August of 1940 that the Red army marched into the Baltic states and they became by force majeure, territorially a part of the U. S. S. R.

But the three little democracies were prepared politically, if not diplomatically. A month or so earlier, by due process of parliamentary law, a decree was promulgated which made the Latvian minister to London chief of the Latvian state if the Russians took over her territory. Today Charles Zarena, minister to Britain, remains the head of the diplomatic corps of the republic of Latvia.

Bilmanis continued to serve his ghost-government in the United States after the Russian seizure. Up to then he had helped to keep the bonds firm between us and his little country whose people reached the shores of the Baltic back in the early days of European history, along with the only two other remaining groups which are at least linguistically, if not ethnically, related to the Latts: the Finns and the Magyars.

The last president of the free republic of Latvia, Carl Ulmanis was American trained. He lived in Nebraska where he waited in exile and worked for his country's independence. He studied agriculture and when he returned to Latvia in that hopeful heyday of Europe's new republics after World War I, he carried back ideas. One of them was the 4-H clubs.

Latvia was 60 per cent agricultural and among its population of only two million, the 4-H movement grew, adapted of course to its new environment, to 40,000 when I heard of it last before the iron curtain descended.

There were interchanges of visits between the countries and, whenever the big 4-H encampment took place in Washington, the little Latvian legation echoed to the cheerful chatter of American children who drank lemonade and heard the big, smiling man with the expressive, ruddy hands, tell of his country and show pictures of the children there at work on their projects or going through their folk dances in the gay costumes of their land.

The American kids looked at the paintings that covered the walls—for Bilmanis was quite a collector. They were allowed gingerly to try the great chair which Napoleon had taken back to France from Moscow, examine the delightful little ivory-objects, the china and the other objets d'art which filled the legation.

And then, one by one, they tripped up the stairs to look at the life-size model of the Latvian girl in the traditional robes of the country, wearing the symbolic necklace made of great discs of amber. Amber had been a Latvian article of export since the earliest traders from the Mediterranean made their way to this northern land, for it was a much admired ornament for the ladies of ancient Rome and Greece. A good necklace was supposed to be worth an Arabian mount.

If there is any amber being collected on Latvian beaches today it

is being turned into the coffers of the Kremlin. I can well imagine what happened to the 4-H organizations when the Reds stepped in—they are about as closely akin to the Communist youth as the boy scouts were to the Hitler Jugend.

But if we are to believe all we hear, Latvia is resisting communism. Only this week I received a copy of the Baltic Review, printed in Sweden. Here is one paragraph: "With the coming scholastic year war games will be introduced as an obligatory subject in the schools of all the constituent Soviet republics, writes 'Cina,' the organ of the Communist party in Latvia. The paper goes on to say that the international situation demands that children be taught the art of war as early as possible. Military discipline should be instilled in them even before they come to school. Their toys should be model tanks and planes and so-called children's 'mechanos' or building boxes should consist of parts whereof these objects can be constructed. The author relates about his trip to Russia to study Soviet education and military training and remarks that in this respect the Baltic republics are very backward as yet. Pupils of seven and eight in the schools of Moscow had displayed quite surprising knowledge as regards military matters. Ten year olds had been experts with the rifles and girls had been as competent as boys. Even tiny tots four and five had known the rudiments of military drill. How useful this proficiency may be in a guerilla war, exclaims the author."

What is going to happen to the next generation in the U. S. S. R. itself and in the countries dominated by her? Listen to this further extract from the Baltic Review:

**Communists' Ideas About Education**

"Every Soviet school manual, every work of fiction for children and young people, every periodical for the rising generation is a manifestation of a war-like spirit worthy of the Huns of old. Innumerable are the glorifications in them of all sorts of heroic exploits of Soviet people during World War II, to enter a military school is represented as the highest aim of every Soviet boy and 80 per cent of the pictures show guns, tanks, infantry or cavalry exercises. Picture books for tiny tots exhibit children playing with rifles, tanks and grenades, every game taught to the young has a military purpose. The little bit of space that is left over from these aggressive and



ALFRED BILMANIS  
...ghost of a nation...

bellicose writings is used to extol the merits of the Communist party and its leaders, Lenin and Stalin. All this literary production exudes such a hate for the whole world, for the bourgeoisie, imperialism and capital, that the books of the Hitler Jugend seem mild nursery rhymes in comparison."

That is not the kind of a state of which Alfred Bilmanis dreamed. He hoped one day to return with his valuable possessions and build a museum in his own restored country. Though he continued to serve as minister, his funds ran low and he had to part with many of his things. However, he did save some of the paintings, Napoleon's chair and the lady and her beads.

Perhaps someday others may realize his dream—some happy day—when freedom in Europe is returned and the ghost republics of the Baltic become real once more for the people who inhabit them.



**IN WHAT** competition does the competitor or contestant take the roughest punishment? Is it football or boxing? Steeplechase riding or water polo? Long-distance running, such as the 5,000 meters, the 10,000 meters or the marathon? Rowing, baseball, tennis or basketball?

We put this discussion up to Tommy Armour, the able golfing Scot who, in his day and time, won the U.S. Open, the British Open, the P.G.A. and more minor tournaments than you can mention.

"Just what form of punishment do you mean?" Armour asked. "Physical punishment, mental punishment or nerve punishment? They are all entirely different."

"What form of punishment is the hardest to handle?" I asked. "Physical, punishment, such as you get in football or boxing, is the softest punishment," Armour said. "The toughest to handle is mental or nerve. Ever have a live nerve in a tooth extracted?"

"I think I can see just what you are leading up to," I said. "I think it is a game called golf." "For a change you are correct," was the silver-haired Scot's answer. "It is golf. Ask Bobby Cruickshank, who before he came over here, was the best lightweight fighter in the British Isles, the best soccer player and one of the best golfers. Not overlooking four years in the Black Watch from 1914 to 1918."

### Bobby Has a Reputation

No one can pay a tribute to Cruickshank, now pro at the Richmond Country club, that we don't double and redouble, no matter what the game. "A knockout punch doesn't hurt," Armour said. "You can take a hammering now and then that won't help you, but it is only physical. Soon over, football is the same. Few football players even feel pain when in play. They don't know they are hurt until later. I'll bet most of them suffer more from nerves—and I don't mean nerve—than from getting hurt physically."

"But football isn't as tough as golf and I think Joe Louis will tell you the same about the fight game. I'll bet Louis has suffered more in a number of golf matches than he ever suffered in the ring. Why? Nerves."

"I don't think Louis ever suffered anything from nerves in a fight in his life. But I can promise plenty that he's taken quite a beating in nerves at golf. Louis doesn't mind a pretty fair bet. And he's quite a good golfer. But some of these boys in golf are hard to take." "The punishment you take in golf on an off day or through a tournament is the worst you get in any game. Did you ever get 'the yips?' The 'yips' are nerves that blow up in your wrists when you are playing chip shots or putting. The nerves simply explode and you can do nothing about it. You can ask Walter Hagen or Bobby Jones, two great putters."

"I recall a \$10,000 tournament I played in. I had a good lead through the first three rounds. Then I got the 'yips.' I three-putted eight greens. I missed seven putts from two to three feet out. I figured each one of these putts cost me \$300."

"I would rather have been knocked down six times by Dempsey or Louis. I would rather have been run over by Bronko Nagarski. I took more punishment in the last round that any fighter ever took in a ring."

**Nerves Prevent Sleep**  
"Bobby Jones won 13 national titles. But I'd like to bet no one ever took more nerve punishment. It took him seven years to win his first championship. He couldn't sleep at night or keep food on his stomach on numerous occasions. Jock Hutchison couldn't eat or sleep through an open. Neither could I. I don't think Hagen ever bothered too much about anything."

I recall one occasion in an amateur golf championship, one of the entries was an all-star college tackle—around 220 pounds. He was a good golfer and he lasted through Wednesday. But he collapsed on Thursday and just missed the hospital. His nervous system blew up. He was in a bad way. He never played in another tournament.

The roughest part of golf is that every mistake you make is your own. No opponent has anything directly to do with it. He can't hit one by you, block you, tackle you or knock you out. He can't do anything to you. You inflict your own punishment.

Golf was first called "an 'umblin' game" by George Low over 30 years ago. It is also an infuriating game at times. When Jerry Travers, a great competitor, won his U.S. Open at Baltusrol in 1915, he was a nervous wreck for over two weeks afterwards. And Travers had just about as fine a set of nerves as I've ever seen.



### Soil 'Bank Account' Determines Returns

#### Check Up on Solvency To Assure Prosperity

Check up on your soil fertility "bank account." It's more important to you than the number of dollars you have in your commercial account.

Your present and future prosperity depends on your soil's crop producing ability. Crop producing ability, in turn, depends on the size of your soil fertility bank account—how you match deposits and withdrawals.

Every crop you sell carries with it nitrogen, phosphate, potash and



other plant nutrients. Unless you balance these withdrawals with good management "deposits" that replace nutrients, rebuild organic matter and repair damaged soil structure, your soil bank account will be overdrawn.

Among steps recommended for keeping your soil bank solvent are: Use deep-rooted legumes regularly in the rotation. Apply lime on the basis of soil tests. Use commercial fertilizer containing phosphate and potash as needed. Return manure, corn stalks, straw and other crop aftermath to the soil. Use contour cultivation and other conservation methods where necessary.

Just as you will get a notice if your checking account is overdrawn, lower per acre yield and higher per bushel costs will notify you if your soil bank account is being overdrawn.

### Farm Bulldozer Blade



This bulldozer blade can be attached or removed from a tractor in three minutes. The blade was salvaged from an old road scraper and the pushers are old 1 1/2 inch galvanized irrigation pipe. The U-clips which attach the pushers to the tractor are 1 1/4 or 1 1/2 inch flat iron which was bent into shape and welded to the pusher pipes. Braces for the frame are 1 1/4 inch pipe.

### Hampshire Sow Sets New Production Mark

Ringold Lady Dora, 733,056, with the litter with which she established a new production record for the Hampshire breed. This sow is the first to have made a "Six Star" record in the Hampshire registry. She is five years old and has raised 75 pigs in eight litters. In her six star litters she has raised 62 pigs, an



average of 103. These pigs weighed a total of 418 pounds, 56 days after farrowing. She is owned by William C. Goodheart Jr., Eaton, Ohio. She was fed corn, oats, alfalfa and pelleted milk by-products prior to farrowing. Her pigs were raised on a ration of seven parts corn and three parts oats with 8 per cent milk by-products added.

### Tests Disclose Silage Increases Hay Tonnage

Tests of haymaking methods show that considerably more tonnage of feed will be obtained from a meadow crop when it is put in a silo than can be procured by any other method of storing.

Analysis of field cured and mow cured hay and of grass silage show a larger percentage of protein in grass than in similar forage cured either in the field or in the mow.

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### More Money Spent During 1948

Americans during 1948 are buying houses and automobiles faster than they can be produced and indebtedness is increasing, according to the Federal Reserve Board's 1948 survey of consumer finances.

Fewer folk are saving in 1948 than the year previous. Some 3 million consumers who had savings bonds in 1947 didn't have them the first of 1948. Consumers are doing more of their paying on a credit basis than a year ago. Because buying has increased, they're using more of their savings than before.

It is expected that about one-fourth of the consumers will spend beyond their income in 1948 as they did in 1947.



HALF the fun of housekeeping is the trimmin'! Such as embroidering these gay romantic

### ASK ME ANOTHER? A General Quiz

1. How many bones are there in the body?
2. What state occupies the geographic center of the U. S.?
3. Is it true that the hairs of the head are similar to fingernails?
4. How much ice is there at the South Pole?
5. When were red and green lights first used as traffic signals?
6. Will moths attack nylon?

#### THE ANSWERS

1. 200. Some anatomists name 206 by including the ossicles of the ear.
2. Kansas.
3. Yes. There's a likeness of material between hair, scales, feathers, the beaks of birds and the horns of cattle.
4. Antarctic region has enough to cover world with a layer 120 feet thick.
5. In 1868 in London, England.
6. Nylon is moth-proof.

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