

Not Enough To Live Too Much To Die

That's Lithuania Today

By AL ANTUCKAS
Los Angeles — (NS) — It took him 20 years to make it, but Ralph Samson, 56, an American workman, is finally home from Lithuania.

After several weeks at his home in St. Casimir's parish here, he slowly is shedding the weariness that shows in tired blue eyes and in grey memories of Moscow and life in a "kolk" collective farm, had six and a half acres, one good horse, two cows, lots of chickens and hogs. I fixed up the old buildings for hay and animals. Things were pretty good.

With gloom and stolidity, he told the experience of a man whose life seems to have been good on a collision course with the major tragedies of the past five decades.

His 20-year effort to return to the U.S. was caused by Soviet refusal to recognize his American citizenship, in spite of the fact that the U.S. Embassy in Moscow at one point issued him a U.S. passport. The Soviets rejected it. Mr. Samson had to go back to the kolkhoz.

Determination, persistence and two trips from Lithuania to Moscow finally paved the way for him to leave the Soviet Union.

Mr. Samson was born in Lithuania and came to America at the age of 18 in 1912.

"I got a job in a textile mill three days after getting here," he said. "I worked 12 hours a day, and nights, too, for 15 cents an hour."

He said he came to America because his parents were dead and he had no wish to be drafted into the army of the Russian czar by remaining in Lithuania. When World War I came, he joined the U.S. Army, served two years as a private and was honorably discharged in 1919. He was not sent overseas.

After the war he worked as a laborer. When he received a \$800 veteran's bonus, he decided to return to Lithuania for a visit to his old home.

"I went in 1934 with a two-year permit — and didn't get

home till August 10, 1960," he said.

Mr. Samson lit a cigarette, held it between thumb and forefinger, European style, cupped his thick hand around it, inhaled, and continued his story.

When his two-year visitor's period was up in 1938 he decided to stay on longer.

"I was living with my sisters. The Russians didn't stand still either. They came in the fall of 1940."

"Then in 1939 Hitler started up. The Russians didn't stand still either. They came in the fall of 1940."

"Every day the boss came and told you what to do, almost like piece work, so many acres, so many bushels. Hours didn't mean anything, from sunup to sundown. The first class grain went to the government. What was left after the state quota, if any, went to the worker. Nobody would think about you."

The kolkhoz was a 2,000-acre farm. It sometimes it was not possible because of weather, or other reasons to reach the quota. It was added to the following year's quota.

For subsistence each family was allotted a half acre of land. "You had to work it on your own time," said Mr. Samson.

By 1941 Mr. Samson's sister in the U.S. had provided the U.S. Embassy in Moscow with proof of her brother's citizenship, his citizenship papers, his Army discharge.

Mr. Samson was too poor to go to Moscow to press his claim and seek exit. In 1947 he saved his rubles, took a train to Moscow, and this time had a passport issued to him by the U.S. Embassy.

Soviet visa registry officials refused to recognize this passport, took it away from Mr. Samson and returned it to the U.S. Embassy with a notice that Mr. Samson was a Soviet citizen since he had been a resident of Lithuania in 1940. The Soviets incorporated Lithuania into the

Daily Mass Calendar

Sunday, Sept. 4 — Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost (green), Gloria, Creed, Trinity Preface.

Monday, Sept. 5 — Lawrence, Justinian (white), Gloria, V.R.

Tuesday, Sept. 6 — Mass as Sunday except no Gloria, no Creed, common preface, V.R. 1901. Rev. Dennis English.

Wednesday, Sept. 7 — Mass as yesterday, V.R. 1935. Rev. Lester Morgan.

Thursday, Sept. 8 — Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary (white), Gloria, 2nd prayer of St. Adrian, Creed, Preface of Our Lady, 1921. Rev. William Harrington, 1948. Rev. John Keefe, 1957. Rev. Thomas O'Connor.

Friday, Sept. 9 — St. Peter, Claver (white), Gloria, 2nd prayer of St. Gorgonius.

Saturday, Sept. 10 — St. Nicholas of Tolentine (white), Gloria.

Prayers listed above died on the date indicated. Please pray for their souls.



Knights Of Lithuania New Leaders

Worcester — (RNS) — Newly-elected officers of the Knights of Lithuania discussed initial plans for the group's 48th annual convention to be held in Cleveland next year. At this year's meeting, held in Worcester, Mass., are (left to right): Lawrence Janonis of New York, second vice-president; Robert S. Boris of Detroit, president; Father Albert J. Contons of South Boston, spiritual advisor; Miss Loretta J. Kasey of Chicago, recording secretary; and Miss Helen A. Shields of Philadelphia, first vice-president. More than 300 delegates from throughout the country attended the Massachusetts meeting.

U.S.S.R. and did not even allow seemed to be to let the Church goods in the shops. From Mr. it the fiction of satellite status, die on the vine by simply tax. Samson's remarks it appeared

By 1952 Mr. Samson decided to ask for release from the kolkhoz on the grounds of age. His fellow workers voted to release him.

"Then I got a job as a night watchman in a cooperative store in town, for 300 rubles (\$30 at tourist rate) a month," he said. "Later I worked as a guard over hay storage and as an inside guard in a savings bank."

"Yes," he grinned, "officials are able to save money. Lots of them are earning 1,000 to 4,000 rubles a month. They save."

He said it was possible to live on 300 rubles a month if one had a half-acre family farm. There was a popular saying that half an acre was too much to die on and not enough to live on.

When he reached 65 last year, Mr. Samson doggedly told his local Soviet officials that he was of retirement age. They said he had not worked long enough for the government to C.M., noted that the Congolese, ing for closer ties between the Samson insisted that in America spread basic education in mica he would be eligible for a pension schools, but that "higher education came too little and too late."

He said he now could no longer work and would be reduced to his half acre diet and whatever he could realize from selling his U.S. gift parcels.

So once again Soviet bureaucracy began to grind Mr. Samson used some of his hard earned rubles and money sent by his sister to travel again to Moscow. This time U.S. Embassy officers told him to stay in Moscow and not return to Lithuania so there would be no chance again for more obstruction.

After living 28 days in a Moscow hotel Mr. Samson was summoned and told the Soviets had agreed to give him a passport and permission to leave as a Soviet immigrant. Russia never did recognize his U.S. citizenship.

With funds provided by his sister in Los Angeles, Mr. Samson left Moscow on August 10. He flew to Copenhagen where a U.S. passport was issued to him. He then flew to Los Angeles. His Soviet passport, which not him, out of Russia, has been a souvenir since Copenhagen.

QUESTIONS ABOUT life in Lithuania were answered by Mr. Samson patiently and plainly. "In Lithuania they are still waiting for something. Sometimes they get mad at America. They say it only talks, never acts. The Hungarian revolt — nobody helped them. They all got killed. Since that time there's been an awful loss of hope."

Family life in Lithuania? "Parents must forcibly send their children to schools of the government. Religion? Parents teach it at home, teach the prayers then take the kids to church. The priest examines them. If they're ready he gives them First Communion. But there's no ceremony, no celebration."

"Little schoolboys of 7 must join the Pioneers, later they join the Komsomol." Both are Red youth organizations.

Mr. Samson estimated that 50 per cent of youth are losing their religion. Asked if this wasn't a rather high estimate, Mr. Samson shook his head and pessimistically reiterated — 50 per cent.

"Teachers are watched," he said. "They have to work for the Communist party and recruit members for the Komsomol even if they're not party members themselves."

Churches are taxed heavily. His parish in a rural area had to pay 15,000 rubles a year taxes — in advance.

"Many churches in the cities have had to close on account of taxes," he said. "Priests are taxed 25 per cent of their income," he said. State policy

Plea For Peace

Faith Links Americas

Piura — (RNS) — A plea to Catholics of North and South America to remain staunchly united in the cause of Christian peace everywhere was sounded here by Richard Cardinal Cushing, Archbishop of Boston.

He spoke as Papal Legate at the solemn opening of Peru's Sixth National Eucharistic Congress in this northern city, where he arrived accompanied by high ecclesiastical dignitaries to the triumphant pealing of church bells and the flying of Peruvian and Vatican flags.

Stressing the spiritual bonds which we Catholics share in North and South America, Cardinal Cushing said, "It was almost as if God had preserved the natural resources of our two continents, untouched and unspoiled, until the Old World had become fatigued by battle, exhausted by fratricidal divisions."

"It was," he said, "as if the sons and daughters of the Old World would find these two continents exactly when humanity needed them, that they would come here at the same time and work out together, in peace and friendship, a peace which, we cannot doubt it, God intended us to share in common."

Recalling the prayer of Christopher Columbus, "Jesu cum Maria, Sit nobis in via" (May Jesus and Mary be with us along our way), he said, "that prayer and all the Catholic faith which inspires it unite us

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Missions Face Radical Changes

Noire Dame — (RNS) — Catholic missionary policies may undergo radical change as a result of the violent upheavals in Africa's newly-independent nations, a Church mission official declared here.

In an address to the 19th biennial convention of the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade, the Rev. Frederick McGuire, Secretary of the American Bishops, also scored what he called "overprotective policies" that keep Catholic natives in little colonies harbored from the rest of the nation.

"The study material could be developed a strong apostolic spirit national center in Cincinnati, among the people that will the resolution suggested."

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"Missionaries," he said, "must distributed through the CSMC develop a strong apostolic spirit national center in Cincinnati, among the people that will the resolution suggested."

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