

Aleks Kurgvel

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FOR THE RECORDS.

Subject: Political Activity.

Yesterday, 19 February, I attended Estonian church services in the Church of Crist, 16th Street, N.W. in Washington, D.C. and the meeting of the Estonian Association of Washington in the Community Hall of the same Church. These events were held to commemorate the 49th anniversary of the declaration of Estonian Independence (24 February 1918).

Approximately 150 people attended the meeting, among them the diplomatic representatives of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania accredited in USA.

Immediately before the meeting the secretary of the Estonian Legion of Liberation, Mr. KARI, who also attended the meeting, informed me that the organizing committee of the meeting has asked that the Legion bring a greeting to the meeting. Mr. Kari said that the Commander of the Legion, Mr. BUSCHMANN, is unable to participate and asks that somebody from the Presidium of the Legion bring the greeting. Mr. Kari asked me, the Deputy Commander, to give the address. Although I had no advance notice of this formal participation of the Legion in this meeting, I thought this to be my duty to step in when the Commander could not come personally and it would not have been fair towards the organizing Estonian Association if the address would be made by a fourth or fifth-ranking member of the Presidium when the second-ranking one was present.

This was thus an entirely impromptu speech which I made.

The main idea of my speech was that the struggle which we are continuing against the Communists is harder than that which three generations of Estonians (grandfather, father and son, as symbolized in a painting by Maxalt fought during Estonian War of Liberation, 1918-1920, and that which we fought during WW II - then there was a front line, and it was known that the enemy came from the east. Our present struggle here is harder because now there is no front line, the enemy is everywhere.

However, even now our fight is not hopeless. The Communists are not as strong as they are feared to be.

I described the flag of the Legion: one side carries the Estonian tricolor, horizontal blue, black and white stripes; the other side has the same colors with the emblem of the Legion, the central part of the Estonian highest decoration "Liberty Cross", placed on the central black stripe. The only difference of this second side, as compared with the National tricolor, is the width of the black stripe - it leaves only very narrow stripes of blue and white at the margin of the flag. This disproportion symbolizes the difficulties which the Estonian Nation must endure now, and how difficult is our struggle. But the Legion hopes and asks everybody to hope and work for the future, that those difficulties will be overcome, that the black stripe will shrink until it will be again of the normal width of the tricolor. - Estonia will be free then.

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