

# **THE ISSUE OF OCCUPATION IN LITHUANIAN-RUSSIAN RELATIONS: INFORMATION SECURITY ASPECTS**

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## **Introduction**

Competition in the information sphere is based on the aspiration of making one's own viewpoint of a certain event or issue dominant and imposing it on others. Information security covers the protection of information and activities based on information (making decisions about the foreign, domestic, and national security issues of the state), and the protection of the idea of the state (ideology and values). Propaganda, the restriction of information, the aspiration to have influence on the opinion and behaviour of society or the authorities, forcing them to act according to a scenario that has been planned in advance, pose a threat to these reference objects of security.

Concern about information pressure being exerted and hostile information campaigns being carried out is on the increase in the public sphere of Lithuania. Awareness of Russia's aspiration to maintain Lithuania in its zone of influence by means of information power causes concern about the protection of interests, values, historical truth, and the national attitude towards and position on various issues. Information that is presented by official figures of Russia or in the media but does not correspond to facts or is an incorrect interpretation of events or history as seen by Lithuania is considered to be a threat. The position declared by Russia is often at variance with Lithuania's official position and misleads the international community. Therefore, the importance of the information security of Lithuania and the need to understand information threats and vulnerabilities increases. Information security in Russia is perceived as the efficient presentation of the official position of the authorities on various issues to domestic and international society and the protection of national

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patriotism and values [1]. A threat to the constitutional rights or freedoms of an individual or citizens; to spiritual or informational activities; to individual, group or public consciousness; or to the spiritual rebirth of Russia is considered to be manipulation of information. On the basis of this definition of information security and threats, Russia vigorously defends its interests in the information sphere.

Recognising the occupation of Lithuania and paying compensation for the damage caused by this event can be regarded as an important and long-lasting theme in relations between Lithuania and Russia. Raising the issue of recognising the occupation carried out by the Soviets and paying compensation for the damage caused by the occupation constantly causes tension between Lithuania and Russia. These issues were discussed most extensively in 2000 after the Seimas obligated the Government to demand that Russia pay for damage resulting from the occupation, which, according to the calculations of the Lithuanian Interdepartmental Commission, amounted to 20 billion US dollars. At that time, as well as later, Russia rejected Lithuania's proposals to solve the issue of the occupation by setting up a bilateral working group. Later the issue of recognising the occupation generated especially intense discussions when Russia was preparing to commemorate the 50th anniversary of its victory in World War II. At that time, one could clearly see the different attitudes that Lithuania and Russia had towards the historical events.

Thus the occupation is one of those issues over which a struggle between Lithuania and Russia in the information sphere is going on; both states seek to present their own position on the occupation and substantiate it as correct. Different proposals follow from different interpretations – to compensate for damage done by the occupation or to value the historical events other than the occupation following World War II. It should be noted that the occupation has recently received the attention of academicians. One proposal not to demand compensation from Russia for the 1940 occupation includes three motives: history, international policy, and morality [2]. The validity of raising the issue of

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1. Совет Безопасности Российской Федерации, „Доктрина информационной безопасности Российской Федерации“. (The Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation) № Пр-1895, 9 сентября 2000, <http://www.scrf.gov.ru/Documents/Decree/2000/09-09.html> [reviewed on 25 August 2005].

2. Česlovas Laurinavičius, *Kodėl nereikėtų reikalauti okupacijos žalos atlyginimo?* (Why shouldn't compensation for damage done by the occupation be demanded?). Radijo paskaita (Radio lecture), 29 March 2006. Recording of the lecture: <http://www.lrt.lt/lectures/static.php?strid=1381> [Reviewed on 15 April 2006].

the occupation has however not been valued in terms of information security. Are Lithuania's positions defended in the information sphere and how does raising the issue or attempts not to actualise it affect Lithuania's information security?

This article presents an analysis of the disagreements arising between Lithuania and Russia over the issue of the occupation. Disagreements between the states are processes going on in the information sphere: the states defend their different interpretations of the historical events and offer their contradictory evaluations. On the whole, the countries compete for what is to be regarded as the historical truth and its correct evaluation. The objective of this article is to provide an answer to the question of why and how historical disputes grow into threats of information security and what consequences this entails; that is, what impact escalation or, on the contrary, non-actualisation of this theme has on information security. To achieve this objective it is sought to elucidate how Lithuania and Russia understand the occupation and what kind of actions this understanding encourages. When analysing Lithuanian-Russian relations, proposals are put forward about how the issue of the occupation should be addressed from the point of view of information security (which problems should be "securitized", and which should not, to assure the information security of Lithuania).

The discussions about the occupation that have broken out recently (2005–2006) and in which Russia's attitude became more belligerent and Lithuania's attitude became more diversified, are given the greatest attention in this article. The discussions were stimulated to a great extent by the commemoration of 9 May organised by Russia in 2005. During the commemoration, the issue of the occupation was in essence not solved. It was used as an argument only on the basis of which the decision about participating in the commemoration was taken. The choice of the period under investigation does not mean that discussions on the occupation were not held earlier. Essential aspects of the previous discussions will be made mention of to the extent of their significance in evaluating the positions of the states on the issue of the occupation.

### **Theoretical approach of the investigation**

The model of securitization developed by the Copenhagen School is applied in this research [3], and it is supplemented to extend the possibilities of its appli-

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3. Buzan, Barry, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. Boulder USA, London UK: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998.

cation. The investigation into securitization is an investigation into a discourse in which specific rhetorical structures expressed in specific circumstances by specific players are sought. Security is regarded as a socially constructed phenomenon: a problem turns into a threat when it is named as such by a securitizing player. Hence, securitization of a problem is its presentation as an existing threat, transferring it from the political agenda into a much more important one, enabling non-traditional measures to be taken to solve it. Desecuritization means returning the problem of securitization to an ordinary political agenda.

When defining the criteria for assessing security policy, the assumption is followed that naming and actualising information dangers, as well as seeking to achieve their recognition as threats, can pose a threat to information security itself – the state's interests in the information sphere. This can destabilise the situation, actualise the problems to which society reacts sensitively, etc. Giving prominence to a problem can take over a large part of the security or political agenda and the discussions that start in the public sphere and in this way can overshadow other important issues, actualise the initial problem, or encourage appearance of new ones.

The model of securitization does not define on the basis of what criteria decisions of security policy should be assessed. This article states that in assessing security policy one can make assumptions based on the principles earlier laid down by the states formally or in official statements (before the issue of the occupation was brought up-to-date when Russia was preparing for the commemoration of May 9). It is assessed whether the states adhered to their earlier declared interests and attitude towards the theme of the occupation. Issues of recognising the occupation and paying damages are related to the historical and fundamental aspects of the idea of the state. The assumption is therefore made that they did not have to change the national interests of Lithuania and Russia or their attitude towards threats because it would take a long time to change the attitude towards them. The response of Lithuania and Russia should correspond with their earlier adopted position on the issue of the occupation and threats posed to that position.

Thus, on the basis of this model, Lithuanian-Russian relations in terms of information security are analysed, and it is sought to establish what information dangers the state should securitize and what dangers it should desecuritize to ensure information security. The article investigates the following: (1) how

the issues of recognising the occupation and compensation for damage caused by the occupation are assessed by Russia and Lithuania and how and why their attitudes towards this issue change or remain unchanged; (2) what actions of theirs are determined by this attitude.

## **Issue of the occupation in Lithuanian-Russian relations**

### *Russia's position on the occupation*

On 24 December 1989, the USSR Congress of People's Deputies gave a political and legal assessment to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, condemning the secret agreements of this Pact and declaring them null and void. The annexation carried out by the Soviets was recognised in 1991 by the Agreement on Lithuanian-Russian Interstate Relations signed by Boris Yeltsin [4]. Russia's position on the issue of the occupation changed after Vladimir Putin became president, however. The occupation began to be denied and belittled in every possible way. In turn, this was the reason why the issue of the occupation raised by the Baltic States began to be understood as a threat of an informational nature to Russia's information security. The viewpoint of the Baltic States opposes the official position of Russia and raises doubts about it in the global information sphere. The demand to recognise the occupation is at variance with the attitude towards historical events presented by Russia and also contradicts Russia's official position that it did not carry out the occupation. This is therefore regarded as a threat to the idea of the Russian state. Not only the financial but also the territorial claims of the Baltic States about the occupation disconcert Russia [5]. They are securitized as a threat to Russia's territorial sovereignty.

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4. „Sutartis tarp Rusijos Tarybų Federacinės Socialistinės Respublikos ir Lietuvos Respublikos dėl tarpvalstybinių santykių pagrindų“ (Agreement on the Fundamentals of Interstate Relations between the Soviet Russian Federal Socialist Republic and the Republic of Lithuania). Adopted on 29 July 1991, ratified on 19 August 1991, and came into force on 4 May 1992. Adopted by the countries, which signed international documents. (Is this really necessary? As this sentence now stands, it doesn't make any sense.)

5. Стенограмма выступления и ответов на вопросы СМИ Министра иностранных дел России С.В.Лаврова по итогам Международной конференции по Ираку, Брюссель, 22 июня 2005 года. (Stenograph of Foreign Affairs Minister Sergei Lavrov's speech and answers to media questions at Conference on Iraq), [http://www.ln.mid.ru/Brp\\_4.nsf/arh/33FE25B66202D11CC3257029002C4B82?OpenDocument](http://www.ln.mid.ru/Brp_4.nsf/arh/33FE25B66202D11CC3257029002C4B82?OpenDocument) [Reviewed on 25 August 2005].

Several ways in which Russia responds to the claims about the occupation can be distinguished. *First*, Russia provokes discussions about concepts and their definition. By introducing new concepts into a generally accepted historical discourse, Russia seeks to change the assessment of the events defined by them. According to Vladimir Chizhov, the vice-minister of foreign affairs of Russia, the time period following the annexation is to be assessed as a “formally *de jure*” legalised membership of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in the Soviet Union rather than an occupation [6]. It is stated that the use of the concept of occupation is unsuitable to define the incorporation of the Baltic States into the USSR [7]. Mikhail Margelov, the chairman of the upper house of the Russian parliament’s international affairs committee, repeated the opinion expressed by Chizhov and stated that when incorporating the Baltic States into the Soviet Union in the fifth decade of the past century, “*de jure* everything was done correctly”[8].

*Second*, Russia seeks to belittle the importance of the occupation by generating discussions about historical events. This is done in two ways. First, by trying to deny or not recognise the event, Russia, when denying the occupation or the issues of paying compensation for damage resulting from it, maintains that in 1940 Russia did not yet exist, and many present-day Russians were not born then. Therefore they cannot meet historical claims. By its structure, values and aspirations, Russia is an absolutely different country from the former USSR. Also, Russia cannot be considered to be responsible for the actions of the USSR because it has suffered from it itself. It could therefore put forward claims about compensation for the investments of the USSR into the re-establishment of Lithuania’s economy. It is maintained that the Baltic States are ungrateful to the Soviet Union for liberating them from Nazi Germany and

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6. BNS, “V.Čižovas: Lietuvos okupacijos nebuvo” (There Was No Occupation of Lithuania) 18 July 2005. <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=7109436&categoryID=7&ndate=1121711400> [Reviewed on 25 August 2005].

7. Russian Foreign Ministry, “Comments by the Russian Foreign Ministry Information and Press Department in connection with remarks by some European politicians regarding the ‘occupation’ of the Baltic countries by the Soviet Union and the need for Russia to condemn this”.04.05.2005.

[http://www.ln.mid.ru/Brp\\_4.nsf/arh/3575341BD4842979C3256FF8002F095F?OpenDocument](http://www.ln.mid.ru/Brp_4.nsf/arh/3575341BD4842979C3256FF8002F095F?OpenDocument) [Reviewed on 25 August 2005].

8. BNS, “M.Margelovas: Baltijos šalių reikalavimai dėl okupacijos – lyg priekaištai Mongolijai už totorių jungą” (M. Margelov: Demands of the Baltic States Concerning the Occupation Are the Same as Reproaching Mongolia for the Yoke of the Tartars), 19 July 2005, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=7116087&categoryID=7&ndate=1121792901> [Reviewed on 25 August 2005].

providing them assistance to restore their economies. Second, a more subtle way to belittle history is when “essence separates values from historical events rather than denying the latter. (It is clear to historians that this is vulgar propaganda.)”[9] In this case, it is sought to belittle the importance of a historical event. On 7 May 2005, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia issued a statement saying that apparently the western states recognised the annexation of the Baltic States by signing the Helsinki Final Act of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation of Europe, consolidating the principle of inviolability of borders.

*Third*, Russia’s goal is not only to remove the issue of the occupation from prominence, but also to have it forgotten altogether. Russian officials make appeals for friendly relations and non-escalation of the theme. Russian President Vladimir Putin, when responding to the attempts to remind Moscow that it should recognise the occupation carried out by the USSR, maintained that the issue related to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact had already been solved and that “having condemned the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact concluded by Stalin and Hitler in 1939, Russia had already made its apology and was not going to do it again”[10]. Putin states that history is either to be forgotten or left to historians to investigate. Hence, it is sought to desecuritize an issue causing heated discussions in bilateral relations. Following his reception by the president of the Republic of Lithuania on 23 March 2006, Sergei Yastrzhembsky, aide to the Russian president and special representative to the president for the development of relations with the European Union, stated the following: “I can firmly say that Russia is not going to compensate Lithuania for damage caused by the occupation. It would therefore be better to stop discussing this theme if we want our relations to move forward”[11]. According to him, assessments of history and claims should be left in the past.

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9. Leonidas Donskis, *Pasaulio tvarka: kova už tai, kaip rašyti istoriją* (The World’s Order: A Struggle for How to Write History) “*Klaipėda*”, 27 June 2005.

10. Russian Foreign Ministry, “Press statement and responses to questions following the Russia-European Union Summit, Great Kremlin Palace, Moscow”, May 10, 2005, [http://www.ln.mid.ru/Brp\\_4.nsf/arh/1F66A6A4BB7104DFC32570000218403?OpenDocument](http://www.ln.mid.ru/Brp_4.nsf/arh/1F66A6A4BB7104DFC32570000218403?OpenDocument) [Reviewed on 25 August 2005].

11. Vija Pakalkaitė, “S.Jastržembskis: Rusija neketina atlyginti Lietuvai okupacijos žalos” (S. Yastrzhembsky: Russia Does Not Intend to Compensate Lithuania for Damage Resulting from the Occupation), 23 March 2006, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=9104815&categoryID=7&ndate=1143099899> [Reviewed on 15 April 2006].

It should be noted that Russia does not become involved in discussions about compensation for damage caused by the occupation. That Lithuania accuses Russia of not co-operating to solve the issue of compensation for damage done by the occupation causes the indignation of Russia. They say that in this way Russia is being discredited, even though it clearly said that on the whole it was not going to speak on this theme [12].

Thus, responding to Lithuania's claims about the occupation as threats to information security, Russia takes respective defensive actions. Russia seeks to deny the attitude to historical events that are unfavourable to it and to present its own interpretation of the events in the information sphere. The commemoration on 9 May 2005 organised in Moscow was devoted to this purpose. In this situation, disagreements about historical events surfaced between Lithuania and Russia. For Russia the end of World War II – the victory in World War II – was an event of pride, important in forming its identity as a great state. For the Baltic States, the end of World War II meant the beginning of a new occupation. Questioning this information and the events relating to it was met in Russia in an especially hostile way. According to Russian political scientist Sergei Markov, who is regarded as a disseminator of the Kremlin's positions, "this is the best thing that we did in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and when somebody wants to belittle what we take pride in, rational relations are out of the question"[13]. Russian officials exerted pressure on the Baltic States to make them participate in the commemoration, tried to create a negative image of the Baltic States in the eyes of the Western countries, and tried to deny the attitude of the Baltic States towards historical events, stating that the Baltic States had not been annexed but joined the Soviet Union of their own free will. Russia understood Lithuania's refusal to participate in the commemoration as disrespect for historical events [14]. Russia securitized Lithuania's refusal as a threat to the idea of

12. "Россию за "ущерб" собираются судить в Гааге: Литва за неделю" (There are plans to judge Russia for "damage" in Hague: Lithuania in week), <http://www.regnum.ru/news/502462.html> [Reviewed on 5 April 2006].

13. BNS, "S.Markovas: Lietuvos prezidentui neatvykus į Maskvą, šalių santykiai gali blogėti". (S. Markov: If the President of Lithuania Fails to Arrive in Moscow, Relations Between the Countries Might Worsen), 15 April 2005, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=6484259&categoryID=7&ndate=1113573243> [Reviewed on 15 September 2005].

14. Diana Jurgelevičiūtė, *Informacinis saugumas Lietuvoje: gegužės 9-osios problema ir Rusijos lėktuvo avarija*, (Information Security in Lithuania: Problem of 9 May and the Crash of a Russian Plane) *Lietuvos metinė strateginė apžvalga, 2006*, Vilnius, Military Academy of Lithuania (in print).



the state. The informational pressure to take part in the commemoration was replaced with informational pressure seeking to discredit Lithuania's image in the international arena. The refusal of the president of Lithuania to attend and take part in the commemoration of 9 May was used to accuse Lithuania of its hostility towards Russia and its inclination towards fascism.

Surveys show that attempts of the officials of Russia to belittle or even to deny the occupation justify themselves at least with respect to the domestic Russian audience. These surveys reveal that 70.5 per cent of the Russians questioned fully or partly agreed with the statement that in 1940 the Soviet Union occupied the Baltic States. 80.2 per cent of the respondents gave a negative answer to the question about whether Russia should apologise to the Baltic States for the occupation, and 66 per cent of the respondents would categorically oppose to such a step [15].

#### *Lithuania's attitude towards the occupation*

Lithuania's officials underline that currently existing interstate relations between Lithuania and Russia are based on the agreement of 1991 in which the annexation of the Republic of Lithuania carried out by the USSR is recorded and obligations are assumed to eliminate the consequences of annexation. Addressing the consequences of the occupation in Lithuania was securitized and special measures were taken immediately after the re-establishment of independence. On 4 June 1991, the Supreme Council of Lithuania – the Reconstituent Seimas – adopted a document entitled Resolution Concerning the Damage Done to the Republic of Lithuania by the USSR and Compensation to the Residents for It [16]. The issue of compensation for the damage done was raised when Russia withdrew its army from Lithuania. The question about withdrawing the army of the former USSR, which was under the jurisdiction of Russia at that time, and paying compensation for the damage done was asked in

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15. ELTA "Apklausa: rusai nemano, kad Baltijos šalys buvo okupuotos" (Survey: Russians Do Not Think That the Baltic States Were Occupied), 16 June 2005, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=6910628&categoryID=7&ndate=1118921919>> [Reviewed on 25 August 2005].

16. Lietuvos Respublikos Aukščiausiasis Taryba – Atkuriamasis Seimas, „Dėl 1940-1991 m. TSRS padarytos žalos Lietuvos Respublikai ir jos gyventojams atlyginimo“ (The Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania – the Reconstituent Seimas – Concerning the Damage Done to the Republic of Lithuania by the USSR and Compensation for It to the Residents), *Valstybės žinios*, No. 17-456, 20 June 1991.

the referendum of 14 June 1992. The issue of compensation for the damage done by the occupation was securitized in Lithuania after the Seimas adopted the Law on Compensation for Damage Resulting from the Occupation by the USSR in 2000 [17]. This law obligated the Government to negotiate with Russia concerning the compensation for damage caused by the Soviet occupation, which Lithuania evaluated at 20 billion US dollars, or 80 billion litas. The amount of damages has not yet been legalised because the Government has not approved its size by a separate resolution. At a meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission in 2001, Lithuania suggested that the two countries commence negotiations on compensation for damage but Russia refused.

As Rimantas Šidlauskas, the Lithuanian ambassador to Russia, noted, “a certain bad psychological background” had a negative effect on relations between Lithuania and Russia [18]. Disputes about interpretations of historical events create this background. Lithuania responds to the information about the occupation disseminated by Russia by issuing statements or adopting documents. For example, on 30 June 2005 the Seimas adopted a resolution in which it expressed “great concern about and disapproval” of the attempts of Russia’s officials to justify or deny the Soviet occupation [19]. In Lithuania itself, initiatives to raise issues of recognising the occupation or compensating for damage resulting from it intensify when dates relating to the occupation are approaching, for example, the Day of Mourning and Hope on 14 June, the anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and 9 May. In June 2005, when the beginning of Soviet deportations in the Baltic States in 1940 was commemorated, Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus noted the following: “Unfortunately, today we again hear voices expressing doubts about whether

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17. Lietuvos Respublikos įstatymas „Dėl SSRS okupacijos žalos atlyginimo“. (Republic of Lithuania Law on Compensation for Damage Caused by the USSR Occupation), 13 June 2000, No. VIII-1727, *Valstybės žinios*, No. 52-1486, 28 June 2000.

18. BNS, “Vilniaus ir Maskvos santykius temdo “psichologinis fonas”, sako Lietuvos ambasadorius” (“Psychological Background” Obscures Relations Between Vilnius and Moscow Says Ambassador of Lithuania), 17 May 2006, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=9555107&categoryID=7&ndate=1147862441> [Reviewed on 29 September 2005].

19. Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas. Rezoliucija. „Dėl sovietinės okupacijos Lietuvoje 65-ųjų metinių ir pirmojo masinio Lietuvos gyventojų trėmimo sukakčių minėjimo“ (Resolution of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania Concerning Commemoration of the 65th Anniversary of the Soviet Occupation in Lithuania and the First Mass Deportations of the Residents of Lithuania). Adopted on 30 June 2005. *Valstybės žinios*, No. 85-3157, 14 July 2005.

Lithuania was occupied, seeking to belittle once again and sometimes to slander our state and our freedom”[20]. When a historical issue is raised when the day relating to it is approaching, it becomes even more urgent. Historical events relating to a specific day and the emotions they arouse enable the importance of the issue and its solution to be more easily substantiated.

Contrary to Russia, which seeks to forget the occupation, Lithuania holds the opinion that Russia will be able to freely and safely create its future only after it has recognised the occupation and thus ended the discussions generated by this issue. According to Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus, it will be possible to understand the problems of today and consistently create friendly relations between the states and nations based on mutual trust only after the past has been evaluated and propagandistic stereotypes have been shaken off [21]. The same opinion is presented in the international acts supporting the issue of Lithuania’s occupation. A resolution that was adopted by the US House of Representatives and condemns the occupation of the Baltic States by the Soviet Union states that if Russia recognised the occupation, the good will of the Baltic States and regional security would strengthen [22]. In a resolution adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in June 2005, the occupation of the Baltic States by the USSR is recognised: despite the protests of the Russian delegation, the wording “the occupied Baltic States”[23] was left in the text. The resolution specifies that if Russia recognised the occupation of the Baltic States carried out by the USSR, it would be the best way towards

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20. BNS, “EP paminėta sovietinių trėmimų iš Baltijos šalių pradžia” (The Beginning of Soviet Deportations from the Baltic States Commemorated at the European Parliament). 14 June 2005, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=6894442&categoryID=2045412&ndate=1118773233> [Reviewed on 28 September 2005].

21. Delfi, “V.Adamkus: lietuviai negali suprasti šiandieninės Rusijos santykio su stalinistine praeitimi” (Valdas Adamkus: Lithuanians Cannot Understand the Relation of Modern Russia with Stalinist Past), 23 March 2006, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=9106910&categoryID=7&ndate=1143108613> [Reviewed on 12 April 2006].

22. BNS, “JAV kongresmenai ragina Rusiją atlyginti Baltijos šalims sovietų okupacijos padarytą žalą” (US Congressmen Urge Russia to Compensate the Baltic States for Damage Done by Soviet Occupation), 28 July 2005, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=7173805&categoryID=7&ndate=1122529564> [Reviewed on 25 August 2005].

23. Parliamentary Assembly, Council of Europe, “Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by the Russian Federation”, 22 June 2005, [http://assembly.coe.int/Mainf.asp?link=http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/AdoptedText/ta05/RES1455.htm#\\_ftn1](http://assembly.coe.int/Mainf.asp?link=http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/AdoptedText/ta05/RES1455.htm#_ftn1) [Reviewed on 25 August 2005].

reconciliation and complete normalisation of the relations between Russia and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – members of the European Union – based on common values. Hence, it became more complicated for Russia to deny the occupation and convince the international community of it.

The election of Vladimir Putin as president can be regarded as an important event that caused Lithuania anxiety about the issue of the occupation. According to Foreign Affairs Vice-minister Zenonas Petrauskas, “up to that time Russia did not try so obviously to falsify history”[24]. Distortion of history is assessed in Lithuania as an activity posing a threat to the idea of the state: it either questions or denies the factors developing and explaining Lithuania’s identity. Attempts to evaluate historical events in another way are therefore always noticed in Lithuania and assessed as issues demanding exceptional attention and concern. In responses to Russia’s statement that the Western states recognised the annexation of the Baltic States by signing the Helsinki Final Act of the Organisation of Security and Co-operation for Europe, it was stated that “the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia is falsifying history and distorting international legal norms”[25] and that its pronouncements “are at variance with historical truth and are null and void”[26]. According to Seimas member Emanuelis Zingeris, statements in which the criminal acts of the USSR against the Baltic States are named only in part are absurd [27]. That Russia fails to name some historical events is also assessed in the negative. In the opinion of the council of *Sajūdis* “the truth is the very fact of the occupation, the criminal activity in organising and carrying out the massacre of citizens of the occupied

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24. BNS, “UR viceministras: Lietuva niekada neatsisakys reikalavimo Rusijai atlyginti okupacijos žalą” (Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs: Lithuania Will Never Give Up Demand That Russia Pay Compensation for Damage Caused by Occupation), 25 October 2005, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=7797485&categoryID=7&ndate=1130252074> [Reviewed on 16 November 2005].

25. ELTA, “D.Žalimas: Rusijos URM klastoja istoriją ir iškraipo tarptautinę teisę” (D. Žalimas: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia Falsifying History and Distorting International Law), 9 May 2005, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=6636816&categoryID=7&ndate=1115633414> [Reviewed on 25 August 2005].

26. ELTA, “Č.Laurinavičius: Rusijos mėginimai Helsinkio baigiamuoju aktu pateisinti Baltijos šalių okupaciją yra niekiniai” (Č. Laurinavičius: Russia’s Attempts to Justify Occupation of Baltic States by Means of the Helsinki Final Act are Null and Void), 9 May 2005, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=6636840&categoryID=7&ndate=1115586000> [Reviewed on 16 August 2005].

27. BNS, “M.Margelovas: Baltijos šalių reikalavimai dėl okupacijos ...” (M. Margelov: Demands of the Baltic States Concerning Occupation ...), *op.cit.*

countries, and damage done to the earlier occupied states and their residents. All that must be legally evaluated, and damage must be compensated”[28]. The attempt to evaluate commonly recognised historical events anew is also regarded as a threat. The statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania concerning Vladimir Putin’s comments about the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact states that “the attempt ‘to explain’ the validity of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact can be assessed as an attempt to open a page of history that was closed a long time ago and to review the decision made by the Congress of People’s Deputies of the USSR”[29].

Lithuania’s struggle for the recognition of the occupation and compensation for damage resulting from it is often referred to as the restoration of historical truth. By means of this argument, the information threat posed by Russia is securitized (though it is rarely referred to directly as an information threat, its contents correspond to the definition of an information threat used in this investigation). In this case, the prevalence of Russia’s interpretations of the occupation and the possibility that they could overshadow Lithuania’s version of historical events are considered to be information threats. This could violate the constitutional principles of the continuity of the Lithuanian state and could weaken the idea of the state. Hence, it is sought to protect the state’s positions in the information sphere (not to permit Russia’s attitude towards the occupation to become prevalent and replace the currently existing one) and in this way preserve the idea of the state. This position of Lithuania is reflected in the solution of the problem of 9 May – the issue of going to Moscow and participating in the commemoration. In Lithuania the attempt to securitize the problem of 9 May took into consideration the aspects of values and ideology. It was sought to avoid indirect approval of the evaluation of the end of World War II presented by Russia and thus strengthen that country’s positions in the information sphere. Participation in the gathering was securitized as a threat to the idea of the state: participation would have meant Lithuania’s approval of Russia’s interpretation of historical events; it was thought that Russia could make use of this and raise doubts about historical events. Russia’s questioning

28. BNS, “Aistros dėl sovietinės okupacijos žalos atlyginimo” (Passions about Compensation for Damage Done by Occupation), 22 March 2006, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=9093823&categoryID=7&ndate=1143020476> [Reviewed on 27 March 2006].

29. URM pareiškimas (Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), 23 February 2005, <http://www.urm.lt/index.php?-777079222> [Reviewed on 25 August 2005].

of historical events is seen in Lithuania as Russia's doubt about Lithuania's statehood and its aspiration to maintain Lithuania and the other Baltic States in its zone of influence. It was therefore decided to speak against participating in that commemoration.

*Lithuania's position on the issue of compensation for damage caused by the Soviet occupation*

Lithuania constantly notes that when evaluating historical events, the truth must not be passed over in silence. Lithuanian and foreign experts urge implementing the law adopted by the Seimas and raising the issue of compensation for damage caused by the occupation. It is recommended to solve this issue not only during bilateral meetings of Lithuania and Russia but also at multilateral international meetings and the International Court of Justice at the United Nations [30]. Both the U.S.A. and the European Union recognise the occupation. According to international law expert Dainius Žalimas, the most important thing is that Lithuania's behaviour when making legal demands should be sufficiently consistent and not become so passive that it would be equivalent to giving up the demand for compensation [31].

Three viewpoints can be distinguished when speaking about the issue of compensation for damage. *First*, compensation for damage caused by the occupation cannot be required because the occupation can be justified as necessity and even had positive consequences for Lithuania. Vytenis Andriukaitis, deputy chairman of the Social Democratic Party of Lithuania, proposed recognising that "Russia, which fought against the USSR itself and which destroyed it, cannot be accused of the annexation and incorporation of Lithuania carried out by the USSR"[32]. Therefore, in his opinion, Russia cannot be required to compensate for damage. However, this viewpoint did not receive such support that

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30. BNS, "Teisės ekspertas siūlo per tarptautinį teismą reikalauti okupacinės žalos atlyginimo" (Legal Expert Proposes That Compensation for Damage Should Be Demanded in International Court), 25 August 2005.

31. BNS, "UR viceministras: Lietuva niekada neatsisakys reikalavimo Rusijai ..." (Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs: Lithuania Will Never Give Up Demand That Russia ... ), *op.cit.*

32. BNS, "V.Andriukaitis ragina suabejoti Lietuvos valstybės laikysena Rusijos atžvilgiu" (V. Andriukaitis Questions Lithuania's attitude towards Russia), 23 October 2005, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=7776492&categoryID=7&ndate=1130054315>

[Reviewed on 28 October 2005].

it would be possible to be successfully securitized in Lithuania, and in essence it reflects the position of Russian politicians.

*Second*, damage must be compensated for; otherwise further friendly relations between Lithuania and Russia are impossible. Compensation for damage caused by the occupation is being securitized by picturing direct dependence between compensation for damage and recognition of the occupation. People supporting this position say that Russia will stop questioning the occupation only after it has compensated Lithuania for the damage caused by the occupation. Recognition of the occupation is considered to be inseparable from Lithuania's statehood and the idea of the state. Non-recognition of the occupation would mean that Lithuania became part of Russia of its own free will, and its present sovereignty could be questioned.

*The third* viewpoint states that it is impossible to identify destruction of the state with compensation for damage. If damage has not been compensated for, it does not mean that the occupation is not recognised. Or, in other words, to recognise the occupation it is not necessary to compensate Lithuania for the damage done. The proposal not to demand compensation for damage resulting from the occupation is substantiated by the fact that this creates tension in the relations between Lithuania and Russia. According to Česlovas Laurinavičius, the current policy pursued by the Government of Lithuania when raising the issue of compensation for damage is not constructive and not only worsens its relations with Russia but also could worsen its relations with the Western states that try to establish if not friendly then at least constructive relations with Russia [33]. At the same time however, Russia has to recognise the occupation.

Recently the question of what Lithuania's position on the occupation should be has not only become important but also exceptional in that different viewpoints are being defended during the discussions. In January 2006, Lithuania and Russia agreed to set up a joint commission of historians who were supposed to carry out common historical investigations within the context of the history of the Baltic region and the rest of Europe. In Lithuania this agreement was evaluated as a new attempt to falsify Lithuanian-Polish history, which

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33 Laurinavičius, "Kodėl nereikėtų reikalauti okupacijos žalos atlyginimo?" (Why Should Compensation for Damage Resulting from the Occupation not be Demanded?), *op.cit.*

would be made by the historians of Lithuania with the Kremlin's knowledge [34]. On the other hand, Alvydas Nikžentaitis, the director of the Lithuanian Institute of History, noted that by creating a commission of Lithuanian-Russian historians it was sought "to lower discussions about the past from the political level to the level of historians"[35]. The aspiration to desecuritize Lithuania-Russian relations and to transfer the solution of the problem to the lowest – non-politicised – level was defined much more clearly in the general objectives of the activities of the commission: "by critically evaluating the history of both states and nations, the commission seeks to ensure that stereotypes of the Lithuanians as eternal enemies of the Russians and the Russians as eternal enemies of the Lithuanians are not created by means of amateur interpretations of history"[36]. In the spring of 2006, a joint publication of the Lithuanian and Russian historians was printed. It presented both countries' viewpoints of the events of 1939–1940. Responding to this information, the Homeland Union party issued a statement in which it expressed concern about whether with the help of the new book it was sought to "re-write history". The statement maintains that "apprehensions, which were repeatedly expressed in public, that it is sought to involve Lithuania in a discussion about what is clear to the whole world are becoming reality"[37].

Another proposal for Lithuania's position on the issue of the occupation was encouraged by the statement made by Russian President Vladimir Putin, who when visiting the Czech Republic and Hungary at the beginning of March 2006 said that he felt "moral responsibility" for the events of 1956 and 1968, when the armed forces of the Soviet Union suppressed democratic uprisings

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34. Česlovas Iškauskas, "Rusija tyrinėja Lenkijos ir Lietuvos santykių istoriją savaip" (Russia Investigates the History of Relations Between Poland and Lithuania in Its Own Way), 31 March 2006, <http://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/comments/article.php?id=9191082>> [Reviewed on 12 April 2006].

35. Alvydas Nikžentaitis, "Rusija tyrinėja Lenkijos ir Lietuvos santykių istoriją savaip: nesenos istorijos tęsinys" (Russia Investigates History of Relations Between Poland and Lithuania in Its Own Way: Continuation of Recent History), 7 April 2006, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=9249189&categoryID=2997120&ndate=1144394377> [Reviewed on 12 April 2006].

36. Nikžentaitis, "Rusija tyrinėja Lenkijos ir Lietuvos santykių istoriją savaip: nesenos istorijos tęsinys" (Russia Investigates History of Relations Between Poland and Lithuania in Its Own Way), *op.cit.*

37. BNS, "Konservatoriai aiškinasi, ar Lietuvos ir Rusijos istorikų leidiniu nesiruošiama perrašyti istorijos" (Conservatives Try to Determine Whether by the Publication of Lithuanian and Russian Historians It Is Sought to Re-write History), 18 May 2006, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=9564769&categoryID=7&ndate=1147945240> [Reviewed on 19 May 2006].



in these countries. I. Pavlovsky, consultant of the Russian Presidential Department for Interregional and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries, stated that Hungary and the Czech Republic received Russia's apologies for damage done in Soviet times because they did not ask for financial compensation for damage done by the Soviet system. In Lithuania, Russia's apology was assessed as the aspiration to break up Central Europe and a strategic step to isolate the Baltic States from Central Europe [38] (because Russia continues to refuse to condemn the occupation of the Baltic States, they therefore from this point of view become exceptional in the region for their unsolved historical issues with Russia). According to Česlovas Laurinavičius, by isolating the Baltic States, Russia seeks to present them in the role of "the bad ones"[39]. It can be noted that the Baltic States themselves make this task easier. Lithuania's demand of compensation for damage caused by the occupation can be regarded a hostile action with respect to Russia. Therefore, in specifying it Russia finds it easy to represent Lithuania as a hostile state. Russia understands the demand for compensation as a threat, securitizes it, and takes measures to resolve it. Because of that, tension in bilateral relations could further increase. Russia, drawing the attention of its own society and the international community to Lithuania's supposedly ungrounded demands concerning recognition of the occupation and compensation for damage, in particular, represents Lithuania as a hostile state seeking financial benefit rather than constructive co-operation. And this harms Lithuania's interests in the international arena. It should be noted that it is common in Lithuania to securitize – consider as a threat – Lithuania's moderate position with respect to Russia. The conclusion is drawn that anyone who speaks for the development of moderate (in this case, pragmatic) relations with Russia betrays the state's interests and represents Moscow's interests. For example, the political scientist Raimundas Lopata stated that "Lithuania must look for pragmatic directions or spheres of co-operation in which there is no space for

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38. BNS, "Politologai: Rusija bando izoliuoti Baltijos šalis ir Lenkiją nuo likusios Europos" (Political Scientists: Russia Tries to Isolate the Baltic States and Poland from the Rest of Europe), 1 March 2006,

<http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=8912831&categoryID=7&ndate=1141217107>

[Reviewed on 3 March 2006].

39. Vidas Venslaviškis, "Rusija mums siūlo „blogiukų“ vaidmenį" (Russia proposes the role of the "bad ones" to us). *Baltijos Kelias*. Interviu su Česlovu Laurinavičiumi, 15 March 2006.

ideological manifestations”[40]. In response to this, European parliamentarian Vytautas Landsbergis sharply criticised the suggestion to follow pragmatism and “to become silent about the occupation and let the empire distort history unrestrained”[41]. He stated that “in this way we betray ourselves, not only the rights of the re-established state, but also our honour and identity”[42]. According to him, if politicians have an element of morality, the demand to compensate Lithuania for damage caused by the occupation is not only useful politically but also unavoidable because the truth cannot be renounced[43]. Conservative MP Andrius Kubilius, the leader of the Seimas opposition, when commenting on proposals made by political scientists to pursue pragmatism, stated that “such steps are only the public relations campaign in implementing, perhaps, the instrument of surrender prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs itself”[44].

It can be noted that prevailing arguments on the issue of recognition of the occupation are based on moral and ideological aspects. Speaking in support of compensation for damage resulting from the occupation, it is thought that ideological and historical disagreements and those relating to values between the states can be resolved by material (financial) measures. On the other hand, proposals not to demand compensation for damage caused by the occupation at the present time are also based on pragmatic arguments. This, first and foremost, does harm to constructive Lithuanian-Russian relations. Second, it does not help co-operation between Lithuania and the western countries.

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40. Vladimiras Laučius, “Apie Lietuvą, kuri nori būti Rusijos” (About Lithuania, which wants to belong to Russia). Politikos apžvalgininko komentaras (Commentary of a political commentator) *Žinių radijas*, 8 March 2006, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=8980356&categoryID=2997120&ndate=1141825126> [Reviewed on 14 March 2006].

41. BNS, “V.Landsbergis nesutinka su politologais dėl okupacijos” (V. Landsbergis Does Not Agree with Political Scientists about Occupation), 2 March 2006, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=8923447&categoryID=7&ndate=1141306009> [Reviewed 28 September 2005].

42. BNS, “V.Landsbergis nesutinka su politologų nuomone dėl okupacijos” (V. Landsbergis Does Not Agree with Political Scientists about Occupation), *op.cit.*

43. Dainoras Lukas, “V.Landsbergis ragina neužmiršti tautos pažeminimo” (V. Landsbergis Urges People Not to Forget Humiliation of the Nation), *Kauno diena*, 10 March 2006.

44. Justinas Vanagas, “A.Kubilių stebina noras nepiminti Rusijai okupacijos” (A Kubilius Surprised about Wish Not to Remind Russia about Occupation), 6 March 2006, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=8956802&categoryID=7&ndate=1141643713> [Reviewed on 15 March 2006].

## **Consequences of securitizing recognition of the occupation and compensation for damage**

### *Effect on Russia's information security*

On the basis of the arguments that are presented in securitizing non-recognition of the occupation, one can maintain that solution of the issue of the occupation is related to the development and establishment of the identity of both Lithuania and Russia. In Russia's case, claims concerning the occupation are considered to be a threat to information security of an informational nature – to the idea and sovereignty of the state. They contradict Russia's viewpoint of historical events, Russia's official position. It could be noticed that peculiar “discussions” about whether to recognise the occupation took place in Russia. During Boris Yeltsin's term in office, the occupation was in essence recognised. After Vladimir Putin's election, Russia began to refuse to recognise the occupation, and later it started to deny the occupation itself. Recognition of the occupation therefore poses a threat to Russia now: *first*, to the idea of the state because Russia denies that it is the assignee of the rights of the USSR (Agreeing with Lithuania's demands would therefore deny the concept of the idea of the state currently being developed by Russia.); *second*, to its pragmatic interests because other countries that also fell victim to the USSR will be able to demand that historical injustice should be rectified and compensated for.

Responding to Lithuania's claims about the occupation as threats to its information security, Russia takes defensive measures. It seeks to deny an attitude, which is unfavourable, towards historical events and presents its own interpretation of these events. It therefore denies and belittles the occupation. The Government of Lithuania sought to transfer discussions about the occupation to the level of the political agenda. Russia however refuses to solve the issue of the occupation in a political or diplomatic way, or indeed in any other way. Its most common position is issuing public statements about the occupation (denial of claims filed by Lithuania and the other Baltic States). This shows its unwillingness to solve the issue of the occupation together with Lithuania. Escalation of the theme of the occupation in the public sphere is useful to Russia because this encourages Lithuania to lodge claims concerning the occupation and compensation for damage more impulsively. Meanwhile

Lithuania's European and transatlantic partners do not support its claims of compensation for damages too actively. On the other hand, escalation of the occupation is not useful to Russia if Russia does not want to solve this issue on the whole. It is therefore better for it not to bring it up-to-date and to maintain discussions at the lowest, non-politicised level.

### *Impact on Lithuania's information security*

In Lithuania's case, recognising the occupation and receiving compensation for damage caused by the occupation are understood as the restoration of historical truth, and history is one of the factors that have an impact on the development of the identity and the idea of the state. That is, in the event the issue of the occupation is not solved, one of the components of the idea of the state will constantly be questioned or denied.

The attempt to evaluate commonly recognised historical events anew is regarded as a threat in Lithuania. Using the argument of "historical truth", the information threat posed by Russia is securitized. In this case, Russia's interpretations of the occupation and the possibility that they could overshadow Lithuania's version of historical events in the information sphere are considered to be information threats. This would violate the constitutional principles of the continuity of the Lithuanian state. Hence, it is sought to protect the positions of the state in the information sphere (to prevent Russia's viewpoint on the occupation from dominating and changing the presently existing one), and in this way the idea of the state would also be protected.

No discussions are generated in Lithuania about whether the occupation actually took place. The opinions, evaluations and proposals concerning how Lithuania should behave when seeking that Russia recognise the occupation and compensate for the damage done, have recently differed, however. The absence of a clear position on what measures should be taken to deal with a fact that was recognised a long time ago, in terms of information security, is unfavourable. In this case, possibilities to manipulate and influence the decision about what measures should be chosen are much wider than if a decision had already been taken about how to seek recognition of the occupation and compensation for the damage resulting from it.

Statements issued by Russian officials posed a dilemma to Lithuania about how it should behave – to respond to them and deny the incorrect and unfavourable information being disseminated or to ignore them and not become involved in Russia’s provocations. In a generalised way, the following actions carried out by Russia can be distinguished as changing the established historical discourse. First, there are statements in which the position or response to the theme of the occupation is expressed, thereby seeking to initiate wide discussions. Quite often such statements are meant for Russian society. However, this cannot be stated unequivocally because they are usually cited in the Western press. Hence, an impact is also being made on the western states. However, since interest in such a statement is comparatively short-lived, involvement in discussions about some statement can only give it prominence and bring it up-to-date, which is not always useful in terms of information security. It is therefore more useful to ignore it and let it be forgotten. Second, official political decisions can be adopted on essential issues relating to the occupation. In this case, the consequences and impact on the audience can be considered to be more long lasting. Therefore, if one does not in a timely manner respond or deny certain information, which was formally established, it might later be more difficult to deny it. From the point of view of international law, illegal actions must be consistently denied because otherwise one can lose the right to lodge claims later.

Measures by means of which Lithuania can remind Russia of the issue of the occupation are various. In this case, their efficiency will be evaluated in terms of information security. The use of diplomatic measures, first of all, means the aspiration to solve the issue of compensation for damage by means of direct negotiations with Russia. As practice shows however, it is impossible to start negotiations with Russia because Russia does not want to do that. Russia is more inclined to transfer discussions from the diplomatic or political sphere into a public sphere and to maintain its position in the form of various statements. It makes use of Lithuania’s claims about the occupation by representing Lithuania as a country hostile to Russia. Also, Lithuania becomes involved in discussions in which it has to play a “defensive” role concerning the occupation, i.e., it tries to deny interpretations of history that do not correspond to the facts presented by Russia. Involvement in discussions about the occupation

demonstrates that no common agreement about it has been reached yet. It is therefore better for Lithuania to respond to Russia's statement by demanding compensation for damage caused by the occupation rather than by arguing about recognising the occupation. In this case, the occupation is taken for granted and is not an object for discussion. According to US commentator P. Goble, Lithuania must at the international level raise the issue of compensation for damage done by the occupation by making use of not only political, legal, or diplomatic manoeuvres but also propagandistic measures [45]. The proposal to make use of propaganda can be justified by taking into account two aspects. First, Russia also makes use of propaganda. If Lithuania does not want to lose the war of information, it therefore has to counterattack. Second, the importance of information power is constantly on the increase. Its use would therefore bring more benefit in carrying out foreign and security policy. Lithuania can make use of the following measures: to win the international society over to its side and to make use of Lithuanian communities abroad to bring the issue of compensation for damage caused by the Soviet occupation up-to-date on the international scale [46].

However, the *requirements* to demand damages can be evaluated as tension on Lithuania's foreign policy. They do not show any attempts to solve the problem of bilateral relations in a constructive way. In this case, it is useful for Russia to declare that its relations with Lithuania and the other Baltic States are not good because of their hostility. This not only puts a stop to promoting co-operation with Russia but also can isolate Lithuania from the western European states. If Lithuania's European and transatlantic partners maintain and further strengthen their constructive relations with Russia, the position advocated by Lithuania will have no support at all. One can approve of the proposal that Lithuania should mitigate its position with respect to Russia – to balance relations with Western Europe and Russia [47]. This can be done without demanding

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45. BNS, "UR viceministras: Lietuva niekada neatsisakys reikalavimo Rusijai atlyginti okupacijos žalą". (Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs: Lithuania Will Never Give Up Demand That Russia Pay Compensation for Damage Resulting from Occupation), *op.cit.*

46. Dainius Žalimas, "Lietuva privalo reikalauti sovietų okupacijos žalos atlyginimo". (Lithuania Must Demand Compensation for Damage Done by Soviet Occupation), [http://www.geopolitika.lt/index.php?lang=lt&content=lt\\_geo\\_1\\_5&parent=lt\\_geo\\_1](http://www.geopolitika.lt/index.php?lang=lt&content=lt_geo_1_5&parent=lt_geo_1) [Reviewed on 27 April 2006].

47. Laurinavičius, *Kodėl nereikėtų reikalauti okupacijos žalos atlyginimo?* (Why Should Compensation for Damage Resulting from Occupation Not Be Demanded?), *op.cit.*

that Russia should compensate for damage caused by the occupation, but by following the main principle that it has to recognise the occupation. The following contradiction can however be seen in the demand to recognise the occupation rather than compensate for damage: the requirement to compensate for damage caused by the occupation is spoken against because this does harm to constructive relations between Lithuania and Russia or even between Lithuania and the western countries. That the *requirement* to recognise Lithuania's occupation also causes Russia's indignation and in turn reduces the possibility of maintaining constructive bilateral relations is not noticed, however.

On the other hand, in evaluating the situation according to the fact that foreign policy decisions of Lithuania should not do harm to its constructive relations with the western states, a different conclusion could be drawn. The West, which does not provide support to Lithuania on the issue of compensating for damage, in essence agrees that Lithuania was occupied and that Russia should also recognise this. Since the demand to recognise the occupation rather than that of compensation for damage caused by the occupation seems more valid, recognition of the occupation at least directly should not be related to the issue of compensation for damage. From this point of view, Estonia could be given as an example that should not be followed. Its Prime Minister Andrus Ansip declared that it would be natural for Russia to apologise for the occupation of Estonia, but he also noted that Tallinn could not guarantee that it would not demand damages even after Russia apologised [48]. It goes without saying that this categorical position of Estonia on the issue of the occupation will not encourage Russia to co-operate.

From a legal point of view, Lithuania's situation is peculiar in that the will of the nation expressed in the 1992 referendum obligates Lithuanian authorities to seek compensation for damage caused by the occupation. "As long as the decision of the nation's referendum of 14 June 1992 has not been revoked by referendum, state institutions of the Republic of Lithuania cannot stop reminding Russia of the Soviet occupation and cannot stop demanding that dam-

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48. BNS, "Estijos premjeras: būtą natūralu, kad Rusija atsiprašytų už okupaciją" (Prime Minister of Estonia: It Would Be Natural for Russia to Apologizes for Occupation), 8 November 2005, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=7911496&categoryID=8&ndate=1131449338> [Reviewed on 28 November 2005].

age resulting from the occupation should be compensated for [49]. Lithuanian and foreign experts also call for implementing the law adopted by the Seimas and raising the issue of compensation for damage caused by the Soviet occupation. It is recommended that this issue should be solved not only at bilateral meetings of Lithuania and Russia but also during multilateral international meetings and at the International Court of Justice at the United Nations [50]. According to Dainius Žalimas, the most important thing is that Lithuania's behaviour in setting its legal requirement should be sufficiently consistent and not become so passive that it would be equal to abandoning the demand for compensation [51]. Thus, in this case it is important for Lithuania to carefully consider and base its arguments on legal arguments. Furthermore, by following legal arguments, Lithuania can deny Russia's claims to cover its losses, which were supposedly incurred when liberating Lithuania from Nazi Germany and assisting it in restoring the country's economy. From the viewpoint of international law, an occupying country cannot receive compensation for the expenses it incurs because it has violated the principles of law and does not acquire any rights from the illegal occupation.

By securitising the occupation, Lithuania wants to ensure that Russia is not allowed to dominate in the information sphere and disseminate its own interpretation of historical events. However, bringing the problem of the occupation up-to-date and securitizing it justify themselves in terms of information security only if legal arguments are used to substantiate the claims. When securitization is carried out on the basis of legally rather than morally valid arguments, the demands that Lithuania makes against Russia are recognised by the international community as well. Russia cannot deny them and the influence of its propaganda weakens. On the other hand, securitization of compensation for damage caused by the occupation is much more difficult. In

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49. Žalimas, "Lietuva privalo reikalauti sovietų okupacijos žalos atlyginimo" (Lithuania Must Demand Compensation for Damage Done by Soviet Occupation), *op.cit.*

50. BNS, "Teisės ekspertas siūlo per tarptautinį teismą reikalauti okupacinės žalos atlyginimo" (Legal Expert Proposes That Compensation for Damage Resulting from Occupation Should Be Demanded in International Court), 25 August 2005, <http://www.delfi.lt/archive/article.php?id=7344042&categoryID=7&ndate=1124948579> [Reviewed on 25 August 2005].

51. BNS, "UR viceministras: Lietuva niekada neatsisakys reikalavimo Rusijai atlyginti okupacijos žalą" (Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs: Lithuania Will Never Give Up Demand That Russia Pay Compensation for Damage Caused by Occupation), *op.cit.*



this case, securitization strains the relations with Russia, and the requirement to pay financial compensation can be used by that country to create a negative image of Lithuania in the international arena. It is therefore more reasonable to solve the issue of compensation for damage with the help of measures of an ordinary political agenda (diplomatic channels, inter-parliamentary relations, etc.)

## **Conclusions**

The theme of occupation is an acute and long-lasting problem in the relations between Lithuania and Russia. Raising issues of recognising the occupation and, in particular, compensating for damage caused by the occupation causes Russia's hostile reaction and encourages it to take aggressive actions against Lithuania. Russia responds to Lithuania's claims by denying the occupation, initiating discussions, and raising doubts about the occupation. Involvement in discussions with Russia over insignificant facts, bringing these details up-to-date, and securitizing them can be used by Russia to create an image of Lithuania as a Russophobic, aggressive state. Lithuania's major aim in protecting the idea of the state is not to allow the occupation to be forgotten or distorted. Therefore securitization of more fundamental aspects than Russia's unwillingness to recognise the occupation is justified in terms of Lithuania's information security: Russia's opinions are not allowed to be dominant in the information sphere, and at the same time Lithuania's legally established position (the formally established will of the nation to demand compensation from Russia for the occupation) and its legal legitimacy from the point of view of international law (the state must consistently deny illegal actions because otherwise it may lose the right to make claims) are defended. By securitizing Russia's misinformation about historical events, Lithuania does not allow it to dominate in the global information sphere. Lithuania's resistance to Russia's information pressure was strengthened even more by the fact that it did not become involved in the discussions about historical events initiated by Russia and the demands to compensate for damage caused by the occupation, which was perceived as an obvious fact. It can be said this proves that thus far the behaviour and decisions of Lithuania are in line with its security interests.

By securitizing the issue of recognising the occupation, Lithuania has to base its arguments on legal rather than moral or pragmatic grounds. Looking at it from the perspective of information security, one can see that the use of moral arguments gives Russia the possibility to create a negative image of Lithuania. And it does not allow Lithuania to be assured of the support of western states, either. A change in reasoning (replacing moral and pragmatic reasoning with legal reasoning) in the claims lodged by Lithuania against Russia would not change their essence: basing the arguments on both moral and legal grounds is also directed towards protecting the idea of the state and the identity and sovereignty of Lithuania. In the meantime, securitizing the issue of compensation for damage, especially when this is done in response to Russia's statements that damage resulting from the occupation will not be compensated for and makes use of moral arguments, is not favourable to Lithuania. It is more reasonable to solve the issue of compensation for damage by de-securitizing it and then relying on the help of measures of the ordinary political agenda. When seeking compensation for damage, one must have in mind that it is a long process. Compensation for damage should not be directly related to recognition of the occupation (having in mind that compensation for damage is impossible without recognising the occupation). And that damage will not be compensated for within a short time should not be interpreted as a factor weakening Lithuania's identity or sovereignty.

Russia's changed position and its active denial of the occupation provoke Lithuania to become involved in a discussion over the occupation and to adopt a hostile attitude towards Russia. Lithuania's involvement in the discussion about the occupation demonstrates that there is no universal agreement about it. If Lithuania responded to Russia's statements by demanding compensation, the fact of the occupation would seem to be taken for granted. However, demands to compensate for damage caused by the occupation can be assessed as Lithuania's strain-oriented foreign policy. It is then simple for Russia to show that its relations with Lithuania are not good because of Lithuania's hostility. This isolates Lithuania from the western states that seek to maintain constructive relations with Russia. In this case, the way out is adherence to the principle that Russia must recognise the occupation, and the issue of compensation for

damage should be solved by way of bilateral negotiations. The demand to recognise Lithuania's occupation also causes Russia to become indignant, however. On the other hand, in this case Lithuania receives understanding: the West, which does not express support for the issue of compensation, recognises the occupation and also believes that Russia should recognise it. By raising this issue, Lithuania therefore protects its position in the global information sphere. Concerning compensation for damage resulting from the occupation, the practice of de-securitization is more useful. The issue could further be solved by following the commitment voiced by the nation in the referendum of 1992 and demanding that damage should be compensated for. However, this should be done by using the measures of the ordinary political agenda, which do not build up tension in relations with Russia.