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Social Democracy in Tsarist Lithuania, 1893–1904

From the demise of Poland-Lithuania in 1795 until their emergence as two independent states in 1918, Lithuania was an integral part of the Russian Empire. At the close of the nineteenth century the Lithuanian provinces of that empire had a total population of approximately 2.6 million. Ethnic Lithuanians, 63 percent of the total number of inhabitants, lived mainly in rural regions and were engaged in farming; the rest were members of other ethnic groups, mostly Jews and Poles, who resided in towns and depended for their livelihood on the urban economy. The dominant agricultural hinterland possessed a considerable degree of ethnic unity. The urban centers were multi-national. The influx of Russian military and civilian personnel, if small in relation to the total population, contributed to this intermixture of nationalities.

Predominance of agriculture, ethnic diversity, and alien rule thus were the essential properties of the historical setting in which Lithuanian social democracy evolved and by which it was molded. The present article will sketch the immediate sources of Lithuanian Marxism, review the two stages in the development of the Social Democratic Party of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Socialdemokratų Partija*, LSDP)¹ before the revolution of 1905, and consider various aspects of the national question.

The Jews and the Poles

The inception of Lithuanian social democracy owes much to the problems and the activities of the Jews. By a series of decrees—the last coming in 1835 under Tsar Nicholas I—the Jews were restricted to a belt of territory in western Russia extending from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, the so-called Pale of Settlement. Within this territory they could move about, and in the latter half of the nineteenth century there was a significant migration to Lithuania—already a major center of Jewish culture. Barred by the government from settling on farmland, these Jewish newcomers flocked to the towns,

1. The name of the party changed several times. It was first known as the Lithuanian Social Democratic Group, then as the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party, and finally as the Social Democratic Party of Lithuania. Its widely used abbreviation, LSDP, is retained in the present article.

The author gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance rendered by the National Endowment for the Humanities,

straining an economy already troubled with an excessive supply of labor.² The lot of the Jewish laborers, like that of other laborers, was not a happy one, and socialist ideas found numerous supporters among them.³

A mode of existence conducive to protest eventually combined with another development, the appearance in Lithuania of persons committed to revolutionary causes. There were a number of revolutionaries among those who had to leave the Russian interior. Others converged toward Lithuania for the express purpose of working among the Jewish laborers there.⁴ By 1892 Jewish social democracy in Lithuania had acquired a measure of organization. Secret groups appeared first in Vilnius (Vilna), then in Kaunas (Kovno) and other localities.

Julius Martov, an exile who in 1893–95 had lived and worked in Vilnius, wrote a profile of the Jewish social democratic elite there.⁵ Its leader was Alexander Kremer. Taciturn yet convincing, endowed with a clear mind and conversant with the ways of conspiratorial existence, he was a capable organizer of underground work, though not a good agitator. Kremer was the head of the organization, but according to Martov its soul was M. D. Srednitskaia. Although lacking in physical strength, she was always on the go and in good spirits, and she immersed herself in the organization's everyday concerns. The group's most erudite Marxist theoretician was I. L. Aizenshtat, whose wife, Liubov Levenson, an indefatigable and accomplished propagandist, enjoyed a great popularity among the workers. In matters of propaganda and organization Samuel Gozhansky was the outstanding figure. Unlike most of his collaborators who were under police surveillance, Gozhansky was a "legal" person, a teacher in a Jewish school. Interested in questions of general theory, Gozhansky endeavored to impart a systematic and unified character to the activities of the Jews. Finally, Tsemakh Kopelzon concentrated on relations with other organizations operating in the towns of Lithuania and Poland.

This array of Jewish leaders, to which many other names could be appended, made notable contributions to Marxism in Russia. Two achievements merit a brief mention: the adoption of a new strategic device to advance class interests, and the attempt to give the Jewish social democratic movement in Russia an organized character. Irrespective of their success in molding an underground web of mutual-aid societies and strike funds, the Jewish leaders

2. See A. Lietuvis [Alfonas Moravskis], "Lietuvos darbininkų judėjimo istorija sąryšy su Lietuvos valstybės atgimimo judėjimu" [A History of the Lithuanian Labor Movement in Connection with the Movement Toward a Rebirth of the Lithuanian State], *Kultūra*, 1933, no. 1, pp. 13–14 (hereafter cited as Moravskis in *Kultūra*); A. Lietuvis, "Die lithauische Arbeiterbewegung," *Die Neue Zeit*, no. 49 (1899), p. 710.

3. *Socialdemokratas*, May 6, 1926, p. 2.

4. Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1933, no. 2, p. 70.

5. Iu. Martov, *Zapiski sotsialdemokrata* (Berlin, 1922), pp. 196–98.

undertook a thorough review of the nature of their work in 1893–94. Until then their efforts—termed propaganda—had consisted mainly of self-education and the introductory study of Marxism, and had been limited to small workers' circles. What now became a matter of major concern to many leading socialists was their inability to reach the laboring masses and involve them in the socialist cause. The corrective they intended to use to accomplish that purpose was agitation. An adaptation of a technique used by the Union of Polish Workers, agitation would focus for the time being not on the imperatives of Marxism but on workers' everyday needs and demands. The means of communication would be the language that ordinary laborers understood—Yiddish in the case of the Vilnius Jews. The adherents to the new strategy seemed to be convinced that eventually the battle for workers' day-to-day economic needs would mature into a class confrontation on broader political issues.⁶

The new plan required written elaboration. *On Agitation (Ob agitatsii)*, a pamphlet prepared by Kremer and edited by Martov, answered the need. The new idea it articulated met initially with strenuous opposition, both in St. Petersburg, where it appeared in 1894–95, and in Vilnius. When it prevailed, *On Agitation* became a guide to action which “within a few years made socialism the militant faith of a sizable portion of the Russian proletariat.”⁷

As early as 1895 the Vilnius leaders recognized the need to equip their extensive activities with greater unity and direction. Martov pointed out that their goal was to form a specifically Jewish organization to lead and educate the Jewish proletariat. The organization's main concern, he said, would be the economic, civic, and political emancipation of the Jewish working class in Russia.⁸ A conference of Jewish social democrats representing several cities then met in Vilnius and concurred in the need for such an organization.⁹

The founding of the General Jewish Workers' Union in Lithuania, Poland, and Russia, known as the Bund, occurred in 1897. The delegates felt that the possible formation of an all-Russian social democratic party, which would attempt to include all the social democratic groups operating in the empire, necessitated prior creation of an exclusively Jewish organization. Only so united could the Jewish proletariat hope to win for itself a measure of autonomy

6. See Leopold H. Haimson, *The Russian Marxists and the Origins of Bolshevism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1955), pp. 71–72, 82; Richard Pipes, *Social Democracy and the St. Petersburg Labor Movement, 1885–1897* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), pp. 60–62; Adam B. Ulam, *The Bolsheviks* (New York, 1965), pp. 118–20; Leonard Schapiro, *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (New York, 1964), pp. 23–24, 28; Martov, *Zapiski sotsial-demokrata*, pp. 224–26, 230–32.

7. Ulam, *Bolsheviks*, p. 119.

8. See N. A. Bukhbinder, “I s'ezd ‘Vseobshchego evreiskogo rabocheho souiza’ ‘Bunda,’” *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, 1924, no. 11, p. 203. See also Martov, *Zapiski sotsial-demokrata*, pp. 244–46; Schapiro, *Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 23.

9. Bukhbinder, “I s'ezd ‘Vseobshchego evreiskogo rabocheho souiza’ ‘Bunda,’” p. 203.

within the future Russian party, or to play an important part in it.¹⁰ The coming of the Bund was a momentous development for Russian as well as Jewish social democracy. A mass movement with a membership of twenty-three thousand in 1904,¹¹ the Bund participated prominently in the affairs of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP), which it helped to form in 1898 and in which it enrolled as an autonomous unit. However, Jewish national aspirations soon ensnared the Bund in a protracted conflict with many members of the Russian party, and relations between the two became strained.

Progress in the development of the Jewish labor movement sharpened the conflict between employers, who were generally supported by the government, and the employees. Seeking additional support and greater effectiveness, the Jewish leaders, as early as 1891, established contacts with the Lithuanians, hoping to prevail upon them to begin systematic socialist activity among the Christian workers in Vilnius and elsewhere. This Jewish initiative acted as a stimulant to Lithuanian social democracy.¹²

The first revolutionary and socialist groups among Christian workers emerged in the years from 1889 to 1892. Adverse conditions in agriculture toward the end of the 1880s caused a migration of rural laborers to the towns, a development which further weakened the general economy and made the hard-pressed workers more responsive to socialist ideas than they probably would have been in prosperous times. Incipient socialism among these workers divided them into two ethnic camps, the Polish and the Lithuanian. Founded in 1892, the Polish Socialist Party (*Polska Partia Socjalistyczna*, PPS) aspired to extend its activities not only throughout the whole of Poland but throughout Lithuania as well. The intentions of the PPS reflected the view then shared by many Poles that Lithuania was but a Polish province and Lithuanian separatism a heresy. Early in 1893 a number of Polish intellectuals in Vilnius met to discuss a report by an organizer from Warsaw, Stanisław Mendelson, who called for the formation of a PPS chapter in Vilnius. A majority of those present agreed with him, although some favored a separate Lithuanian organization.¹³ Thus, a nucleus of Polish socialism under the direction of Aleksander Sulikiewicz was established in Vilnius.

Although the PPS attached a good deal of importance to its work in Lithuania, it was not entirely successful there. Concerned mainly with the

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 205–6.

11. Schapiro, *Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 22.

12. Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1933, no. 2, p. 71. Cf. V. Merkys, *Narodnikai ir pirmieji marksistai Lietuvoje* [The Populists and the First Marxists in Lithuania] (Vilnius, 1967), p. 115.

13. Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1933, no. 3, p. 138; *Socialdemokratas*, May 6, 1926, p. 2; Merkys, *Narodnikai*, p. 123; Ulrich Haustein, *Sozialismus und nationale Frage in Polen* (Cologne, 1969), pp. 137, 141.

spread of its literature, the PPS relied on the area's Polish intelligentsia and had little if any support among the workers.¹⁴ Polish-Lithuanian rivalry in Vilnius continued until 1906, when the PPS units in Lithuania yielded to the LSDP.¹⁵

LSDP: Stage One, 1893–1899

The genealogy of Lithuanian Marxism, which as a political movement eventually evolved into the LSDP, was linked to the activities of two socialist groups. One of them, organized by Boleslovas Urbonavičius, soon fell under the influence of the newly created PPS. Its work with the Christian workers in Vilnius was extensive, although hastily conducted. Urbonavičius would pick out the most promising workers, instruct them in the essentials of socialism, and then send them off to distribute socialist literature and promote the further development of class consciousness. Urbonavičius felt that revolution in Russia could be accomplished in a relatively short period if the revolutionaries in Russia and its borderlands acted in concert.¹⁶ E. Sponti, a Belorussian and an ex-officer in the Russian army, headed the second group. Lack of proper attention to the needs of conspiratorial work on the part of the Urbonavičius group, as well as its affinity with the PPS, led the Sponti organization to take an independent course. It trained its future agitators in a more thorough and methodical way, trying to provide them with the tools and qualities essential for underground work.¹⁷

The two groups had much in common. Both propagated socialist ideas among the same categories of labor, both relied on Polish publications, and both communicated in Polish. Still, they were independent and even quite

14. V. Perazich, "Nakanune pervogo s'ezda," *Proletarskaia revoliutsia*, 1928, no. 2, p. 25; Martov, *Zapiski sotsialdemokrata*, p. 212; Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1931, no. 5, p. 278; J. Jurginis, V. Merkys, and J. Žiugžda, eds., *Lietuvos TSR istorija* [A History of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic], vol. 2 (Vilnius, 1963), p. 183; Lietuvos TSR Mokslų Akademijs, *Mažoji lietuviškoji tarybinė enciklopedija* [The Small Lithuanian Soviet Encyclopedia] (Vilnius, 1968), 2:324 (hereafter *MLTE*).

15. On the relations between the PPS and the LSDP see Steponas Kairys, *Lietuva budo* [Lithuania Was Awakening] (New York, 1957), pp. 273, 288–304.

16. Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1933, no. 3, p. 139; *Socialdemokratas*, May 6, 1926, p. 2; Mikas, "Lietuvos socijaldemokratų partija" [The Social Democratic Party of Lithuania], *Kova* [Struggle], May 17, 1907, p. 277; V. Kapsukas, "Pirmieji L.S.D. žingsniai" [The First Steps of the Social Democratic Party of Lithuania], *Naujoji gadynė* [The New Era], no. 3 (August 1916), p. 138 (hereafter Kapsukas in *Naujoji gadynė*); Institute of Party History, "Lietuvos komunistų partijos istorijos apybraiža" [A Sketch of the History of the Communist Party of Lithuania], *Komunistas*, 1967, no. 1, pp. 89–90 (hereafter *Apybraiža in Komunistas*).

17. *Socialdemokratas*, May 6, 1926, p. 2; Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1933, no. 3, pp. 139–40; Mikas, "Lietuvos socijaldemokratų partija," *Kova*, May 17, 1907, p. 277; Kapsukas in *Naujoji gadynė*, p. 138.

different from each other. On May 1, 1893, the two uncharacteristically joined to observe May Day, the first such demonstration by the Christian workers in Vilnius.¹⁸ Soon thereafter the local police, disturbed by the spread of Polish socialist literature, came upon the Urbonavičius group, and with the aid of persons who viewed socialist agitation with disfavor, government authorities made short shrift of it. The Sponti organization survived. But the fear of police action forced it to interrupt its activities for several months, and it suffered a partial loss of influence and contacts.¹⁹

The founders of the LSDP were two descendants of Lithuania's nobility who knew hardly any Lithuanian—Alfonas Moravskis and Andrius Domaševičius. Moravskis, a former student at the universities of Kharkov, Kazan, and Kiev, moved to Vilnius in 1892. Rather gloomy, taciturn, and overly cautious, he spent much of his time establishing contacts with workers. To escape possible arrest, Moravskis, with the consent of Domaševičius, left Lithuania in 1897 for Western Europe, where a year later he formed the Union of Lithuanian Social Democrats Abroad. Through it he tried to communicate with Lithuanian socialists in Western Europe and the United States, and to acquaint Western socialists with socialism in his country. After the turn of the century his commitment to revolutionary action ebbed.²⁰ Domaševičius, a physician who had studied at Kiev University and practiced medicine in St. Petersburg, settled in Vilnius in 1893. There he became one of the "twelve Lithuanian apostles" who attempted to halt the further Polonization of that city. An obstinate man, imbued with initiative and enthusiasm, and "handsome as a doll," Domaševičius was popular and influential with the local leftist intelligentsia. He was briefly arrested in 1897, then rearrested in 1899 and exiled to Siberia. Released in 1904, he returned to Vilnius to become a central figure in the 1905 revolution in Lithuania.²¹

Moravskis and Domaševičius are rightly considered the builders of the LSDP. But other prominent names were also associated with the party at one time or another during the 1890s. Stanisław Trusiewicz was one of them. A former member of the Proletariat Party, he was better versed in Marxist literature than any of his colleagues. In 1894–95 Trusiewicz, Moravskis, and Domaševičius worked in unison, but in 1896 their cooperation found a snag in

18. Merkys, *Narodnikai*, pp. 130–31; Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1933, no. 3, p. 140; Jurginis et al., *Lietuvos TSR istorija*, 2:174.

19. Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1933, no. 3, p. 141; Jurginis et al., *Lietuvos TSR istorija*, 2:172.

20. Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, pp. 265–66; *MLTE*, 2:633.

21. Mykolas Biržiška, *Lietuvių tautos kelias* [The Path of the Lithuanian Nation], 2 vols. (Los Angeles, 1952–53), 2:55–57; *MLTE*, 1:414; Martov, *Zapiski sotsialdemokrata*, p. 211; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, p. 266; Kipras Bielinis, *Penktieji metai* [The Year 1905] (New York, 1959), p. 147.

the national question.²² Feliks Dzierżyński attended the 1896 congress of the LSDP as a representative of the socialist youth in Vilnius. In 1897 the party ordered him to Kaunas, where he was to form an LSDP chapter. He was arrested there later that year and thus was removed from party work until 1899, when he escaped from his confinement in Viatka Guberniia. Like many members of the landowning class from which he descended, Dzierżyński disapproved of Lithuanian separatism. He deserted the LSDP, helped to form the Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania (Sojaldemokracja Królestwa Polskiego i Litwy, SDKPiL), and then gravitated toward the RSDLP.²³ Finally, Vladimir Perazich, a Serb who had studied at Vienna University and had been a member of the Austrian Social Democratic Party, worked with the LSDP in 1896–97. He, too, opposed the national inclinations of the Lithuanian party, and in 1898 joined the RSDLP.²⁴ Trusiewicz, Dzierżyński, and Perazich ended up as Bolsheviks.

In 1893 Sponti, who had to leave Vilnius, needed a successor to continue his work there. Closer to the Lithuanians than to the PPS, Sponti entrusted his following to Moravskis.²⁵ At that time the number of organized workers, mostly but not exclusively in Vilnius, was between two hundred and three hundred. This band of socialists was led by a secret nucleus of about twenty workers and intellectuals.²⁶ Like Jewish socialists, the Lithuanians initially aimed at improving workers' economic well-being and sharpening their sense of class identity. In general, their conception of party operations bordered on "economism." Occasionally their activities acquired a political note, too, because agitation against a repressive Russian government was difficult to avoid.²⁷ Conditions of alien rule helped to politicize Lithuanian social democracy.

22. M. K. Dziewanowski, *The Communist Party of Poland* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), p. 26; Martov, *Zapiski sotsialdemokrata*, p. 212; K. Zalewski [Stanisław Trusiewicz], "Iš socializmo istorijos Lietuvoj" [From the History of Socialism in Lithuania], *Socialdemokratas*, no. 6–8 (May 1916), pp. 45–47.

23. Jurginis et al., *Lietuvos TSR istorija*, 2:176–77, 179; *MLTE*, 1:453.

24. *MLTE*, 2:814–15.

25. Merkys, *Narodnikai*, p. 116; Kapsukas in *Naujoji gadynė*, pp. 138–39; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, p. 271; Jurginis et al., *Lietuvos TSR istorija*, 2:172. Cf. E. Sponti, "Kratkaia avtobiografija," *Na zare rabocheho dvizheniia v Moskve*, ed. S. I. Mitskevich (Moscow, 1932), p. 98.

26. Apybraiža in *Komunistas*, 1967, no. 1, p. 90; J. Komodaitė, "Komunistų bendražygis" [A Fellow Combatant of Communists], *Komunistas*, 1965, no. 11, p. 62; *Socialdemokratas*, May 13, 1926, p. 2.

27. *Przyczynę do programu Litewskiej socjal-demokracji* reviewed in *Varpas* [The Bell], 1897, no. 4, p. 55; Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1931, no. 4, p. 200; V. Kapsukas, *Trumpa Lietuvos Social-Demokratų Partijos istorija* [A Short History of the Social Democratic Party of Lithuania], vol. 1 (St. Petersburg, 1918), p. 15 (hereafter *Trumpa partijos istorija*); Kapsukas in *Naujoji gadynė*, pp. 139–40; *Socialdemokratas*, May 6, 1926, p. 2,

The LSDP began to develop into a political party in 1895 with a series of consultations followed by a preparatory conference. The year was a time of decision. It witnessed an exchange of views which presaged divergent roads for the Vilnius social democrats. Conflicting national objectives first separated the Jews and the Christians and then split the latter, too. The purposes of the talks between the Lithuanian-Polish and the Jewish groups were to chart their future relations and to reach an agreement on matters of agitation. Representing the first group were Moravskis, Domaševičius, and Trusiewicz. Kopelzon and Gozhansky usually spoke for the second. (It appears that members of the PPS took no part in these deliberations.) The Lithuanian-Polish spokesmen advanced the idea of a party designed to unite the Lithuanians and the Jews for work in Lithuania. The Jews found this proposal unacceptable, perhaps for two reasons. They were bent on the formation of a separate party to represent the Jewish proletariat in Russia. Also, the Jews generally considered themselves Russian Marxists, whereas the Lithuanians and the Poles were beginning to develop their own separate identities. The question of agitation presented no undue problems. The two sides agreed to conduct agitation on the basis of workers' everyday needs, and to be in touch with each other.²⁸ All of which meant that in the future, as in the past, the efforts of the Lithuanians and the Jews would be mutually supportive but separate.

Had it not been for conflicting national allegiances which destroyed the unity between the Trusiewicz and the Domaševičius-Moravskis groups, 1895 would have been an auspicious year for Lithuanian social democracy. Trusiewicz feared that the forging of strong ties between Lithuania's social democrats and liberals, sought by Domaševičius and Moravskis, would be detrimental to the former. Unable to sway the two, Trusiewicz in 1896 founded his own party, the Union of Workers in Lithuania. The party stipulated the establishment of a democratic government in Russia as one of its goals. It further proposed that the Russia of tomorrow should grant its subject nationalities a number of concessions, including a measure of self-government. Lastly, it stated its readiness to become an autonomous member in a future all-Russian social democratic party.²⁹

and May 13, 1926, p. 2; Lietuvis, "Die lithauische Arbeiterbewegung," p. 711; Apybraiža in *Komunistas*, 1967, no. 1, pp. 92-93. Cf. V. Akimov [Makhnovets], *Očerki razvitiia sotsialdemokratii v Rossii* (St. Petersburg, 1906), p. 17; Schapiro, *Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, pp. 24, 28, 31; A. Lietuvis and N. N. [Alfonsas Moravskis and Jonas Vileišis], *Augis darbininkų judėjimo Lietuvoje* [Growth of the Labor Movement in Lithuania] (Plymouth, Pa., 1900), pp. 25-31, 56-57.

28. Zalewski, "Iš socializmo istorijos Lietuvoj," p. 46; Martov, *Zapiski sotsialdemokrata*, p. 210; Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1931, no. 5, p. 276.

29. Zalewski, "Iš socializmo istorijos Lietuvoj," p. 47; Georg W. Strobel, *Quellen*

The Union of Workers in Lithuania was a failing body; it had some success only in Vilnius. In 1899–1900 Trusiewicz and Dzierżyński, who also fell away from the Domaševičius-Moravskis axis, joined Rosa Luxemburg in founding the SDKPiL. In 1906 this hybrid party became a part of the RSDLP. An impressive leadership and a purported membership (in 1907) of twenty-five thousand enabled the SDKPiL to play a prominent part in the subsequent development of Russian and Polish social democracy.³⁰

The conference of Lithuanian social democrats which laid the basis for the founding of the LSDP occurred toward the end of 1895. The conferees agreed upon a program congruent with the views of Domaševičius and Moravskis. The period of inception ended with the first, or constituent, party congress in Vilnius, in 1896. The thirteen delegates formally adopted the party program drafted the preceding year, including a call for the formation of a federal state without Russia.³¹ (A discussion of the national issue appears in the last portion of this article.)

Besides the position on the national question, the program offered an analysis, in Marxist terms, of the local economy, expounding the view that existing social and economic ills could be corrected only if socialism supplanted capitalism. It also referred to the economic and political nature of the class struggle and assigned to the proletariat a key role in the quest for a socialist future. Finally, after specifying an array of desired civil liberties and economic aims, the program ended with statements of party policy on a number of items: matters of tactics, relations with the Jewish proletariat, and attitudes toward the Russians.³² Various strands of experience were woven into the program. Referring to the proposed solution of the national question, a founder of the LSDP recalled that the example of the multinational Swiss federation was especially popular with the social democrats of similarly diverse Vilnius.³³

zur Geschichte des Kommunismus in Polen, 1878–1918 (Cologne, 1968), p. 38; L. Martov et al., eds., *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii v nachale XX-go veka*, 4 vols. in 6 (St. Petersburg, 1914), 3:286.

30. Kapsukas, *Trumpa partijos istorija*, 1:12; M. Beržas [Zigmas Angarietis], *Antrosios Lietuvos Socialdemokratų Partijos darbai ir mokslas* [Works and Science of the Second Social Democratic Party of Lithuania] (Kaunas, 1925), p. 10; V. Mitskevich-Kapsukas, "Istoki i zarozhdenie kommunisticheskoi partii Litvy," *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, 1929, no. 1, p. 156; Z. Patirgas, "Keli bruožai iš Lietuvos socialdemokratų praeities" [Several Aspects from the History of Lithuania's Social Democrats], *Žiburiai* [Lights], May 18, 1946, p. 3; K. Grinius, *Atsiminimai ir mintys* [Memories and Thoughts], vol. 1 (Tübingen, 1947), p. 172; Strobel, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Kommunismus in Polen*, pp. 38–39; Jurginis et al., *Lietuvos TSR istorija*, 2:180–81; Michał Römer, *Litwa* (Lwów, 1908), pp. 272–73. Cf. F. E. Dzerzhinsky, *Isbrannye proizvedeniia*, vol. 1 (Moscow, 1957), p. 2; Dziewanowski, *Communist Party of Poland*, p. 51.

31. Jurginis et al., *Lietuvos TSR istorija*, 2:175; *Socialdemokratas*, May 20, 1926, p. 2.

32. See the LSDP program of 1896 in Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, pp. 389–94.

33. Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1931, no. 4, p. 199.

Also, after a passing reference to views current among Austrian socialists, he singled out the clearly separatist platform of the PPS, which made a strong impression upon the Lithuanians.³⁴ A recent textual analysis of the LSDP programs has established as their main sources the resolutions of the Second International, the program of the German Social Democratic Party adopted at Erfurt in 1891, and the platform of the PPS.³⁵ The influences over the LSDP were clearly Western.

The following of the LSDP during the first stage of its existence could not have been large, and it was concentrated mainly in Vilnius. In factories and shops combat funds were formed. Those most active in them were urged to enroll in the LSDP. Composed of workers and members of the intelligentsia, the Central Group of Agitators directed the work of the funds and of individual party members. In turn, the group was subordinated to the party's central committee elected by the congress.³⁶ It is possible that this mode of organization was patterned on the one devised by the Jews.³⁷

The illegal newspapers of the LSDP were published in Lithuanian and Polish. Three issues of *Lietuvos darbininkas* (*The Lithuanian Worker*; its Polish edition was entitled *Robotnik Litewski*), published in Switzerland, France, and East Prussia, appeared in 1896–99. Their publication was facilitated by Julian Marchlewski and other members of the Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland, whom Domaševičius and Moravskis contacted in Paris in 1896 and 1897. (In 1900 the name of the party was changed to Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania.) In 1897–98 nine issues of *Echo życia robotniczego* (*Echo of Workers' Life*) were reproduced on a hectograph in Vilnius for the Polish-speaking readers. Two issues of *Aidas Lietuvos darbininkų gyvenimo* (*Echo of the Life of Lithuanian Workers*) appeared in 1899, the first issue in Polish and Lithuanian, the second only in Lithuanian. Both were published in East Prussia.³⁸

34. Ibid., and Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1931, no. 5, p. 275; V. Merkys, "Lietuvių SDP pirmųjų programų kilmė" [Origin of the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party's First Programs], in *Lietuvos TSR Mokslų Akademijos Darbai* [Works of the Academy of Sciences of the Lithuanian SSR], ser. A, no. 3 (1966), pp. 136, 145; Kapsukas, *Trumpa partijos istorija*, 1:9; Kapsukas in *Naujoji gadynė*, p. 141.

35. Merkys, "Lietuvių SDP," pp. 136–38. See also Mikas, "Lietuvos socijaldemokratų partija," *Kova*, May 24, 1907, p. 295.

36. Jurginis et al., *Lietuvos TSR istorija*, 2:177.

37. Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1931, no. 5, p. 275. Cf. Martov, *Zapiski sotsialdemokrata*, pp. 200–201.

38. V. Biržiška, "Lapelis iš Lietuvos S. D. partijos istorijos" [A Little Sheet from the History of the Social Democratic Party of Lithuania], *Darbas* [Labor], 1950, no. 1, pp. 4–5; Merkys, "Lietuvių SDP," p. 136; *MLTE*, 1:21, 456, and 2:371; Jurginis et al., *Lietuvos TSR istorija*, 2:176.

LSDP: Stage Two, 1901–1904

A police crackdown on revolutionaries in the early part of 1899 terminated the first period in the history of the LSDP. It also modified the nature of that party's activities during the period that followed. The arrests of 1899 led to a large-scale political trial in Vilnius, which resulted in the banishment of more than forty persons, including Domaševičius and Trusiewicz. Others fled the country to avoid a similar fate.³⁹ This government sweep eliminated the entire leadership of the LSDP, and for a time the party itself virtually ceased to exist.⁴⁰

The resurgence of the LSDP in 1901–2 was the work of a new breed of men, among whom two Lithuanian students deserve mention. Vladas Sirutavičius, a remnant of Lithuania's aristocracy, was enrolled in the St. Petersburg Technological Institute. He was a well-liked person and a gifted speaker who knew how to handle theoretical matters in a way that ordinary workers understood. In 1899 Sirutavičius went to Vilnius, where, after consultations with several workers, he formed a provisional central committee.⁴¹ A year later another student from that same institute, Steponas Kairys, arrived and joined in the work of restoring the party to life. Kairys was entrusted with the conduct of party propaganda; most of the main LSDP appeals were credited to him. He served on the central committee continuously from 1901 to 1944, although his involvement in party affairs during 1908–11 was minimal. Until his death in New York in 1964 Kairys held a pivotal position in Lithuanian social democracy.⁴²

A discussion of the LSDP elite during the 1901–4 period should also include several other persons. From 1902 to 1905 Augustinas Janulaitis edited *Darbininkų balsas* (*The Voice of Labor*), the party's organ published in East Prussia. Impetuous in his habits and frowning on compromise, Janulaitis did not hesitate to attack his political opponents, namely, Russian officials and Lithuanian moderates.⁴³ Kipras Bielinis, the man of forty cryptonyms, was responsible for the first anti-Russian demonstration in Lithuania during the revolution of 1905. The son of a man famous in Lithuanian history

39. Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, p. 286; Kapsukas, *Trumpa partijos istorija*, 1:15. Cf. Apybraiža in *Komunistas*, 1967, no. 2, p. 84.

40. Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1931, no. 6–7, p. 333; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, pp. 26, 38; Kapsukas, *Trumpa partijos istorija*, 1:16.

41. Biržiška, *Lietuvių tautos kelias*, 2:48, 151; Bielinis, *Penktieji metai*, p. 156; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, pp. 322–23; P. Čepėnas and J. Girnius, eds., *Lietuvių enciklopedija* (Boston, 1962), 27:505–6.

42. *Lietuvių enciklopedija*, 10:253; *MLTE*, 2:18; Bielinis, *Penktieji metai*, p. 118.

43. Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, pp. 118, 340; *MLTE*, 1:672; Biržiška, *Lietuvių tautos kelias*, 2:57–59.

for smuggling illegal books into the country, Bielinis was said to have organized thirty political meetings and demonstrations in 1905. Aleksandras Birinčikas, a laborer, was, like Domaševičius, a link between the two stages in the development of the LSDP. One of the party's founders, Birinčikas was arrested in 1897, but he resumed party work upon his release in 1904. According to contemporaries he was without peer as a speaker and organizer.⁴⁴ Also active in the LSDP was Jonas Biliūnas, a writer who died of consumption at twenty-eight. He formed primary party organizations, wrote political booklets, and contributed to illegal liberal and socialist journals.

One might also comment on the role of Vincas Mickevičius-Kapsukas, the man who in 1919 was chosen as the head of a Communist government in Lithuania and Belorussia. Briefly enrolled in Bern University, where he studied sociology and political economy, Kapsukas began his political career in liberal quarters, contributing to some of their periodicals and assisting in the editing of others. Then came a period of transition. In 1903–5 Kapsukas first gravitated toward the LSDP, then severed his ties with it and formed the ephemeral Lithuanian Social Democratic Labor Party, and finally again coalesced with the LSDP. Communist writers emphasize that this particular quarrel between Kapsukas and the LSDP was due primarily to policy differences.⁴⁵ It is true that a variation in party tactics was apparent, but other causes were equally important.⁴⁶ It seems that there were a number of persons, presumably including Kapsukas, who were disenchanted with the liberals but not yet affiliated with the social democrats. Experiencing inner struggle, doubt, and vacillation, they were going to publish a journal in which they planned to discuss problems of policy and purpose. However, they put off publication in the hope that the LSDP would agree to sponsor it. Kapsukas joined that party in 1903.⁴⁷

Meanwhile another, perhaps decisive, matter arose. A personality conflict developed between Kapsukas and Janulaitis, the man who was both the editor of the main LSDP publication and the party's representative abroad. Kapsukas asked the party's central committee to intervene and settle the dispute, but the central committee hedged. Unable or unwilling to air his views in existing periodicals and eager for action, Kapsukas began to publish his own magazine in 1904. Initially he had no plans for any kind of separate social democratic organization, and was still hoping for a reconciliation with the LSDP. But

44. Bielinis, *Penktieji metai*, p. 156; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, p. 336.

45. Vincas Kapsukas, *Raštai* [Works], vol. 1 (Vilnius, 1960), pp. 93–94; Apybraiža in *Komunistas*, 1967, no. 3, p. 90; *MLTE*, 2:395.

46. On the efforts of the Kapsukas group to find support among agricultural workers see Steponas Kairys, *Tau, Lietuva* [To You, Lithuania] (Boston, 1964), pp. 54, 59, 62–63; Biržiška, *Lietuvių tautos kelias*, 2:119.

47. Kapsukas, *Raštai*, 1:262–63.

when it became obvious that the party stood by its editor, Kapsukas broke away from the LSDP and formed his own group.⁴⁸ The rupture, however, was short-lived. In 1905 Kapsukas resubmitted to the LSDP and was elected to its central committee. His Lithuanian Social Democratic Labor Party ceased to exist.

A majority of party leaders were sons of farmers with medium holdings. Professionally they belonged to the middle class, and were studying to be lawyers, engineers, writers, and professors. At the time of the party's reconstruction most of them were under twenty-five. Together with the rank and file they discussed problems of special interest to socialists, such as the history of the labor movement in the West and in Lithuania, the nature of the capitalist economy, and the respective roles of employers and employees. Kairys recalls that ordinary workers and their educated leaders developed relations of mutual trust.⁴⁹

The LSDP was similar in organization to many other socialist parties. Its supreme organ was the party congress. From 1896 through 1905 six congresses were convened, all of them in Vilnius. Congresses were usually dominated by educated party members, although workers were also represented. A central committee elected by the congress directed the party's everyday work. Between the central party institution and its primary organizations were regional formations—ten in 1905. The regional organizations held conferences and formed committees to coordinate party activities within their jurisdictions.⁵⁰ Unfortunately, figures on membership in the LSDP during the 1901–4 period are not available. The approximate following could perhaps be inferred from the circulation of the party's main newspaper, which ranged from thirteen hundred to two thousand copies.⁵¹ In 1907 the LSDP was believed to have about eighteen hundred members.⁵²

From 1901 through 1906 the party produced thirty-six issues of *Darbininkų balsas* (*The Voice of Labor*). To its Polish supporters the LSDP offered *Echo życia robotniczego na Litwie* (*Echo of Workers' Life in Lithuania*); its nine issues came out between 1902 and 1906. *Darbininkų balsas* served mainly as a propaganda device, concentrating on current political events. It contained

48. On the divergence between Kapsukas and the LSDP see *ibid.*, 1:263–67, 5:402–6, 414–19; Kapsukas (Leipzig) to Šaulys (Bern), Apr. 13, 1904, University of Pennsylvania, Šaulys Archives, f. 58; Kapsukas (Tilsit) to Šaulys (Bern), Dec. 7, 1904, Šaulys Archives, f. 58; "Vincas Mickevičius-Kapsukas," *Darbo visuomenė* [Labor Society], 1935, no. 2, pp. 46–47; A. Petrika, *Lietuvių tautinio atbudimo pionieriai* [Pioneers of Lithuanian National Awakening] (Brooklyn, 1939), pp. 194–95; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, p. 164. See also statement by the central committee of the LSDP quoted in *Kova*, Aug. 18, 1905, pp. 106–8.

49. Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, pp. 323–24.

50. *Ibid.*, pp. 333–34, 342, 345.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 329.

52. *MLTE*, 2:396.

next to nothing on theory and tactics. In addition to periodicals, the party also resorted to pamphlets and appeals. The number of pamphlets listed in *Darbininkų balsas* in 1904 was close to forty. LSDP appeals were issued both by the central committee and the local organizations, sometimes in editions of as many as fifty thousand copies.⁵³

The new LSDP differed from the old one in a number of ways. For one, it acquired a degree of ethnic unity that it did not have previously, a change applicable to both leaders and ordinary members. Arrests tended to limit the range of LSDP operations to Lithuania proper. Also, as the party enlarged its activities beyond the environs of the multinational Vilnius area, spreading into provincial towns and rural communities, it enlisted a body of supporters who were predominantly Lithuanian. The Polish language, too, gradually receded and was replaced by Lithuanian.⁵⁴ The rebuilt party differed from its former self in yet another respect, its socioeconomic base. Earlier the social democrats had concentrated their efforts on city workers, especially on those in small craft industries.⁵⁵ Like socialists in many other countries, they held the peasantry in low regard.⁵⁶ But after the turn of the century they redirected their search for support to include the amorphous category of the underprivileged: farm labor, landless peasants, and especially the small holders of land. This strategy brought the party to a point where its sources of support were predominantly rural.⁵⁷ Moreover, as unrest in the Russian Empire mounted, most of Lithuania's rural youth who tended toward the LSDP were probably attracted by that party's activism, not by its class

53. *Lietuvių enciklopedija*, 5:329; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, pp. 329–30, 326–27.

54. Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1931, no. 6–7, p. 333; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, pp. 324–25; Bielinis, *Penktieji metai*, pp. 19, 21; Biržiška, *Lietuvių tautos kelias*, 2:118; Römer, *Litwa*, p. 280.

55. See resolutions of the 1903 party conference in *Vienybė Lietuvininkų* [Unity of Lithuanians], no. 20 (1903), p. 234; see also Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, pp. 287, 324; Merkys, *Narodnikai*, pp. 131, 144; Apybraiža in *Komunistas*, 1967, no. 1, pp. 95, 110; Kapsukas, *Trumpa partijos istorija*, 1:13; Jurginis et al., *Lietuvos TSR istorija*, 2:175; Lietuvis, "Die lithauische Arbeiterbewegung," p. 710; Mikas, "Lietuvos socialdemokratų partija," *Kova*, May 24, 1907, pp. 295–96; Sponti, "Kratkaia avtobiografija," p. 97; Römer, *Litwa*, pp. 282–84.

56. See Beržaitis [Jonas Vileišis], "Lietuvių darbininkų judėjimas" [The Lithuanian Labor Movement], *Varpas*, 1904, no. 2, p. 24.

57. Kapsukas, *Trumpa partijos istorija*, 1:18; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, pp. 283, 324–25; *Vienybė Lietuvininkų*, no. 20 (1903), p. 234; *Kova*, Nov. 3, 1905, p. 194; Beržas, *Antrosios Lietuvos Socialdemokratų Partijos*, p. 13; Z. Angarietis, "Lietuvos Komunistų Partijos įsikūrimas" [The Formation of the Communist Party of Lithuania], *Komunistas*, 1928, no. 5, p. 3; P. Ruseckas, *Į laisvę* [Toward Freedom] (Kaunas, 1919), p. 26; Mitskevich-Kapsukas, "Istoki i zarozhdenie kommunisticheskoi partii Litvy," p. 156; Kairys, *Tau, Lietuva*, p. 53; Bielinis, *Penktieji metai*, pp. 21 and 28; Biržiška, *Lietuvių tautos kelias*, 2:118–19; V. Mickevičius-Kapsukas, *Pirmoji Lietuvos proletarinė revoliucija ir sovietų valdžia* [Lithuania's First Proletarian Revolution and the Soviet Government] (Chicago, 1934), p. 66; Römer, *Litwa*, p. 284.

nature.⁵⁸ Finally, the revival of the LSDP witnessed, and aided, a progressive divergence between liberals and socialists. The preoccupation of a portion of Lithuania's intelligentsia with that country's national awakening had produced, in the 1890s, a symbiosis between nationally minded socialists and radically inclined liberals. The socialists sought the help of the liberals in translating, publishing, and transporting needed materials. The liberals expected their partners to arrest further Polonization of Lithuania's outlying areas. The efforts of the liberals were designed to counter the PPS with the LSDP, to set off Piłsudski against Domaševičius. Liberal support of the socialists had little or no ideological tinge; it was prompted by national motives.⁵⁹ After 1902, however, their collaboration seemed to ebb. The liberals began to evolve into a political movement, which they were not before. The LSDP discomfited the liberals by its influence on certain segments of the rural society, because the liberals themselves were dependent on this social strata.⁶⁰

In concluding this overview of the LSDP after the turn of the century, it is necessary to point out that the Lithuanian party was only one of several social democratic groups active in the area. Numerically it ranked below the Jewish Bund, which remained the largest socialist party. The incursion of the RSDLP into Lithuania dates from the middle of 1901. A nucleus of the Russian party was formed there partly by those who were connected with the smuggling of *Iskra* into Russia. Its most prominent figures were two officers, I. Klopov and F. Gusarov. The group was small and its activities were confined to Vilnius, where two factions, the Bolshevik and the Menshevik, coexisted in relative harmony. In 1904 the RSDLP created a committee to coordinate its work in the northwestern region of the empire, including Lithuania. On the eve of the revolution of 1905 the RSDLP chapter in Vilnius had 120 organized workers.⁶¹

The SDKPiL also had branches in Lithuania. In 1901–4 it sponsored

58. D. Alseika, *Lietuvių tautinė ideja istorijos šviesoje* [The Lithuanian National Idea in the Light of History] (Vilnius, 1924), p. 112; Kapsukas, *Trumpa partijos istorija*, 1:19; Manfred Hellmann, "Die litauische Nationalbewegung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert," *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung*, 2 (1953): 91; Bielinis, *Penktieji metai*, p. 28; Kipras Bielinis, *1905 metai* [The Year 1905] (Kaunas, 1931), p. 24; Biržiška, *Lietuvių tautos kelias*, 2:119. Cf. Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, p. 325.

59. Grinius, *Atsiminimai ir mintys*, 1:142–43, 209; Beržaitis, "Lietuvių darbininkų judėjimas," p. 25; Kapsukas, *Raštai*, 1:264; Patirgas, "Keli bruožai iš Lietuvos social-demokratų praeities," *Žiburiai*, May 11, 1946, p. 3; V. Perazich, "Iz vospominanii (1896–1897 g.)," *Krasnaia letopis'*, 1922, no. 2–3, p. 115; Kapsukas, *Trumpa partijos istorija*, 1:14; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, p. 234; Biržiška, *Lietuvių tautos kelias*, 2:55–56.

60. Kapsukas (Tilsit) to Šaulys (Bern), Nov. 3, 1905, Šaulys Archives, f. 58; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, pp. 234, 244, 338, 340; *Vienybė Lietuvininkų*, 1904, p. 595; Römer, *Litwa*, p. 285.

61. *Iskra*, Nov. 20, 1904, p. 8; *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, 1924, no. 8–9, p. 203; Jurginis et al., *Lietuvos TSR istorija*, 2:266, 268–70; Kairys, *Tau, Lietuva*, p. 62.

several strikes and political demonstrations in Vilnius and Kaunas. Representatives of the party attended, in an advisory capacity, the second congress of the RSDLP in 1903. There they opposed the inclusion of national self-determination in the program of the Russian party, and then left the meeting when their efforts failed. Owing in part to defection of its members to the RSDLP, the influence of the SDKPiL in Lithuania after 1903 was on the wane. When the two parties united in 1906, the 150 members of the SDKPiL in Vilnius switched to the RSDLP.⁶²

The National Question

The policy-makers of the LSDP had two main objectives—to heighten workers' class awareness and to further Lithuania's national renaissance. These goals determined the basic qualities of Lithuanian social democracy during the years under review. Eventually, for a number of reasons, the party's stand on the national question overshadowed its service in the cause of labor. Perhaps this was the right course, because the national question was essentially one of Lithuania's future existence. At party conferences and congresses, or in party publications, the matter of the country's future existence was subsumed into such operational concepts as independence, federalism, autonomy, and separatism. The separatism of the LSDP, as noted above, meant the abandonment of the Russian fold. Parenthetically, it also meant the establishment of a distinctly Lithuanian identity with respect to the Poles. Although the leading social democrats never elaborated the reasons for their demand of independence for Lithuania, especially in Marxist terms, some interpretation of their motives is possible.

First, to the Lithuanians, as to the Poles and other nationalities, the tsarist regime was an alien and oppressive reality whose unpopularity was deepened by its policy of Russianization. The tsarist government and its policies generated enmity toward Russia, and there were many who doubted that Great Russian nationalism in a democratic Russia of the future would be any more tolerant of minority aspirations.⁶³

Second, socialist literature in Lithuania, and elsewhere, was rich in references to Russia as a backward country that retarded progress. Backwardness was alleged in Russia's general economic development as well as in the development of its revolutionary movement. The LSDP maintained that it ought to support the revolutionary movement in Russia but not count

62. Jurginis et al., *Lietuvos TSR istorija*, 2:271; Kairys, *Tau, Lietuva*, p. 321; *MLTE*, 2:322.

63. Kapsukas, *Raštai*, 1:117; Kapsukas, *Trumpa partijos istorija*, 1:7; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, p. 279. Cf. resolutions of the 1903 party conference in *Vienybė Lietuvinkų*, no. 20 (1903), p. 234; Grinius, *Atsiminimai ir mintys*, 1:139–40.

on it. In general, the argument from Russia's social and political lag tended to impart a pro-Western direction to the LSDP.⁶⁴

Third, fragmentary evidence shows that the LSDP attempted to justify its separatism by adducing an ideological coloration. The workers' movement was an international one, so ran the argument,⁶⁵ because its ultimate goals were the same throughout the world. However, each nation possessed a set of distinctive traits which the proletariat valued and to which it adjusted. Opposed to oppression in any form, the proletariat was also opposed to the oppression of one nation by another. Lithuania endured such an oppression. Not only did the Lithuanian workers suffer as workers, but they also suffered as Lithuanians. Since the LSDP struggled for the freedom of all the people, it struggled for the national freedom of the Lithuanians, too. The incarnation of such a national freedom would be the establishment of a democratic republic of Lithuania.

Finally, the desire to be independent of Russia was, to a point, a legacy from the past, reinforced by the nationalism of the PPS. Lithuania's existence as an independent state and then as one in union with Poland, before 1795, followed by Polish and Lithuanian uprisings against the Russians in the nineteenth century, were not forgotten by the founders of the LSDP.⁶⁶ What bearing these past experiences had on their conduct is, however, difficult to assess.

The LSDP position on the national question was contained in three main documents, the draft program produced by the preparatory conference of 1895 and the two versions of the party program adopted by the congresses of 1896 and 1897. The first document, written by Domaševičius, has never been found, but contemporaries assert that it was virtually identical with the one approved in 1896.⁶⁷ The statement on the future of Lithuania, endorsed by the congress of 1896, included the following proposition: "An independent democratic republic, consisting of Lithuania, Poland, and other countries, based on a loose federation."⁶⁸ Further paragraphs indicate that this federation

64. Kapsukas in *Naujoji gadyne*, pp. 140–41; Kapsukas, *Trumpa partijos istorija*, 1:9; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, pp. 278–79. See also resolutions of the 1903 party conference in *Vienybė Lietuvininkų*, no. 20 (1903), p. 234.

65. See resolutions of the 1903 party conference, *ibid.*; see also Lietuvis and N. N., *Augis darbininkų judėjimo Lietuvoje*, pp. 48–49; *Darbininkų balsas*, 1903, no. 1, pp. 7–9.

66. Perazich, "Iz vospominanii," p. 108; Mitskevich-Kapsukas, "Istoki i zarozhdenie kommunisticheskoi partii Litvy," p. 154; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, pp. 279–80; Merkys, "Lietuvių SDP," pp. 145, 149; Kapsukas in *Naujoji gadyne*, p. 141; Martov et al., *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii*, 3:285–86. Cf. resolutions of the 1905 party congress reproduced in Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, p. 411.

67. Merkys, "Lietuvių SDP," p. 134; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, pp. 274–75.

68. See the program of 1896 reproduced in Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, p. 391.

was to include Lithuania, Poland, Latvia, Belorussia, and the Ukraine.⁶⁹ In short, it was to be a federation without Russia. The founders of the party were not unanimous in their approval of such a separatist statement. Some, including Dzierżyński, preferred autonomy for a Lithuania that remained a part of the Russian Empire.⁷⁰ However, the majority, which included three liberals attending the congress, opted for a federation that excluded Russia as one of its constituent states.

The second congress of the LSDP, held in 1897, altered the party program in one important respect. It no longer excluded Russia from possible membership in a future federal state. The outbreak of the first large-scale strikes in Russian cities in 1896–97, thought to be an indication of a growing revolutionary movement there, and concessions to the so-called internationalists within the party were probably the main reasons for the change in program.⁷¹ It should be noted, however, that until 1905 most of the party decision-makers, including some who later became Communists,⁷² adhered with more or less firmness to the original plan contained in the program of the preceding year.⁷³

To the pre-1905 arbiters of the LSDP, the fruition of party policy on the national question appeared, if vaguely, as a two-stage process—the winning of independence from Russia, and then the creation of a federal state. This view, expressed in party statements and the writings of party leaders, was based on the conviction that the formation of a voluntary federation was predicated on a prior condition of independence for the member states.⁷⁴ It is incontrovertible, however, that independence was not the final goal. According to Moravskis the indigenous revolutionary potential was simply not strong enough to aspire to a completely independent and separate Lithuanian state.⁷⁵

69. *Socialdemokratas*, May 27, 1926, p. 2; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, p. 394.

70. Apybraiža in *Komunistas*, 1967, no. 1, p. 102.

71. Angarietis, "Lietuvos Komunistų Partijos įsikūrimas," p. 2; Beržas, *Antrosios Lietuvos Socialdemokratų Partijos*, p. 10; Merkys, "Lietuvių SDP," p. 149; Kapsukas in *Naujoji gadynė*, p. 141; Kapsukas, *Trumpa partijos istorija*, 1:9–10.

72. Kapsukas, *Trumpa partijos istorija*, 1:24; *Darbininkų balsas*, 1903, no. 6, p. 200.

73. Kapsukas in *Naujoji gadynė*, p. 141; Kapsukas, *Trumpa partijos istorija*, 1:10; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, pp. 277–78; Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1931, no. 4, p. 199; Moravskis quoted in Alseika, *Lietuvių tautinė ideja istorijos šviesoje*, p. 112; *MLTE*, 2:395; Apybraiža in *Komunistas*, 1967, no. 2, p. 101; Beržas, *Antrosios Lietuvos Socialdemokratų Partijos*, pp. 9–10, 13; *Darbininkų balsas*, 1902, no. 5, p. 5.

74. Kapsukas, *Raštai*, 7:571; Kapsukas, *Trumpa partijos istorija*, 1:22; Kapsukas in *Naujoji gadynė*, p. 143; Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1931, no. 4, p. 199; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, pp. 277–78. Cf. LSDP appeal of April 1904, included in Kipras Bielinis, *Dienojant* [At Daybreak] (New York, 1958), pp. 447–48; LSDP Manifesto of September 1905, included in Kairys, *Tau, Lietuva*, pp. 333–38; LSDP appeals of 1905, entitled "What the Lithuanian Social Democrats Want" and "To War for the Vilnius Diet," reproduced in Bielinis, *Penktieji metai*, pp. 524–29; LSDP appeal of November 1905, reproduced in Kapsukas, *Raštai*, 2:206–8.

Unfortunately party literature discussed neither the duration of the period of independence nor the mechanics of federation-making.

The ultimate objective of the LSDP, then, was the founding of a federal republic. Although federalism itself enjoyed a good deal of support, the composition of the future state presented problems. Initially the list of possible members included Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Belorussia, and the Ukraine—but excluded Russia. Apparently such a design aimed to reconstitute, on a different basis, the defunct Polish-Lithuanian state. (The inclusion of Latvia was probably motivated by its ethnic kinship with Lithuania.)⁷⁶ Later, the LSDP ceased to be explicit about the composition of the future state, although it remained wedded to federalism as the form which Lithuania's relations with the neighboring countries should assume. Deference to party internationalists and intensification of revolutionary action in Russia, as possible reasons for the change, were noted above.

Two additional reasons deserve consideration. First, failure to list the member states was partly due to insufficient interest in the proposed federation. The idea, it seems, evoked little or no favorable response from the Latvian, Belorussian, and Ukrainian social democrats.⁷⁷ Second, reluctance to be explicit on membership hinted at a mounting friction between the Lithuanians and the Poles. It appears that the quality of nationalism, on both sides, contained a measure of incompatibility. The Lithuanian national intelligentsia, including its socialist wing, was engaged in the process of nation-building. The leaders of the new Poland, who were used to viewing Lithuania as a Polish domain, refused to recognize the Lithuanian endeavor, or so the Lithuanians felt. In 1894–96 some LSDP members apparently thought that union with Poland, on the basis of equality, was possible. But as optimism subsequently waned the LSDP deferred the question of membership to a future time.⁷⁸

The significance of LSDP separatism needs to be evaluated on a two-

75. Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1931, no. 4, p. 199; Moravskis quoted in Alseika, *Lietuvių tautinė ideja istorijos šviesoje*, p. 111; Lietuvis (Moravskis) quoted in Hellmann, "Die litauische Nationalbewegung," p. 90; Kapsukas in *Naujoji gadynė*, pp. 140–41.

76. Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, p. 279.

77. *Socialdemokratas*, May 27, 1926, p. 2; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, p. 278; Kairys, *Tau, Lietuva*, p. 61. For a contrary view see Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1931, no. 5, p. 276. Cf. Martov et al., *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii*, 1:356–57; Grinius, *Atsiminimai ir mintys*, 1:221.

78. Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1931, no. 5, p. 279, and 1933, no. 3, p. 138; Moravskis quoted in Alseika, *Lietuvių tautinė ideja istorijos šviesoje*, p. 112; Kairys, *Lietuva budo*, p. 278; Kapsukas in *Naujoji gadynė*, pp. 139–41; Kapsukas, *Trumpa partijos istorija*, 1:6; Mitskevich-Kapsukas, "Istoki i zarozhdenie kommunisticheskoi partii Litvy," pp. 154–55; Hausteine, *Sozialismus und nationale Frage in Polen*, pp. 255–56.

dimensional scale of politics. On the scale of revolutionary politics, separatism tended to be divisive. First, socialist organizations that were affiliated with the Second International frowned upon the national tendencies of the LSDP. Although the LSDP considered itself bound by the decisions of the Second International, it gained admission to that body only in 1923, when party affairs unfolded in an entirely different setting. Second, the secessionist policy proved to be a source of perennial intraparty discord. The alienation of the Trusiewicz-Dzierżyński following in the 1890s was partly due to the national posture of the LSDP.⁷⁹ And in the years after 1905 those who stayed with the LSDP were again torn asunder—mainly, if not solely, by the national question.

On the scale of national politics, separatism elicited a more constructive sequel. In independent Lithuania of the 1918–40 period the question of who pioneered Lithuanian independence became, perhaps excessively, one of controversy and concern. It attracted more attention than in the years before 1918. As late as 1894 Lithuanian independence was rarely an item on the agenda of the Lithuanian intelligentsia. To most it was nothing but an “empty dream.” Except for individual views, the call of the LSDP for a break with Russia, or at least for a fundamental change in the basis of future Lithuanian-Russian association, was the first of its kind to issue from a Lithuanian political movement. Indicating an advanced quality in social democratic leadership, the action tended to politicize the essentially cultural character of Lithuania’s national renewal.

79. *Socialdemokratas*, May 20, 1926, p. 3; Kapsukas, *Trumpa partijos istorija*, 1:10–12; Apybraiža in *Komunistas*, 1967, no. 1, pp. 101–2. On other reasons for the estrangement of the Trusiewicz group see Moravskis in *Kultūra*, 1931, no. 6–7, p. 326; *Socialdemokratas*, May 20, 1926, p. 3.