



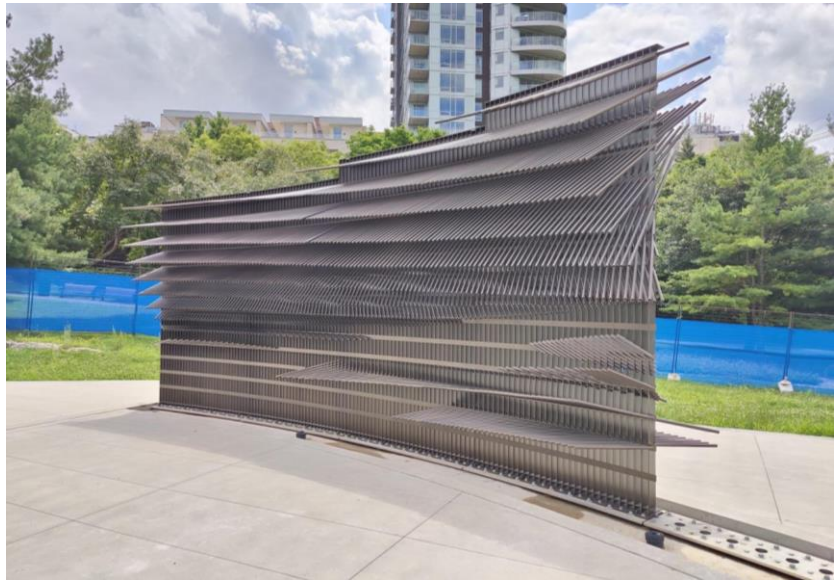
## Project Update – Installation of the *Arc of Memory*

Installation of the *Memorial to Victims of Communism* art piece – the *Arc of Memory* – has begun!

The *Arc of Memory* segments are transported to the site on a truck, where they are attached to a crane which lifts the segment from the truck and lowers it onto the plinth. Then, the segment is carefully positioned and finally, bolted on. Segments are installed two at a time, approximately every two weeks. So far, 6 of the 12 segments have been installed to date, on June 27 and July 10 and 27.

Installation of the remaining segments will take approximately 2-3 months. Once all segments are in place, final adjustments will be made to ensure all rods are perfectly aligned. Then the calendar plates, which indicate the days of the year, will be put in place at the base at the *Arc of Memory*. Please enjoy the next two pages of photos of this exciting process!

The unveiling of the Memorial is planned for November 2, 2023.



Installation of a section of the *Arc of Memory* for the *Memorial to the Victims of Communism, Canada, A Land of Refuge*; 4 of the 12 segments of the *Arc of Memory* in place at the Garden of the Provinces and Territories in Ottawa, July 2023.











## History Unhidden

### Forest Brothers

Little is known in the West of the insurgent wars that were fought against Soviet Communist occupation from 1943 to 1956. The partisans who fought in these ill-fated wars of national liberation against the rule of Soviet Communism were collectively known as the “Forest Brothers”. These included the Partisans of Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Ukraine.



Lithuanian partisans of the Tauras military district 1945.

Information about the partisan campaign in Belarus is scarce. This is, to a great extent, the result of the Lukashenko dictatorship where such research is forbidden. The Lukashenko dictatorship is the direct legacy of the Communist occupation of Belarus. Nevertheless, it is known that an active insurgency by the Belarus “Forest Brothers” was conducted from 1944 until their demise in 1946/47. It was in Belarus that NKVD (Forerunner of the KGB) and MVD counterinsurgency tactics were refined according to their own admission. Although the insurgency was not successful, the tradition of Belarussian partisan warfare continues to exist to this day in the form of acts of railway sabotage committed in support of Ukraine.

In 1943, the Ukrainian “Forest Brothers” were already fighting both the Nazis and the Soviet Communists in the forests, mountains and golden prairies of Ukraine seeking both independence and democracy. These Ukrainian “Forest Brothers” fought Soviet Communist domination until their defeat in 1956 and some say much later. The Ukrainian partisans numbered in the tens of thousands and were the largest and longest running partisan movement in Eastern Europe at that time. In 1947, a Ukrainian partisan unit fought its way across Eastern Europe to neutral Austria bringing

with it evidence of deportations, food confiscation, collectivization and the horrors of the Gulag, etc. This evidence was added to that which was revealed in the defection in Canada of former GRU agent Igor Gouzenko of Soviet Communist infiltration of the governments of Britain, Canada and the United States. These two events were instrumental in the adoption of policies by the West in 1949 that led to the Cold War. Today, Ukraine is still fighting for its independence against elements in Russia spawned by Soviet Communism including its ex-KGB dictator, Putin. It should not come as a surprise to anyone that Ukrainian partisans are active in Crimea, the Donbas and as far afield as Moscow.

The origins of the term “Forest Brothers” is said to originate in the Baltic States. All three Baltic States had already endured Soviet Communism in 1940 which resulted in the deportation of hundreds of thousands of civilians to Siberia. In 1944, Armed Resistance was seen as the only hope for independence and in many cases, survival.



Union of Lithuanian Freedom Fighters (LLKS) Pennant circa 1949 of the Tiger Partisan Company that operated in Eastern Lithuania. The communists had great difficulty in locating their HQ. The partisans outwitted the NKVD for years by having their HQ in Belarus and not Lithuania where the Russian search was concentrated. The symbol in the middle was the symbol of the Lithuanian King Gediminas, sewn onto a Lithuanian flag. *From the Museum of Genocide Victims, Vilnius, Lithuania.*

The Estonian “Forest Brothers” were first to do battle in early 1944 in the Baltics. The Estonians had the smallest movement of the Baltic States reflecting the size of their population. Their struggle lasted until 1949. The Latvian “Forest Brothers” also started their fight for sovereignty in 1944 and continued the fight until 1949, the year of collectivization in the Baltics. The Latvians had the second largest population of the Baltic States and their armed resistance movement reflected this fact. The Lithuanian “Forest Brothers”

had the most membership which again reflected the size of the population. The Lithuanian armed resistance lasted until 1952 but some argue 1954. Note that in all Baltic States there were small groups or individuals that carried on the partisan struggle into the 1960s and 1970s. To this day all three retain the tradition of partisan warfare which is taught in schools. Today, all three Baltic States have elements of their society that would resort to partisan warfare automatically if invaded by Russia.



Cap belonging to a Lithuanian partisan Section Commander circa 1949. Note the Lithuanian “Vytis” (similar to the French Cross of Lorraine). Baltic partisans, for the most part, wore uniforms and had a rank and command structure and carried weapons openly. This matches the requirements of the Geneva Conventions to be considered a legitimate armed force. The Russians to this day call them “Bandits”. *From the Museum of Genocide Victims, Vilnius, Lithuania.*

There were many reasons why the efforts of the “Forest Brothers” were not successful. One reason was the level of Soviet Communist manpower that was available for use against the partisans especially after 1945. These included NKVD and MGB (later to become the KGB) as well as the Red Army. Another key reason was that there was a lack of organized support from the West. MI-6, CIA, Swedish and German Intelligence involvement with the above partisan movements was extremely limited. There were two reasons why support from the West never materialized. First, as had been pointed out by Gouzenko, was Soviet infiltration in the form of Kim Philby and others that disrupted both MI-6 and CIA operations directly. The second was the fact that the West was slow in identifying Soviet Communism as a threat. Today, history is repeating itself. It is of interest that the West again is playing catch-up in regards to the Communist PRC and their global political and economic programs to dominate the Global South. The West was late in the case of the

“Forest Brothers” and the result was 50 years of Soviet domination.

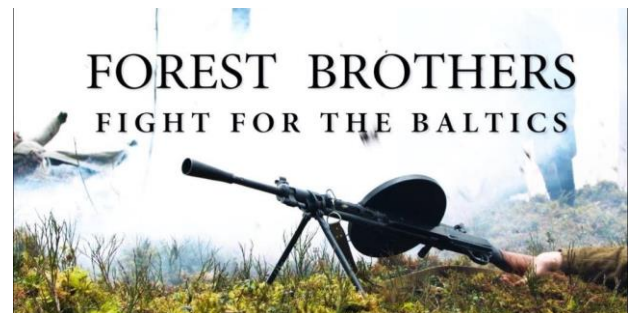
Russia to this day tries its best to discredit all of the above “Forest Brothers” for several reasons. First, armed resistance to the Soviet Communist occupations detract from the current Russian narrative that all these occupied countries joined willingly and/or are traditional territories of the Russian empire. The second reason is the fear that a tradition of partisan warfare would be ingrained in the cultures of Belarus, Ukraine and the Baltic States making them resilient to Russian Hybrid Warfare or actual planned future occupation as is in the case of Ukraine where partial occupation has already been achieved. There is also a third key reason. Russia fears the development of partisan warfare internally and therefore must discredit partisan movements related to all of its immediate neighbours.

**Caveat** – The above is just a brief outline of the history of the “Forest Brothers”. This article also does not cover other armed resistance movements that fought on against Soviet Communism but were not classified as “Forest Brothers”. The Polish AK – Armia Krajowa comes to mind. Also note that dates can also be points of contention among some.

*Submitted by: Anonymous*

## Resource Spotlight

### ***Forest Brothers-Fight for the Baltics***



“Forest Brothers - Fight for the Baltics” is a video produced by NATO and includes interviews with former partisan fighters and those who supported them, and dramatic battle scene recreations and interviews with modern-day Special Forces of Lithuania, the direct descendants of the Forest Brothers. It is available to watch here:

[Forest Brothers - Fight for the Baltics - YouTube](#)