

nia (Wilkes-Barre, Plymouth, Shenandoah, Scranton, Philadelphia).

Šliūpas noticed that Lithuanian immigrants in the United States did not have a clear concept of who they were. As a result they joined Polish parishes and organizations, which promoted the ancient concept of a Polish-Lithuanian Union. Although there was a very large number of Lithuanian immigrants in the United States, there was only a handful of Lithuanian priests and teachers. The Lithuanian language, culture and traditions were being neglected.

Even though Šliūpas was a free-thinker, he maintained constant contact with the Lithuanian clergy who he urged to foster the Lithuanian language in churches and schools. He respected the religious and political beliefs of all Lithuanians in order that the common goal of gaining independence for Lithuania could be achieved.

Šliūpas invited a Lithuanian priest, the Rev. Alexander Burba, to come to the United States and investigate the situation. Both men visited all major Lithuanian communities and urged Lithuanians to distance themselves from the Poles and create their own parishes and schools. He also founded the *Lithuanian Learned Society* for the purpose of publishing scholarly books in the Lithuanian language. One of these was a history of Lithuanian literature.

Šliūpas was one of the most noted and energetic Lithuanian American activists of his time. During the 35 years he spent in the United States he founded and edited a score of publications, among them: *Unija* (The Union, 1884-85), *Lietuviškasis Balsas* (The Lithuanian Voice, 1885-89), *Apšvieta* (Enlightenment, 1892-93), *Naujoji Gadyne* (The New Era, 1894-96), *Laisvoji Mintis* (The Free Thought, 1910-15), and others. He also founded a number of organizations, including *Friends of Lithuania* (1885-88), *Alliance of all the Lithuanians in Amer-*

*ica* (1886-88) and the *Lithuanian Learned Society* (1889-96). He also wrote and published dozens of books and pamphlets on Lithuanian history and culture, as well as on the social themes predominant in the world in the later part of the 19th century.

Although in the beginning Šliūpas supported the ideas promoted by the Socialists, soon he separated from

delegation at the Paris Peace Conference.

He returned to Lithuania in 1919, and was appointed as his country's first minister to Estonia and Latvia. In 1920 he briefly returned to the United States to solicit funds for industrial development projects in Lithuania.

From 1924 onward, Šliūpas resided in Lithuania, teaching at the Biržai



Collector's Certificate of the *Lithuanian Relief and Autonomy Fund*, listing Dr. Šliūpas as its President. On the left is a leaflet showing Lithuania in the midst of war. The caption reads: "Lithuanians of America, Help!"

them when he realized that they were more interested in promoting global revolution than freedom for Lithuania. He clashed with the Socialist dominated Lithuanian American Congress of 1914 after it rejected his proposal to demand autonomy for Lithuania.

During the First World War Šliūpas was prominent in the action to reestablish Lithuanian independence. He chaired the *Committee of the Lithuanian Relief and Autonomy Fund*, which provided financial help for the reconstruction of Lithuania, and took part in Lithuanian conferences in Russia and Sweden. He also helped organize the Lithuanian mission in London and served on the Lithuanian

and Šiauliai high schools (1921-23), directing the *Society of Ethical Culture*, which he had established in 1923, and reviving his former periodical *Laisvoji Mintis* (1933-41). From 1925-30 he taught history of medicine at the University of Kaunas, where he was awarded honorary doctoral degrees by the university's medical, humanities and law faculties.

In 1933 he was elected mayor of Palanga, a seaside resort city, serving until 1940 and briefly during the Nazi occupation, before being removed for protesting the destruction of Jewish and Lithuanian lives by the Nazis.

Šliūpas left Lithuania with his family in anticipation of the second Soviet invasion (1944), and died in Berlin on November 6, 1944. His ashes were transferred to Chicago and interred in the Lithuanian National Cemetery.