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ESTONIAN DEPORTED BY U.S. ARRIVES IN SOVIET

By HENRY KAMM, Special to the New York Times
Published: April 22, 1987

Karl Linnas, under sentence of death for war crimes in the Soviet Union and deported Monday night from the United States, was returned to his native Estonia tonight.

Tass, the Soviet press agency, announced that he had been taken to Tallinn, capital of the Estonian Soviet Republic.

In a separate dispatch based on an interview with the office of the Soviet Prosecutor General, Tass reported that no statute of limitations applied "to that category of criminals." Although the statement was not amplified, it appeared to indicate that the Soviet Union was signaling that it intended to carry out the death sentence that the Estonian Supreme Court imposed on Mr. Linnas in absentia in 1962.

Earlier, the Foreign Ministry spokesman said in a press briefing that Mr. Linnas could appeal the sentence if it had been passed by a military court and had not been not confirmed by the Soviet Supreme Court. Gennadi I. Gerasimov, the spokesman, said he was not certain which court had tried Mr. Linnas. The subsequent Tass dispatch specified that he had been tried, convicted and sentenced by a civilian tribunal. Concentration Camp Deaths

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The court convicted the Estonian, who became an American citizen in 1959, of responsibility for the deaths of thousands of inmates of the Tartu concentration camp in Estonia. It found him guilty of having commanded the camp, set up by the invading Germans and manned by Estonian collaborators.

Mr. Linnas was ordered deported from the United States for lying about his wartime activities to immigration authorities. In a ruling upholding the order, a Federal Appeals Court stated that Mr. Linnas had supervised mass executions of Jewish prisoners.

Mr. Linnas was the first person accused of war crimes deported against his will by the United States to the Soviet Union. In 1984, Fyodor D. Fedorenko chose to be sent to the Soviet Union after losing a legal battle against deportation.

Mr. Linnas was put on a Czechoslovak airliner at Kennedy International Airport on Monday night and flown to Prague, where he was transferred to a special Soviet plane. **Tone of Reports Changes**

Mr. Linnas's actual return to the Soviet Union brought about a distinct change in the tone of Soviet reporting on the American proceedings in the case. As recently as this morning, Tass dispatches on the prisoner's departure from New York depicted the American procedures as official attempts to withhold Mr. Linnas from Soviet justice.

Tonight, however, Tass reported that the Prosecutor General's office said that "note should be

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taken of the objective attitude of the U.S. judicial authorities to the material in the Linnas case made available to the U.S. side by the Soviet Union."

"Soviet judicial bodies are prepared to maintain cooperation with U.S. justice authorities," the report said, "for the two countries were allies in the Second World War. The decision of the U.S. authorities on the deportation of Karl Linnas demonstrates that they can be united in the just cause of bringing war criminals to justice."

Mr. Linnas, who is 67 years old, arrived in the United States from West Germany in 1951. Tens of thousands of citizens of the Baltic nations, Nazi collaborators as well as many others, fled ahead of the advancing Soviet Army in 1944 and were gathered in displaced persons camps in West Germany. The United States resettled great numbers of them as refugees in the late 1940's and early 1950's.

Mr. Linnas worked as a land surveyor, living quietly in Greenlawn, L.I., until 1979. Then immigration officials charged him with making false statements to gain entry to the United States. The final Supreme Court ruling in the protracted case came Monday, when by a 6-3 decision the court refused to extend an order blocking execution of the deportation writ.

Much opposition to the proceedings in the United States was based on contentions that Mr. Linnas had been tried in absentia on evidence largely supplied from Communist-ruled countries.

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DEPORTED BY U.S., HE TELLS OF LIFE IN SOVIET JAIL

By ANDREW ROSENTHAL, Special to the New York Times
Published: June 04, 1987

An Estonian who was deported from the United States to face a conviction in the Soviet Union for Nazi war crimes has written to his daughter in Virginia, saying it appears he will not get a new trial on a death sentence handed down 25 years ago.

The letter by the Estonian, Karl Linnas, also provides a brief but evocative glimpse into his life in a Soviet prison.

Mr. Linnas, the first person accused of war crimes to be sent to the Soviet Union by the United States against his will, described strikingly good treatment in the prison at Tallinn, the Estonian capital, where he was jailed after being handed over to Soviet custody on April 21.

He said he had been given large quantities of tobacco, as well as soap and other items that can be difficult for average Soviet citizens to find, even out of jail. The delivery of the letter, and Mr. Linnas's relatively good conditions, suggested the Soviet authorities were eager to convey the impression that they were treating the 67-year-old prisoner gently. Visited by Warden

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Mr. Linnas, who has repeatedly protested his innocence, wrote that he had been visited by the warden several times and given special permission to send and receive letters.

"It looks as though I am a long-awaited, spectacular visitor here," he said in his letter. It was written in Estonian, and his daughter, Anu Linnas, provided a translation.

Mr. Linnas said he was allowed to get fresh air only in a small room open to the sky, perhaps on the jailhouse roof.

Tidbits of news from the outside come from a loudspeaker "on the wall of the cell I am in," he wrote on April 24. "It said that the temperature was 6 degrees Celsius, a bit chilly for a spring day." That is 43 degrees Fahrenheit.

In 1962, Mr. Linnas was convicted by a Soviet tribunal of serving as an officer at a Nazi death camp in his hometown of Tartu, Estonia, and was sentenced to die. A resident of the United States since 1951, he was deported after a series of Federal courts held that he had lied on an immigration form by saying he was a student in Tartu from 1940 to 1943 and by entering the United States as a wartime refugee. Not Tried in U.S. Although Mr. Linnas was not tried on war crimes charges in the United States, the first Federal judge who heard his case in 1981 said the evidence against him, most of which was supplied by the Soviet authorities, was compelling enough to warrant his deportation to the Soviet Union.

Anu Linnas, who has staunchly defended her father against what she insists are charges fabricated by the Soviet Government, said the letter arrived by certified mail on May 20.

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She said she was certain the letter, written on both sides of two sheets of cheap paper, was written by her father.

It was not clear under what conditions the letter was written. It is separated into three sections, dated April 24, April 26 and April 27, and shows that the prison authorities returned it to Mr. Linnas at least once, ostensibly because it was in an envelope intended for domestic mail. She said there were no obvious signs of censorship.

In the first section, Mr. Linnas described his arrival in Estonia under Soviet guard. Two days later, he said, he was given a copy of the Soviet court's 1962 conviction and told he had seven days to seek a pardon, which he said he later did through a state-appointed Estonian lawyer.

"He thought that there would not be a new proceeding since there has been such a great lapse in time," he wrote of the lawyer. "He did promise to study the law further." Ramsey Clark Was His Lawyer

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