



# Department of Justice

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**NEW YORK MAN ABANDONS U.S. TO AVOID QUESTIONING  
ABOUT ALLEGED NAZI PAST AFTER SUPREME COURT  
REJECTS HIS 5TH AMENDMENT CLAIM**

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The Department of Justice announced today that Aloyzas Balsys, 86, formerly of Queens, New York, permanently departed the United States for Lithuania yesterday rather than comply with a Justice Department subpoena to answer questions concerning his activities in Lithuania during World War II.

Balsys' claim -- that the Fifth Amendment allowed him to remain silent because his answers could incriminate him in Lithuania, Israel, or Germany -- was rejected by the United States Supreme Court in June 1998.

In light of the Supreme Court's decision, Balsys agreed to depart the United States permanently for Lithuania in order to avoid enforcement of the subpoena. Under the terms of a settlement that required him to leave the United States by May 30, Balsys conceded that he misrepresented and concealed his true wartime activities when he entered the United States in 1961, making his entry illegal.

Earlier this month, in a similar case, Vytautas Gecas, 77, was ordered jailed for up to 18 months or until he complies with a Justice Department subpoena to answer questions about his activities in Lithuania during World War II. The federal judge in Pensacola, Florida who ordered the incarceration cited the Supreme Court's Balsys decision in rejecting Gecas' claim that the

Fifth Amendment allowed him to refuse to answer questions based on his fear of prosecution by a foreign country. Gecas remains in custody in the Santa Rosa (Florida) County jail.

Eli M. Rosenbaum, Director of the Criminal Division's Office of Special Investigations (OSI), said that Balsys, a permanent resident alien, would not answer questions about captured wartime documents found by OSI staff historians which show that he served during the war in the Nazi-sponsored Lithuanian Security Police (the Saugumas). These documents show that Balsys served as chief of a Saugumas precinct office in Vilnius from at least the beginning of November 1941 until at least 1943.

The Vilnius Saugumas was subordinate to the Nazis and its responsibilities paralleled those of the Gestapo. The Vilnius Saugumas assisted the occupying Nazi forces in enforcing persecutory measures against Jews by, among other things, arresting Jews caught outside for attempting to escape from the barbed-wire enclosed ghettos in which they were confined, and arresting persons who attempted to assist Jews. The Jews seized by the Saugumas were turned over to Nazi authorities; most were executed at Paneriai, a wooded area near Vilnius. In all, nearly 55,000 of Vilnius' 60,000 Jews perished at Paneriai during the Nazi occupation of Vilnius.

Rosenbaum noted that Balsys' service in the Vilnius Saugumas in the fall of 1941 is significant because of the large number of liquidation actions against Jews that took place during that period. "The criminal acts perpetrated by this force enabled the Nazis to come shockingly close to achieving their goal of eradicating the entire Jewish population of Vilnius," said Rosenbaum.

Balsys entered the United States from England in 1961. When he applied for his visa, he did not disclose his service in the Saugumas or residence in Vilnius. Balsys never became a United States citizen.

In addition to Balsys, three other former members of the Vilnius Saugumas voluntarily abandoned their United States residences and moved to Lithuania following the initiation of legal proceedings or investigation by OSI.

--Adolph Milius left in 1997, following OSI's initiation of denaturalization proceedings against him. Milius was stripped of his citizenship by a federal district judge in Tampa in 1998, based on the "overwhelming evidence that the Saugumas aided in the persecution of Jews."

--Aleksandras Lileikis, former Chief of the Vilnius Saugumas, returned to Lithuania in 1996 after being denaturalized by a federal district judge in Boston. The judge who issued the decision stripping Lileikis of his citizenship found that "tens of thousands died under his command of the Saugumas."

--Kazys Gimzauskas, who served as Lileikis' deputy in the Vilnius Saugumas, left the United States in 1994 while under investigation by OSI. Gimzauskas, a former resident of St. Petersburg, Florida, had his citizenship revoked by court order in 1996.

In 1997, a federal judge in Cleveland revoked the citizenship of Algimantas Dailide, another former member of the Vilnius Saugumas. In support of his decision to denaturalize Dailide, the judge cited documentary evidence that Dailide assisted in the arrest of a group of Jews who were attempting to escape the Ghetto and who, as a result of their arrest, were ordered killed at Paneriai. That case is currently pending before the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.

To date, 61 Nazi persecutors have been stripped of U.S. citizenship as a result of OSI's investigations and prosecutions.

Balsys is the 50th Nazi persecutor to have been removed from the United States since OSI was created in 1979. More than 250 persons remain under investigation by OSI.

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