

JOINT STATEMENT BY THE BALTIC DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES

Pierce Hall, Washington, D. C., June 10, 1956

in connection with the Commemoration of the 15th Anniversary of the Beginning of Mass-Deportations in the Baltic States by the Soviet Union

On the eve of World War II, the Baltic States became victims of the Soviet aspiration for world domination. Soviet leaders opened the gates of aggression in Europe by the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, signed on August 23, 1939. By this pact, the Soviet Union secured a free hand in eastern Poland, Latvia, and Estonia, and later, on September 28, 1939, by means of an additional protocol, also Lithuania was included in the s. c. sphere of influence of the Soviet Union. The enslavement of the Baltic States was undertaken notwithstanding the Soviet's most solemn declarations and treaty obligations to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of the Baltic countries and not to interfere with their domestic affairs. All that followed — the forced conclusion of mutual assistance pacts between the Soviet Union and the Baltic States, military occupation, formation of puppet governments, farcical elections—is now a well established fact.

The occupation and incorporation of the Baltic States into the Soviet Union was only the prelude to the whole campaign of territorial acquisitions on the part of the Soviet Union in Europe and Asia.

"...Millions of people of different blood, religions and traditions have been forcibly incorporated within the Soviet Union, and many millions more have in fact, although not always in form, been absorbed into the Soviet Communist bloc. In Europe alone, some 100 million people, in what were once 10 independent nations, are compelled, against their will, to work for the glorification and aggrandizement of the Soviet Communist State.

"The Communist rulers have expressed, in numerous documents and manifestos, their purpose to extend the practice of Communism, by every possible means, until it encompasses the world. To this end they have used military and political force in the past. They continue to seek the same goals, and they have now added economic inducements to their other methods of penetration.

"It would be illusory to hope that in their foreign policies, political and economic, the Soviet rulers would reflect a concern for the rights of other peoples which they do not show towards the men and women they already rule." (Joint Declaration made by the President of the United States of America and the Prime Minister of the United States of America and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom in Washington on February 1, 1956).

The same goal of world domination and expansion was recently reiterated at the XX Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

"The Communist Party of the Soviet Union follows Lenin's thesis that 'all nations will realize socialism, this is inevitable, but not all of them in the same way'..."

To this Khrushchev added:

"These (bourgeois) politicians do not dare to declare that capitalism will perish in the new world war, if they will wage it, but they are already forced to admit publicly that the socialist camp is invincible."

"It is true," said Khrushchev in his report to the XX Congress, "that we recognize the necessity to transform in a revolutionary way the capitalist society into the socialist society..." "It does not at all follow from the fact that we stand for peaceful co-existence and economic competition with capitalism, that the struggle against bourgeois ideology, against the survival of capitalism in the minds of men can be relaxed."

Soviet imperialism in Europe and Asia has been imposed with greatest ruthlessness, and it has been accompanied with an appalling amount of human misery.

Today we are commemorating the mass deportations which began in our countries in June, 1941, and which still continue under one form or another. In those tragic days of June more than 100,000 Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians were

deported to remote areas of the Arctic and Siberia. Since then our people have been deprived of the most elementary human rights and have been exposed to torture and starvation in forced labour camps. On the testimony of hundreds of eyewitnesses, the Select Committee To Investigate the Incorporation of the Baltic States Into the U.S.S.R. of the House of Representatives of the United States in 1954 established the following:

"The U.S.S.R. has been and is now engaged in a ruthless program of sovietization in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, employing the well known Communist tactics of arrest and detention without cause, torture chambers, mass deportations to slave labor camps, population transfer, and wide-scale political murders."

After a detailed analysis of the facts, the Committee concluded:

"The evidence is overwhelming and conclusive that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were forcibly occupied and illegally annexed by the U.S.S.R. Any claims by the U.S.S.R. that the elections conducted by them in July, 1940, were free and voluntary and that the resolutions adopted by the representing parliaments petitioning for recognition as a Soviet Republic were legal, are false and without foundation in fact." (Third Interim Report, 1954, p. 8).

The Baltic nations, like the other Soviet subjugated nations behind the Iron Curtain are firmly convinced that as ramparts of Western civilization they will not be abandoned by the free world. Therefore, we highly appreciate the Joint Declaration of the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom made in Washington on February 1, 1956, setting forth their attitude toward the struggle between the Western and Communist worlds, wherein they expressed the hope of all the captive nations as follows:

"...We (of the West) shall help ourselves and others to peace, freedom and social progress, maintaining human rights where they are already secure, defending them when they are in peril and peacefully restoring them where they have temporarily been lost."

At this solemn commemoration, together with millions of other Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians throughout the world, we mourn those compatriots who have fallen victim to the Communist conspiracy and those who are still struggling for their lives in the remote reaches of the Arctic and Siberia, or in their own lands — Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

We must again state that our goal has been and will always remain the reestablishment of the complete independence and full sovereignty of our nations, and we have faith that with the help of God, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania will achieve that freedom and independence.