

Letter to the United Nations:

FROM THE FORGOTTEN TO THE FORGETFULL...

His Excellency The President
of the Twelfth General Assembly of the United Nations
United Nations Headquarters New York

Your Excellency:

February 16, 1958

On the Fortieth Anniversary of the Restoration of Independence of the Republic of Lithuania the undersigned representatives of Lithuanian-American Student and Youth Organizations respectfully call your attention to the unjust situation created by the continuing occupation of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia by the Soviet Union. The ruthless Soviet suppression of political and human rights in the Baltic countries contains a threat to international peace and security.

Taking advantage of the political and military collapse of Europe, and utilizing the infamous secret agreement with Hitler Germany, the Soviet Union forced upon the Baltic States in September and October 1939 the so-called pacts of mutual assistance. In June 1940, disregarding its own solemn commitments to respect the integrity and sovereignty of these nations, the Soviet Union invaded the Baltic States and replaced their legal governments by puppet regimes obedient to Moscow. Disregarding the provisions of the Hague Convention defining the rights and duties of an occupying power, the Soviets incorporated Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia into the Soviet Union.

By this action and the re-occupation of the Baltic States in 1944, which continues to the present day, the Soviet Union violated not only the treaties of peace and non-aggression with the Baltic countries, but the Atlantic Charter and the Declaration and Charter of the United Nations as well.

According to international law the forcible incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union is an act of aggression —an international crime. The community of free nations has therefore not recognized the so-called incorporation of Lithuania and of the other Baltic States into the Soviet Union. The diplomatic missions of the Baltic countries continue to function in most of the democratic states. The people of the Baltic countries continue to resist the Soviet regime, both at home and in the slave labor camps of Soviet Russia.

The Charter of the United Nations sets forth the principles of relations among states and establishes obligations and procedures for the protection of rights of the states which have been infringed upon and violated.

We appeal to the President of the Twelfth General Assembly and the members of the United Nations to raise the issue of the restoration of freedom and sovereignty to the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

We suggest that the United Nations General Assembly raise and discuss this problem: study and investigate the plight of the Baltic countries held captive by Soviet Russia and the actual conditions in those countries, and call upon the Soviet Union to honor the treaties of Peace and Non-Aggression with Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia — to demonstrate co-existence by deeds, not just words.

We particularly remind the smaller free nations of the plight of the Baltic States — victims of Soviet aggression. Collectively the smaller nations have a big voice in the General Assembly and they can imbue the world organization with a greater consciousness of its responsibilities and a stronger resolution to live up to the principles of the Charter. Their voice would help and enable the free nations to bring the issue of Lithuania and the other Soviet-captive countries before the forum of the United Nations General Assembly and the wide world.

We submit that the subjugation of the Baltic nations and other neighboring states by the Soviet Union is one of the main causes of the present world tension. The possibility of repeated uprisings in this area, possibly involving third states, and thus resulting in a world-wide conflagration, will exist as long as the present situation continues. No real peace and security can be established in Europe and throughout the world while half of Europe remains enslaved and until the effects of Soviet aggression have been eradicated.

The Fortieth Anniversary of the Restoration of the Independence of Lithuania is an important reminder to peoples of the world that the Lithuanian nation was and is determined to be free and independent, regardless of the nature of the foreign oppression. It is imperative for all people who believe in the principles of freedom and the inviolability of treaties and international law, that Lithuania and all the other captive nations be liberated and sovereign rights and self-government be restored to them.

Very respectfully yours,

The Representatives of the National
Lithuanian-American Student and Youth Organizations.