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## Editorial:

### A QUARTER OF A CENTURY WITHOUT FREEDOM

*June 15, 1965, marked a quarter of a century since the independence of the Baltic States has been extinguished by a secret agreement of two neighboring powers. It is appropriate, therefore, to remind the present-day world, a world which has seen national liberation from colonial rule on the Afro-Asian continent, that the consequences of Soviet imperialism are still with us. We are printing below Manifesto of the Baltic States Freedom Council, which represents over a million of Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians throughout the free world.*

Twenty-five years ago, in connivance with Hitler's Germany, the Soviet Union attacked the Baltic States. Some 300,000 Red Army troops poured into Lithuania on June 15, 1940, and into Latvia and Estonia on June 17, 1940. With the assistance of the occupation army, the emissaries of the Kremlin — Dekanozov, Vishinsky, Zhdanov — unseated the legitimate governments of the Baltic States. The Baltic countries were robbed of their independence and transformed into colonies of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union assault against its Baltic neighbors initiated the Soviet westward march against Europe. The beginnings of today's international tension and threat to peace may thus be found in the Soviet aggression against the Baltic States in 1940.

By the aggressive acts against Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the USSR broke the peace and non-aggression treaties it had signed with those states.

Expropriation, exploitation, pauperization, slave labor, suppression of human rights and fundamental freedoms, Russification, terror, murder, mass deportations — these are the marks of the Soviet occupation in the Baltic States. In committing and continuing these acts, the Soviets violated the United Nations Declaration, the Atlantic Charter, the United Nations Charter, the Convention on the Suppression of Crimes of Genocide, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights — all these documents bearing the signature of the USSR.

The Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian peoples, historically and traditionally Western in orientation and outlook, have consistently placed their hopes in the Western World. Their trust in the West was strengthened by the Declaration of the United States Department of State of July 23, 1940; the statement of the President of the United States on October 15, 1941; the Atlantic Charter; the Yalta Declaration on Liberated Europe; the repeated statements by the United States Government about non recognition of the Soviet annexation of the Baltic States, the continued recognition of free Baltic diplomatic representatives by the United States as well as many European and South American Governments; and the proclaimed aims and principles of the United Nations.

At the same time the hopes of the Baltic peoples have been strengthened by the global process of de-colonization and the universal acceptance of the right of self-determination of nations. The liberation movement of the colonial peoples in Africa and Asia has helped to expose Soviet colonialism as well and has raised the hopes of captive Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians. They are convinced that the tide of emancipation from colonial rule will not stop at the borders of the Baltic countries.

The Baltic peoples have given active expression to their determination to regain freedom, and have resisted their oppressors, thus contributing greatly to the continuing struggle for freedom and justice being waged by all captive peoples enslaved by the Soviet Union. Despite heavy setbacks and trials, our peoples maintain their faith in the restoration of their freedom and independence.

We — free Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians — are conscious of our responsibility toward our nations and to history. At this twenty-fifth anniversary of Soviet aggression, we feel dutybound to give voice to the will and the aspirations of our

captive peoples:

WE ACCUSE the Soviet Union of committing and continuing an international crime against the Baltic States;

WE DEMAND that the Soviet Union withdraw its military, police and administrative personnel from the Baltic countries;

WE REQUEST that the governments of the free world, especially those of the Great Powers, use all peaceful ways and means to restore the exercise of the right to self-determination in the Baltic countries and in the rest of East-Central Europe;

WE FURTHER REQUEST that the United Nations' De-Colonization Committee immediately fulfill its overdue duty and take up the case of Soviet colonialism in the Baltic States;

WE APPEAL to the conscience of all mankind to perceive the magnitude of the injustice perpetrated upon the Baltic peoples and to support the efforts toward the restoration of liberty to these countries.

BALTIC STATES FREEDOM COUNCIL