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LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY of the U. S. A., Inc.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
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Please reply to:

STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY OF THE
U.S.A., INC. TO THE REPUBLICAN PARTY PLATFORM
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA
AUGUST 16, 1972

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INTRODUCTION

Today, the United States stands on the threshold of the most meaningful and potentially rewarding era in the history of mankind—an opportunity brought about in no small measure by the aggressive and imaginative statesmanship of President Nixon. For the first time in the last fifty years, global peace is attainable. And we believe, under the leadership of President Nixon, it will become a reality.

However, global peace is only the first great objective of our Nation, we must also seek the attainment of freedom and justice for all oppressed nations.

For even if the countries of the world cease hostilities toward one another, the unresolved legacies of the Second World War must be confronted; the status of the "Captive Nations" must be once and for all equitably resolved.

Our statements today are directed so that you, the Platform Committee, in drafting the Platform of the Republican Party are aware of the intense feelings of the



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many millions of such Ethnic-Americans.

The current plight of the Soviet-occupied Baltic Nations, and in particular Lithuania, is especially distressing, for unlike most of the other "Captive Nations", the Baltic States were forcibly annexed into the Soviet Union in 1940.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

This annexation was a cruel blow to Lithuania which, as a non-slavic nation, had existed as an independent country since the establishment of the Kingdom of Lithuania in 1251. The independence of the Lithuanian people was interrupted in 1795 with the final partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth under the yoke of Czarist Russia. However, in 1918 the Lithuanian people exercised their right of self-determination and restored the independent Lithuanian State. They confirmed their decision by a determined struggle in the wars for Lithuanian independence in 1919-1920, and held free elections for their Constituent Assembly in 1920. In the peace treaty of July 12, 1920, Soviet Russia officially recognized the sovereignty and independence of Lithuania and voluntarily renounced forever all sovereign rights and claims by Russia over Lithuanian soil and her people.

At the outbreak of World War II, Lithuania was a fully independent and sovereign nation, a member of the League of Nations and a signatory of numerous international treaties with the Soviet Union. And for the previous 20 years, had consistently pursued a policy of friendly relations toward the USSR.

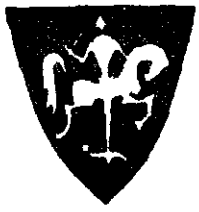


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However, the Soviet Union in the secret Molotov-Ribbentrop agreements of August 23 and September 28, 1939, divided the prospective spoils of World War II with Nazi Germany, and secured the independent Baltic States as a part of their exclusive sphere of influence reserved for Soviet territorial expansion. These secret agreements sealed the fate of the three Baltic countries.

While the attention of the entire world was focused on the collapse of France, the Soviet Union during June 15-17, 1940 invaded with overwhelming armed forces and occupied Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. After fraudulent elections, characterized by a single list of candidates, were conducted under conditions of military occupation, coupled with an intensive terror campaign, the Soviet Union annexed the three Baltic States.

There can be no doubt in the mind of any individual in the United States about the Lithuanian people's continuous rejection of the oppressive Communist system. The post-war history of Lithuania bears grim testimony to this rejection. From 1944 to 1952 anti-Soviet partisans struggled against the Soviet military occupation in protracted guerilla warfare, at a cost of over fifty thousand Lithuanian lives in this struggle for freedom. During the Stalin era, over one-half million Lithuanians were deported to Russia and Siberia in an effort to depopulate and subjugate the Lithuanian Nation. And, to this very day, Lithuanians are risking and sacrificing their lives in defiance of the Communist regime in



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seeking political freedom, as demonstrated by the infamous Simas Kudirka affair and by the recent three reported self-immolations within Lithuania.

NON-RECOGNITION OF ANNEXATION OF BALTIC COUNTRIES

The United States has never recognized the Soviet annexation of the Baltic States, and this position continues to give succor to the Lithuanian people, since it reinforces their determination to await national independence. Moreover, the unsettled international status of these countries discourages a great many Soviet citizens from settling in Lithuania, thus reducing the flow of prospective colonists and considerably hindering the Soviet policies of colonization, ethnic dilution, Russification, and effective absorption of Lithuania, and the other Baltic states, into the Soviet Union.

The United States policy of non-recognition of the Baltic annexation has also exerted a restraining effect on Soviet repressive policies, since Communist authorities must consider that extreme measures of repression in the Baltic countries are not regarded as an internal matter of the Soviet Union, and have provoked protests of World Public Opinion.

Lithuanian-Americans are generally in favor of the new initiatives taken by the United States to achieve a genuine relaxation of world tensions, and the strengthening of international peace and security, but we are greatly concerned that during any future



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negotiations the policy of non-recognition of the Soviet annexation of the Baltic States and the principle of self-determination could be impaired, compromised or even abandoned.

In particular, the pending European Security Conference poses such a threat today. We strongly urge that the Platform of the Republican Party pledge not to recognize the territorial "status quo" in Europe, because such recognition would violate the rights of self-determination of the peoples and nations of Eastern Europe.

Furthermore, let us not be fooled that peace in the world can be attained by offering the inalienable rights of the people of Lithuania and the rest of the Baltic nations on the altar of appeasement. This would be tantamount to our ratification of the Molotov-Ribbentrop agreement of 1939 and extinguish for all time the small candle of hope in the darkness of totalitarian oppression.

DIPLOMATIC LEGATIONS OF THE BALTIC COUNTRIES

The United States policy of non-recognition of the forcible annexation of the Baltic States by the Soviet Union is reinforced and given visible expression and substance by the continued existence of Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian diplomatic legations. These legations focus public attention upon the unsettled international status of the Baltic countries, and they act as a restraining influence upon the Soviet Union.

As vital as these diplomatic legations are, the current policy of the United States Department of State has allowed an



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erosion of the Baltic diplomatic services which, if not reversed, will lead to their gradual extermination. The Department of State does not recognize any Baltic diplomats not commissioned by the last Presidents of independent Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. Obviously, as old age takes its toll, Baltic representation is being progressively reduced and ultimately will completely disappear.

The Lithuanian-American Community of the U.S.A., Inc. urges that the Republican Platform support the adoption by the Department of State of a policy similar to that of the Holy See which has accepted new Baltic diplomats.

Moreover, the source of financial support of the Lithuanian diplomatic service in the United States which is the frozen assets of independent Lithuania located in the United States, are being rapidly depleted, and in about four years will be completely exhausted. The Lithuanian-American Community of the U.S.A., Inc. urges the Republican Party to be committed to insure the future continued existence of the diplomatic services of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO LIBERTY

In the summer of 1950, Radio Free Europe began broadcasting to the people of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria. Three years later, in 1953, the first small-scale broadcasts of Radio Liberty began reaching the people of the Soviet Union. In both instances, Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty brought news to the people of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and expressed viewpoints



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which were repressed in those lands.

In the intervening two decades, the thirst for news from non-Communist sources on the part of the people of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union has proven the need for Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty.

In a recent interview, the Nobel Prize winning Soviet author, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, illustrated the value of Radio Free Europe when he stated "If we learn anything about events in our own country, its from there (Radio Free Europe). ...You Westerners cannot imagine my situation. No one dares to stand up and object to a party propogandist, because, if he does, the next day he may lose his job and even his freedom."

The 1,500 employees of Radio Free Europe produce and broadcast an average of 15 hours a day to the five Eastern European countries involved. The 1,000 employees of Radio Liberty reach out 24 hours a day, in 20 languages, to a potential audience of 50 million Soviet homes which have radios. Accurate estimations of the listenership in the Soviet Union do not exist, but in the five Eastern European nations in 1970, it was estimated that Radio Free Europe reached an average of 53 percent of the people over 14 years of age.

Another important barometer of the effectiveness of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty is the extent to which the Communist governments attempt to block broadcast signals. By sending out competing radio signals on the same radio frequencies, they attempt to



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reduce Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty to moaning static. Fortunately, it is easier to evade such jamming than it is to jam the radio signals themselves. In addition, the price to make listening more difficult is high, about \$6 million annually in Czechoslovakia alone and about \$150 million in the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union began jamming Radio Liberty 10 minutes after it went on the air and has continued its jamming attempts 24 hours a day ever since. It is reasonable to conclude that the value of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty broadcasts can be calculated by how hard the Communists try to stop them.

Every effort must be expended to continue to provide information from the free world through Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty until such time as there is a guarantee of a free flow of information.

Therefore, we urge the Republican Party to continue its dedication to the continued existence of these vital broadcast stations and foster the expansion of these broadcasts to include the Baltic States.

DIRECT ACTION BY UNITED STATES ON BEHALF OF BALTIC STATES

The 89th U.S. Congress during its second session adopted House Concurring Resolution 416 urging the President to direct the question of the status of the Baltic countries in the United Nations and other international forums.

Notwithstanding, it was not until recently that the Baltic oppression was openly brought to the attention of the member nations



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of the United Nations—and then only to support United States Viet Nam policies.

It is time that United States delegates to the United Nations direct the attention of the councils of United Nations to the intensified religious and political persecution of the peoples of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The failure to do so diminishes the credibility of the United States position regarding the Baltic States. World opinion continues to condemn the atrocities of the Soviet Union directed toward the Baltic States.

Additionally, a new forum is open in which Baltic questions may be raised directly to the Soviet Union by United States officials. The future deliberations and conferences with the Soviet Union resulting from the recent summit meeting will provide excellent opportunities to focus attention on the political, religious and cultural suppression within the Baltic Countries.

Viewing the continued silence of Kurt Waldheim and his failure to respond particularly to the latest appeal of one of the Baltic countries, i.e., a Petition of 17,000 Lithuanian-Catholics voicing denial of religious freedom and discrimination by the Soviet Union in conjunction with his recent strong attack on the United States Viet Nam policy is conclusive evidence that there is a lack of objective and impartial concern by United Nations leadership to valid international causes.

We, therefore, urge the adoption of an affirmative policy



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of employing these conferences as an opportunity to bring forth the question of the Baltic nations directly to the appropriate Soviet officials.

PROPER CLASSIFICATION OF NATIONALS WITHIN THE SOVIET UNION

We bring attention to this Committee the apparant use of the term "minorities" to classify the oppressed peoples within the Soviet Union. We respectfully suggest the proper terminology be "Nationalities" such as Lithuanian, Latvian or Estonian.

SUMMARY

For the foregoing reasons, the National Executive Committee of the Lithuanian-American Community of U.S.A., Inc. respectfully urges a strong commitment to the following points and we ask that they be incorporated in the Foreign Policy plank of the 1972 Republican Platform:

1. Reaffirmation of the principle that the Baltic Nations will regain their freedom and independence, and the maintenance of a vigorous policy of non-recognition of the annexation of the Baltic Nations by the Soviet Union.
 - (a) Opposition to any official recognition of the territorial "status quo" in Europe.
2. Provide the means to insure the continued existence of the diplomatic services of the three Baltic countries.
3. In addition to employing the U.S. delegation to publically bring forth the Baltic question in the United Nations,



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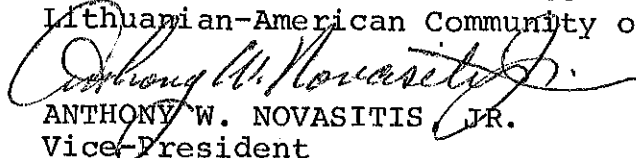
- raise directly to the Soviet Union in future conferences and negotiations, the continued religious, political and cultural suppression of the Baltic Nations.
4. Pledge strong action to insure the continued viable operation of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty to serve the purpose for which they have been created.
 5. Employ proper classification and identity of the peoples of the Captive Nations of Eastern Europe as "Nationalities" and not as "minorities".

Thank you.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



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National Executive Committee
Lithuanian-American Community of U.S.A, Inc.



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Vice-President
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