

May 30, 1940

The Minister in Latvia (Wiley) to the Secretary of State

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Summary:

Officials express concern about the Soviet Union's aggressive actions toward Lithuania.

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[Received 5:50 p.m.]

107. Moscow's No. 601, May 29, midnight. Competent official of Foreign Office professes to be at a loss to explain Soviet procedure towards Lithuania. Under existing treaties Soviet Government should be able to satisfy all desires in the Baltic area including increase of garrisons and bases without recourse to pressure. He described the situation as grave even if the Soviet complaints were fabricated. That the Soviet Union had made its quarrel with Lithuania public was a very bad sign.^[1]

My Estonian colleague for whose opinions I have considerable respect considers the situation very dangerous for the Baltic States. He believes that the Soviet Union may be synchronizing the final development of its Baltic policy with events in the west. The Estonian Minister added that some of the incidents cited in the Tass communiqué were indeed based on fact.

However the Lithuanian Counsellor claims that the Soviet move has come as a complete surprise to his Government which is at an utter loss to explain its patriotic [*sic*] purpose.

The new Soviet Minister^[2] is paying conspicuous lip service to Soviet friendship for Germany.

A special meeting of the Latvian Cabinet is now in protracted session with the President.

Wiley

^[1] In telegram No. 90, May 31, 3 p.m., the Minister in Lithuania, Owen J. C. Norem, stated that "the Lithuanian Foreign Office suggested that the matter be kept secret but the Russians preferred to publish the affair over the radio and in the press." The Minister gave as his personal opinion his belief that "Russia will not make any further move at this time but will reserve the present case for some action in the future should it seem feasible." (760M.61/100)

^[2] Vladimir Konstantinovich Derevyansky, previously Soviet Minister in Finland, had presented his credentials on May 8, 1940.