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Department of State, Memorandum, 'Current United States Policy Toward Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia'

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Summary:

Explanation of US policy of non-recognition of Soviet control of the Baltic states.

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BALTIC STATES - US Policy

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For Mr. Leddy's Briefing Paper

US Policy Toward the Baltic States has three basic and interrelated elements: 1) The US does not recognize the forcible incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union; 2) we continue to recognize and to maintain official relations with those diplomatic and consular representatives of the last free governments of these states who still maintain offices in the US and certain other Western countries; Latvia and Lithuania maintain Legations in Washington and Estonia has a Consulate General in Charge of Legation in New York; 3) we support publicly and through such diplomatic means as are available and appropriate the just aspirations of the Baltic peoples for freedom and national independence.

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MEMORANDUM

Current United States Policy Toward Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia

Current United States policy toward Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia was first formulated and expressed at the time of the incorporation of these States into the Soviet Union by the then Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles (enclosure 1). Since that time we have firmly maintained our policy of non-recognition of the illegal incorporation of the Baltic Nations. Secretary of State Dulles reiterated this policy in 1953 before a select committee of the House of Representatives investigating the Soviet domination of the Baltic States (enclosure 2).

We have taken the following positive steps in implementing our policy:

- (a) We have continued to recognize the diplomatic and consular representatives of the pre-war Baltic Governments. The Lithuanians and Latvians maintain Legations in Washington and the Estonians a Consulate General in New York.
- (b) The Secretary of State has sent congratulatory letters to the Baltic Mission chiefs on the occasions of their national days reaffirming our support for their aspirations. Copies of messages sent in 1964 and 1965 are attached (enclosure 3).
- (c) High government officials have made speeches condemning Soviet aggression with the purpose of keeping alive the issue of self-determination for the Baltic peoples and mobilizing world opinion in their favor. Examples of such speeches include the late President Kennedy's Address before the U.N. General Assembly, September 25, 1961 (begin p.14) (enclosure 4); the late Ambassador Stevenson's addresses at the United Nations and his letter on "Colonialism" of November 25, 1961 to the President of the General Assembly (enclosure 5); and Assistant Secretary of State G. Mennen Williams's address before the Lithuanian American Council of New York on the occasion of Lithuania's Independence Day ceremonies on February 16, 1964 and his address at the Captive Nations Day Observance at Pittsburg on July 19, 1964 (enclosure 6).
- (d) The President has issued each year since 1959 a Proclamation declaring the third week of July to be "Captive Nations Week". A copy of the 1965 Proclamation is attached (enclosure 7).

Our policy of building bridges to Eastern Europe does not run counter to our policy of non-recognition of the Soviet takeover in the Baltics. It is our hope that the success of the bridge building policy will eventually create an atmosphere in Eastern Europe that will make it possible for the three Baltic Nations to again be free and independent. Assistant Secretary Williams referred to this theme in his Captive Nations address (see enclosure 6).