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## Baltic Freedom Day, 1983

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

In 1940, Soviet armies invaded and occupied the independent countries of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. The peaceful, Western-oriented Baltic nations were crushed by the force of arms of their hostile neighbor. Under the cynical arrangements of the infamous Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement, the Soviet Union forcibly incorporated the three Baltic Republics into its empire.

Following the Soviet takeover, tens of thousands of the Baltic peoples were subject to imprisonment, deportation, persecution, and execution. Their religious, cultural, and historical heritage has been denigrated. The foreign political system which now controls their homelands has attempted to force these unwilling people to accept an alien life of totalitarian domination. But it has failed.

Today, the Baltic peoples continue to struggle to attain the freedoms we enjoy. These men and women still suffer harsh imprisonment, banishment, and persecution for their beliefs. Brave Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians still seek to exercise their human rights to think, speak, and believe as their conscience directs them.

The people of the United States of America share the just aspirations of the people of the Baltic nations for national independence, and we cannot remain silent in the face of the continued refusal of the government of the U.S.S.R. to allow these people to be free. We uphold their right to determine their own national destiny, free of foreign domination.

The government of the United States has never recognized the forced incorporation of the Baltic States into the Soviet Union and will not do so in the future.

In its defense of the rights of the Baltic people, the United States does not stand alone. On January 13th, the Parliament of Europe passed a resolution by an overwhelming majority on "The situation in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania," calling for the restoration of self-determination for the Baltic States.

By House Joint Resolution 201, the Congress of the United States has authorized and requested the President to designate June 14, 1983, as "Baltic Freedom Day."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate June 14, 1983 as Baltic Freedom Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate remembrances and ceremonies and to reaffirm their commitment to principles of liberty and freedom for all oppressed people.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirteenth day of June, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

*Ronald Reagan*