Public Law 101-39
101st Congress

Joint Resolution

Designating June 14, 1989, as "Baltic Freedom Day", and for other purposes.

June 19, 1989
[S.J. Res. 63]

Whereas the people of the republics of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia (hereinafter referred to as the "Baltic Republics") have cherished the principles of religious and political freedom and independence;

Whereas the Baltic Republics existed as independent, sovereign nations and as fully recognized members of the League of Nations;

Whereas 1989 marks the 50th anniversary of the infamous Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in which the Soviet Union colluded with Nazi Germany, thus allowing the Soviet Union in 1940 to illegally seize and occupy the Baltic Republics and to incorporate such republics by force into the Soviet Union against the national will and the desire for independence and freedom of the people of such republics;

Whereas due to Soviet and Nazi tyranny, by the end of World War II, 20 percent of the total population of the Baltic Republics had been lost;

Whereas the people of the Baltic Republics have individual and separate cultures and national traditions and languages which are distinctively foreign to those of Russia;

Whereas since 1940, the Soviet Union has systematically implemented Baltic genocide by deporting native Baltic peoples from Baltic homelands to forced labor and concentration camps in Siberia and elsewhere;

Whereas by relocating masses of Russians to the Baltic Republics, the Soviet Union has threatened the Baltic cultures with extinction through russification;

Whereas through a program of russification, the Soviet Union has introduced ecologically unsound industries without proper safeguards into the Baltic Republics, and the presence of such industries has resulted in deleterious effects on the environment and well-being of the Baltic people;

Whereas the Soviet Union, despite recent pronouncements of openness and restructuring, has imposed upon the captive people of the Baltic Republics an oppressive political system which has destroyed every vestige of democracy, civil liberty, and religious freedom;

Whereas the people of the Baltic Republics are subjugated by the Soviet Union, are locked into a union such people deplore, are denied basic human rights, and are persecuted for daring to protest;

Whereas the Soviet Union refuses to abide by the Helsinki accords which the Soviet Union voluntarily signed;

Whereas the United States stands as a champion of liberty, is dedicated to the principles of national self-determination, human rights, and religious freedom, and is opposed to oppression and imperialism;

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Whereas the United States, as a member of the United Nations, had repeatedly voted with a majority of that international body to uphold the right of other countries of the world to self-determination and freedom from foreign domination;

Whereas the Soviet Union has steadfastly refused to return to the people of the Baltic Republics the right to exist as independent republics, separate and apart from the Soviet Union, or to permit a return of personal, political and religious freedoms; and

Whereas 1989 marks the 49th anniversary of the continued policy of the United States of not recognizing the illegal forcible occupation of the Baltic Republics by the Soviet Union: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That—

(1) the Congress recognizes the continuing desire and right of the people of the Baltic Republics for freedom and independence from the domination of the Soviet Union;

(2) the Congress deplores the refusal of the Soviet Union to recognize the sovereignty of the Baltic Republics and to yield to the rightful demands for independence from foreign domination and oppression by the people of the Baltic Republics;

(3) June 14, 1989, the anniversary of the mass deportation of Baltic peoples from their homelands in 1941, is designated as "Baltic Freedom Day", as a symbol of the solidarity of the people of the United States with the aspirations of the enslaved Baltic people; and

(4) the President is authorized and requested—

(A) to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe Baltic Freedom Day with appropriate ceremonies and activities, and

(B) to call upon the Soviet Union, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the Democratic Republic of Germany to renounce the acquisition or absorption of the Baltic Republics by the Soviet Union as a result of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

Approved June 19, 1989.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S.J. Res. 63:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 135 (1989):
Feb. 28, considered and passed Senate.
June 13, considered and passed House.