CONGRESSIONAL RESOLUTION OF NON-RECOGNITION

The United States never recognized the legality of the Soviet occupation of Estonia. This stance was ultimately based on the 1932 Stimson Doctrine, a policy of non-recognition of international territorial changes caused by force. At the time, the doctrine was addressing Japan’s invasion of China. But the principles of this doctrine were applied again in 1940 by U.S. Secretary of State Sumner Welles regarding the Soviet annexations of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

Below is one of many Congressional resolutions issued over the years that reaffirmed the U.S. non-recognition position.

Congressional Concurrent Resolution, 1973

In 1973 the House of Representatives referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs the following concurrent resolution introduced by Congressman Derwinski of Illinois.

December 5, 1973

Whereas the three Baltic nations of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have been illegally occupied by the Soviet Union since World War II: and

Whereas the Soviet Union will attempt to obtain the recognition by the European Security Conference of its annexation of these nations: and

Whereas the United States delegation to the European Security Conference should not agree to the recognition of the forcible conquest of these nations by the Soviet Union:

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), that it is the sense of the Congress that the United States delegation to the European Security Conference should not agree to the recognition by the European Security Conference of the Soviet Union's annexation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and it should remain the policy of the United States not to recognize in any way the annexation of the Baltic nations by the Soviet Union.