

# Memorandum

in the Case of

Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania  
and Ukraine

The League of Esthonians, Letts, Lithuanians  
and Ukrainians of America

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Presented by the League of Esthonians, Letts,  
Lithuanians and Ukrainians of America

## FRIENDLY RELATIONS OF THE FOUR PEOPLES

From the Baltic to the Black Sea, occupying territory greater in extent than Germany and France combined, are situated four new and democratic republics,—Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Ukraine. Their combined populations number nearly eighty millions. Their armies fighting side by side against the Bolshevist regime have bound them into a league for defense of their homes and countries.

**In Europe**

Their kindred in America, numbering about three millions, have also come to a close understanding with each other for purposes of mutual welfare and for the establishment of proper relations between their former countries and the democratic peoples of the United States, Great Britain, France, Japan and Italy, the powers which are most interested in bringing the whole of Europe to a normal and peaceful condition. They have formed the League of Esthonians, Letts, Lithuanians and Ukrainians of America. Their duly elected representatives take the liberty at this time of presenting the case of their mother countries and they petition that each of these republics be accorded official recognition and justice in any and all treaties which may be entered into affecting their political, economic and territorial rights.

**In America**

The formation of this brotherhood among these peoples in the two hemispheres is entirely natural and cannot in any way be construed as superficial or temporary. It has been brought about in Europe by many circumstances affecting their racial, economic and political existence extending over many centuries. Because of their territories, stretching all the way across Europe, and because of differences in race from the neighboring nations, they were obliged at various times to conduct wars of defense against oppression and invasion of their territories and against their national annihilation at the hands of Poles, Russians, Tartars and Germans.

**Naturalness  
of the  
League**

Each nation is composed distinctly of people of its own race, with its own language, history, literature, traditions and aspirations. Each has become independent through its own efforts and each has established a government of its own strong enough to defend its country against the Bolsheviki, Poles and Germans.

## **OPPRESSION BY THE NEIGHBORING IMPERIALISTIC POWERS**

### **By Old Poland**

Generations ago, the peoples of these republics tasted of a political tie with Poland and found it anything but endurable. Their languages, religions, national rights and economic aspirations were ignored and abused beyond measure. Colonization by Poles, the imposition of the Polish language with a different religion, as well as the unwarranted seizure at opportune moments of territories belonging to Letts, Lithuanians and Ukrainians, were as much the order of the day as the Polish duplicity. The political chicanery and snobbery of the Polish gentry and clergy did not at all end with the partition of Poland. Nor did the partition prevent the Poles from using their ill-gotten advantage in furthering the use of the Polish language through religious channels and in oppressing economically their comrades in misfortune.

### **Greed of the New Polish Government**

Since Poland's resurrection as an independent state, the people of these four republics have found the new Polish government as insincere, arrogant and imperialistically ambitious as in the past. Under pretense of fighting the Bolsheviks, where no Bolsheviks were present, the Polish armies have occupied parts of Ukraine and territories of East Galicia and Volhynia, where the population is almost entirely Ukrainian. Under the same pretense they have occupied the Lithuanian territories of Grodno, Vilna, Minsk and Suwalki. Lithuanian civil officials were arrested and replaced by Poles; persecution and abuse of all who spoke the language of the country was inaugurated, and war was begun on the Lithuanian people with the sole object of incorporating Lithuania into Poland. This war still continues. In short, all of Poland's promised activity against the Bolsheviks has proved to be a ruse for securing the help of the Allied Governments in her attempt to acquire Lithuania, Esthonia, Latvia and Ukraine.

### **By Germany**

German attempts to gain a political foothold in Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the last few centuries, as well as the activities of their notorious land-owning Baltic barons, have produced results among the natives of these countries not dissimilar to the results produced by the Poles. The economic exploitation of these countries by the mail-fisted methods of the Germans, supported by the officials and court camarilla at Petrograd, has served to make the people bitter enemies of both Germans and Russians.

### **German Military Occupation**

Four years of military occupation of these countries by German armies in this war and the abuse inflicted by their soldiers upon the natives during that time have served to inspire a burning hatred in the heart and soul of every native man, woman and child. Not only did the Germans requisition all available cattle, sheep, horses, agricultural and manufacturing implements, tools, machinery and supplies, but they even wantonly destroyed or carried away seeds, hay, straw, grain, pillows, covers, blankets, sheets, mattresses, clothing, linen, medical supplies and furniture. They left the peo-

ple to starvation, exposure to the inclement weather and ravaging diseases. They flooded these countries with unredeemable, worthless paper money and they planted military colonies which now are making alliance with the Russians in order to secure these territories for Germany. With the Poles and the Bolsheviki they bartered and traded the cities and territories of the unfortunate republics. No such suffering, misery and devastation were wrought in Poland, Serbia, Belgium, France or any other country by the World War, as in these four republics, whose people fought and still are fighting so valiantly on the side of the Allies. There never was and never can be any pro-German sentiment in these four countries.

Russia ruled these four nations, each more enlightened than herself, for more than a century. Her sway over Ukraine lasted three centuries. Her rule was notorious, not only because of her political, racial and economic persecution of alien races, but because of her thorough corruption and the unparalleled short-sightedness of her political policies. Her eagerness to denationalize and Russify the subject nations led her to extremes. The most enlightened men of these nations, whose only crime was their patriotism, served months in solitary confinement and years in exile in Siberia. Even Germans were given more rights than were the native inhabitants. All the commerce was directed into Germany's hands, while the natives were driven to despair, with emigration as their only hope for betterment. Printing in the native languages was prohibited, although all foreign languages were encouraged and protected.

**By Russia**

The incompetence of the Imperial Russian Government is a familiar story. The same bureaucrats and autocrats of that old regime, men like Admiral Kolchak, General Denikin and their assistants, are trying to assume control of the country again, but they are not one whit more liberal now than they were under the czars. It is well known that one of the articles in the Kolchak Statutes provides the death penalty for all persons who advocate the principles of self-determination or separation from the old Russian Empire. Russian factions supporting Admiral Kolchak and his direct representatives have declared that as soon as Russia shall have established peace within her own proper territory, whether controlled by the Bolsheviki or by the monarchists, *she immediately will take steps to nullify the Treaty of Versailles*. Not only do the Russians intend to destroy the four republics of Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Ukraine, but they plan to crush the independence of Poland and Finland and to subjugate even Roumania. To carry out this scheme successfully, Russians are prepared to enter immediately into economic, defensive and offensive treaties with Germany. The unusual diplomatic activity of recent date among Berlin, Moscow and the Kolchak elements, as well as the military understanding which seems to have been arrived at in the Baltic, is a bad omen for peace in Europe for a long time to come.

**Russia Today**

## **THE POWER IN THE CO-OPERATION OF THE FOUR REPUBLICS OF ESTHONIA, LATVIA, LITHUANIA AND UKRAINE**

The four nations have no ties whatever with Germany, Poland and Russia. They are independent, and their right to independence is historically, racially, and by the principle of self-determination, indisputable. Lithuanians, Letts, Esthonians and Ukrainians differ in language and race from all their neighbors. They had their independent states for centuries. They gave due protection to all creeds and peoples and lived in peace and toleration among themselves. Together they now form a force powerful enough to command the situation in Eastern Europe.

### **Their Natural Wealth**

Their territory, extending in a wide belt all the way from the Baltic to the Black Sea, is the most productive in Europe. Even under Russian domination and German economic influence, and at times when Russia proper had famines, they exported immense quantities of wheat, rye, oats, barley, potatoes, fruits, flax, linens, linseed oil, hemp, wool, feathers, bristles, hogs, sheep, poultry, horses, cattle, graphite, manganese, iron, quicksilver, salt, oil, coal, hardwoods, building materials, fish, amber, beet sugar, honey, beeswax, and many manufactures. They have great waterways, railroads, and many ice-free ports within their own proper territories. Their countries are ready for commercial expansion and development. They know of no competitors in any lines, with the exception of Germany, among their turbulent neighbors.

### **The Character of the People**

The natives are democratic, industrious and not given to extreme radical views or to economic disturbances. Their farming and laboring classes are the most enlightened of all the peoples of the former Russian Empire. Their sons attend universities in all parts of Europe and have filled the most prominent places in the professions, literature, industry, and the administrative departments of former Russia. Many of them now have returned to aid in the reconstruction and defense of their native countries.

### **Capacity for Self-Government**

There can be no doubt that these countries are capable of conducting the administration of their own countries in a modern and peaceful manner and independently of Russia, Poland and Germany. They have shown amazing power for organization in the development of their armies and in the administration of their countries for defense against the Poles and the Bolsheviki, though the ruin and misery caused by the German armies of occupation has yet to be overcome. Now that they stand shoulder to shoulder there is no force in Europe so effective and so completely on terms of good understanding politically as these four newly established republics of Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Ukraine. All they seek at the hands of the principal Allied and Associated powers is recognition of their respective republics and just territorial boundaries.

## EFFECT OF THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

The so-called barrier that has been constructed of Poland and Roumania for the purpose of separating Germany and Russia is not only inadequate in population and territory, but it lacks strength in itself. It is not composed of peaceful and homogeneous peoples and it is surrounded on all sides by enemies. Roumania has Bulgaria on the south, Hungary on the west, and Russia (should Ukraine not be independent) on the north and east. From all of these she has taken away some territory and thus has become an enemy of each.

**Polish-  
Roumanian  
Barrier  
Inadequate**

Poland is in a far worse plight than Roumania. Although she has a difficult problem in the reconstruction of her own country, she has eagerly started wars with her neighbors for territories which, in most cases, belong and have belonged to those neighbors from time immemorial, with the exception of Posen, some parts of Prussia and Russian Poland proper. She has a controversy with Czechoslovakia over the Bohemian district of Teschen; with Germany she is contending for Posen, Silesia and parts of East and West Prussia. In Lithuania she is at war over the districts of Suvalki, Vilna, Grodno and Minsk, which never were parts of Poland. In Latvia she claims Inflanty. In Ukraine she is warring for all she can seize, especially for Western Ukraine, or Eastern Galicia, which, until recently, was a part of Austria and where for centuries the native inhabitants have been Ukrainians (Ruthenians). Poland's greed would not stop at conquering all Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia and Esthonia. The power in Poland, as well as in Roumania, is in the hands of the land-owning gentry, while the peasants present splendid material for the Bolshevik propaganda or for an economic revolution.

The autocratic Russian anti-Bolshevik forces give even less promise for the future peace of Europe than do Poland and Roumania. The United States has declared in the words of Secretary Lansing that "this Government has announced its intention to assist Admiral Kolchak and his associates to the extent that it may be found legally practicable to do so and has reached this decision only because of its conviction that assistance to Russia cannot be rendered through dealings with the Bolshevik regime at Moscow but also because of the liberal policy to which Admiral Kolchak has committed himself." Nevertheless, it cannot be doubted that Admiral Kolchak who calls his regime the 'all Russian Government' is diametrically opposed to the independence or self-determination of Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Ukraine. Admiral Kolchak's policy is anything but liberal, and his declarations of "liberality" are vague, evasive and meaningless. His binding himself and his associates to safeguard free institutions in Russia by the earliest practicable meeting of the Constituent Assembly does not in any way promise self-determination to the peoples who are in no way Russian and who are now free and independent.

Instead of supporting Poland, Roumania and the anti-Bolshevik Russian imperialists, it would be more expedient to support these four republics of about eighty million people, who are fighting the Bolsheviks, not only without receiving any help, but with much interference and open warfare against them on the part of Poles, Germans and the Russian anti-Bolshevik forces, frequently in *the rear of their fighting lines*.

Poland in occupying Lithuanian and Ukrainian territories with permission of the Supreme Council at Versailles on pretence of fighting the Bolsheviks is gradually extending the line of demarkation laid down between Lithuanian and Polish troops, and is occupying the whole of Ukrainian East Galicia. These invasions prevent effective campaigns by the Lithuanians and Ukrainians against the Bolsheviks.

These four republics feel that not only are they being wronged by the support given by the Allies to Poland in her occupation of territories not her own, but that some provisions of the Versailles Treaty encroach upon their inalienable national rights. Articles (Navigation) 331, 332, 338, 342 and 345 provide for internationalization of the River Niemen with its connections. This river flows entirely through territory inhabited by Lithuanians and before partition was owned and controlled by Lithuania. Article 99 of Section X does not provide for the cession of Lithuanian port of Memel to the Republic of Lithuania. The territory adjoining Memel should also be ceded to Lithuania, and Northern East Prussia with native Lithuanian population should be given the right of determining the government the inhabitants wish to live under.

Article 87, Section VIII, should not extend the boundary of Poland into Lithuanian territory, see lines 11, 12 and 13.

Article 94, Section IX, does not provide a right of plebiscite for the Lithuanian part of East Prussia.

## CONCLUSION

In order to promote cordial relations with these four democratic republics at an early date and establish peace in Eastern Europe, it will be necessary to see that their proper territorial rights are respected by their neighbors, and guaranteed by treaties, and that their respective republics are given recognition of their independence by the principal Allied and Associated Powers.

While representatives of these republics on many occasions have presented their demands for each country separately, and frequently jointly, at Versailles, London and Washington, the present request and petition to the principal Allied and Associated Powers, the United States, Great Britain, Italy, Japan and France, is to the effect that:

1. Independence of the republics of Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Ukraine, respectively, be recognized at an early date, in each case with their national territories intact.

2. The said four republics be accorded all necessary means for the reconstruction of their respective countries, for the immediate establishment of commerce, and for defense against invasion.

3. No neighboring country under any pretext be given consent or permission to occupy temporarily or permanently any part of territory belonging to these four republics.

4. All four above mentioned republics be permitted to join the League of Nations at an early date, as independent and sovereign States.

5. The privileges and rights included in Article X of the Covenant of the League of Nations be extended only to such nations as will come to a peaceful understanding with their neighboring countries as to their proper boundaries with them and as shall have withdrawn all their troops from disputed territory.

6. Poland be compelled to withdraw at once her troops from all Lithuanian territories, particularly from Grodno, Suwalki, Vilna and Minsk, and from all Ukrainian territories, particularly of East Galicia and Volhynia.

7. No Government representing Russia or any faction thereof be given recognition or aid until it shall have definitely recognized, without any reservation, full independence of the republics of Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Ukraine, respectively.

8. The Lithuanian inhabitants of the Northeastern part of East Prussia, formerly a part of Lithuania proper, be given, if not ceded outright to Lithuania, at least the right to choose the Government under which they shall live, (see Article 94, Sect. IX) as has been done in the case of West and East Prussia which are partly inhabited by Poles.

9. Articles (Navigation) 331, 332, 338, 342 and 345 of the Versailles Peace Treaty be so construed as not to permit internationalization of the River Niemen with all its "connections," but to cede the same to Lithuania.

10. Article 99 of Section X of the Versailles Peace Treaty with Germany be so construed as to cede the Lithuanian Port of Memel, lately of the German Empire, not to the associated powers, but to Lithuania, as well as the territory mentioned therein as ceded to the Principal Allied and Associated Powers, and Article 87, Section VIII, be so construed as to define Poland's border to the point of meeting of the Southern border of Gubernia Suwalki with the boundary of East Prussia.

11. German troops and all their military and civilian colonists be compelled to withdraw from all territories of these four republics at once.

12. No territory, in whole or in part, properly belonging to these republics which has been colonized by foreign elements or where a foreign language has been introduced while the native population was under political disadvantage, be given the privilege of self-determination by plebiscite separately from the country to which it properly belongs, nor be ceded outright to any neighboring or other foreign power.

13. Germany and Poland be compelled to reimburse these countries for all damage done.

14. All decisions be rendered solely upon the principles of equity and in accordance with those aims as were proclaimed that this war was fought for.

