

Letter from Baltic activists to Winston Churchill (9 September 1948)

Caption: On 9 September 1948, Juozas Lanskoronskis, representative in France of the Baltic Federalist Movements, and Anro Halm, General Secretary of the Baltic Council in Stockholm, send to the former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, Chairman of the Congress of Europe held four months earlier in The Hague, a letter in which they express the determination of the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian people to contribute to the efforts to establish a united Europe on a federal basis.

Source: Archives historiques de l'Union européenne, Florence, Villa Il Poggiolo. Dépôts, DEP. ME Mouvement européen. Préparation du Congrès de l'Europe devant se tenir à La Haye du 07 au 10/05/1948, ME 1179.

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Dear Chairman of the Congress of Europe,

The Delegation of the Baltic Federalist Movements, grateful for having been allowed to participate in the Congress of Europe, would like to take this opportunity to involve the Baltic people in the common task of creating a truly united Europe. Through you, Mr Chairman, it has the honour of making the following declaration to the Congress:

1. The Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian peoples, aware of being European by virtue of their geographical location and the many close similarities of their culture and way of life, have long given their complete support to the idea of European cooperation, which can only be of the greatest benefit to their economic, social and cultural development in a context where national autonomy is maintained in line with the duties and obligations that, for them, would result in a Europe which is devised and established on new foundations and where the restrictive old concept of full sovereignty would necessarily be limited, with some powers being transferred to a common supranational authority.
2. The delegation aligns itself fully with all declarations which seek to highlight the principle that Europe cannot be truly united unless Europe as a whole is involved and that, by excluding the peoples of Eastern Europe, the solution can only be less than perfect and, at the very most, temporary.
3. It welcomes the principle expressed in the final resolution that such a union should be open to all nations democratically governed and sees in it a reason and an incentive for the Baltic peoples to direct their efforts towards the establishment of a democratic regime.
4. The delegation is already deeply convinced that as soon as the Baltic peoples emerge from the totalitarian domination of foreign occupation, they will not fail to take full advantage of the rights of free human beings to organise themselves freely in a truly democratic manner and, standing shoulder to shoulder with all the peoples of Europe, will not delay for a single moment in extending their full and sincere cooperation towards this common goal.

Juozas Lanskoronskis
Representative of the Baltic Federalist Movements, Paris

Anro Halm
General Secretary of the Baltic Council, Stockholm