

FALSIFIERS of HISTORY (Historical Survey)

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Foreword

At the end of January the State Department of the United States of America in collaboration with the British and French Foreign Offices published a collection of reports and diary records of Hitler diplomatic officials under the mysterious title: *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-1941*.

We learn from the preface to the collection that as early as the summer of 1946 the Governments of the U.S.A., Great Britain and France agreed among themselves to publish materials from the archives of the German Foreign Office relating to the period 1918-1945 which had been seized in Germany by the American and British military authorities. It is noteworthy that the materials published in the collection pertain only to the period 1939-1941. The materials relating to the preceding years and in particular to the Munich period, have not been included by the U.S. State Department and thus concealed from the knowledge of the world. This, of course, is not accidental, and was done with a purpose which is quite alien to an objective and honest treatment of historical truth.

In order to provide some manner of justification in the eyes of the public for this unilateral publication of a collection of unverified and arbitrarily chosen records of Hitler officials, the British and American press circulated the story that "the Russians had rejected the proposal of the West to publish jointly a full account of Nazi diplomacy."

This assertion of British and American circles *does not correspond to the facts*.

The real facts are as follows. In the summer of 1945, when reports appeared in the foreign press that preparations were being made in England to publish documents captured in Germany, the Soviet Government approached the Government of Great Britain and insisted that Soviet experts participate in a joint examination of the German documents captured by the British and American troops. The Soviet Government held that publication of such documents without common consent was inadmissible. Nor could it assume responsibility for the publication of documents without careful and objective verification; for unless these elementary conditions were observed, publication of the materials could only harm relations between the member states of the anti-Hitler coalition. However, the British Foreign Office *declined the Soviet proposal*, on the grounds that the Soviet Government had raised the question of exchanging copies of the captured Nazi documents prematurely.

It is likewise known that on September 6, 1945, the American delegation to the Political Directorate of the Control Council in Germany submitted a draft directive on the handling of German archives and documents. This draft provided that a uniform procedure of collecting and keeping archives be instituted all over Germany, and that representatives of members of the United Nations shall have right of access to them. It also provided that the documents might be copied and published. This proposal was examined at four meetings of the Political Directorate, but its further examination was postponed at the request of the British and the Americans on the plea that they had no instructions. And when subsequently the American representative

announced that the U.S. Government was preparing a new proposal and requested that the submitted draft be regarded as non-effective, the question was removed from the Political Directorate's agenda.

Consequently, the allegation that the Soviet Government refused to take part in preparing the publication of the German archive materials is *false*.

Simultaneously with the publication of the above-mentioned collection, and as though at the wave of a magic wand, a fresh campaign of unrestrained vilification and slander was started in the United States and the countries dependent on it in connection with the non-aggression pact concluded between the U.S.S.R. and Germany in 1939, which it is alleged was directed against the Western Powers.

There can therefore be no doubt as to what was the real purpose of the publication in the U.S.A. of the collection of documents on Soviet-German relations in 1939-1941. It was not to give an objective account of historical developments, but to present a distorted picture of events, to heap lies and slanders on the Soviet Union and to undermine the international influence it enjoys as a staunch and genuinely democratic fighter against aggressive and anti-democratic forces.

This treacherous behaviour is in conformity with the attitude toward inter-allied relations typical of the ruling circles of the Anglo-American countries: instead of honest and sincere relations between allies, instead of mutual confidence and support, a policy is pursued of using every means, down to and including calumny, for the purpose of weakening one's ally, exploiting him in one's own narrow and selfish interest and strengthening one's own position at his expense.

Nor must the fact be lost sight of that the ruling circles of the U.S.A. are endeavouring by their slanderous campaign against the U.S.S.R. to undermine the influence of the progressive elements in their own country who advocate improvement of relations with the U.S.S.R. This blow at the progressive elements in the U.S.A. is undoubtedly designed to weaken their influence in view of the presidential elections to be held in the autumn of this year.

The collection is crammed with documents concocted by Nazi diplomatic officials in the seclusion of German diplomatic chancelleries. This fact alone should have acted as a restraint against the unilateral use and publication of documents which by their nature are one-sided and tendentious, recount events from the standpoint of the Hitler Government and are intended to present them in a light favourable to the Hitlerites. It was precisely for this reason that the Soviet Government was opposed to the unilateral publication of the captured German documents without thorough and joint preliminary verification. Even the French government news agency France Presse had to admit that the manner of publication of the materials by the three Governments without the knowledge of the Soviet Union was "not quite in accord with normal diplomatic procedure."

Nevertheless, the British Government did not agree with this. The American, British and French Governments have taken the step of unilaterally publishing the German documents, and have not stopped at falsifying history in their attempt to slander the Soviet Union, which bore the main brunt of the struggle against Hitler aggression.

By doing so, these Governments have assumed full responsibility for the consequences of this unilateral action.

In view of this, the Soviet Government feels itself entitled, in its turn, to make public the secret

documents concerning the relations between Hitler Germany and the Governments of Great Britain, France and the U.S.A. which fell into its hands, and which the above three Governments have *concealed* from the public. They have concealed these documents; they do not want to publish them. But we believe that, after all that has taken place, these documents should be made public, so that historical truth may be re-established.

The Soviet Government possesses important documents captured by the Soviet troops at the time of the defeat of Hitler Germany, the publication of which will help to throw true light on the preparation and development of Hitler's aggression and the Second World War.

This too is the purpose of the present historical survey, *Falsifiers of History*, published by the Soviet Information Bureau of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R.

The secret documents pertaining to this subject will be published shortly.

I.

How the Preparations for German Aggression Began

The American falsifiers and their British and French abettors are trying to create the impression that the preparations for German aggression which developed into the Second World War began in the autumn of 1939. But who nowadays save the most naïve who are prepared to believe any sensational hoax will swallow this? Who does not know that Germany began preparing for war immediately after Hitler's advent to power? Who does not know, moreover, that the Hitler regime was set up by the German monopolists with the full approval of the ruling camp in Britain, France and the United States?

In order to prepare for war and to provide herself with up-to-date armament, Germany had to restore and develop her heavy industry and, first and foremost, the metallurgical and war industries of the Ruhr. After her defeat in the first imperialist war, and weighed down moreover by the yoke of the Versailles Treaty, Germany could not have accomplished this in a short space of time with her own unaided resources. In this German imperialism received powerful assistance from the United States of America.

Who does not know that in the post-Versailles period American banks and trusts, with the full consent of their Government, made investments in the German economy and granted Germany credits running into billions of dollars, which were spent on the reconstruction and development of her war-industrial potential?

It is general knowledge that a whole series of measures were taken in the post-Versailles period to reconstruct Germany's heavy industry and, in particular, her war-industrial potential. Immense assistance was rendered in this by the Dawes Reparations Plan, by means of which the U.S.A. and Great Britain planned to make German industry dependent upon American and British monopolies. The Dawes Plan cleared the way for a powerful influx and infiltration of foreign, chiefly American, capital into German industry. The result was that already in 1925 the German economy began to expand, consequent upon an intensive process of re-equipment of her

production facilities. At the same time her exports rose sharply, and by 1927 reached the level of 1913, while in the case of finished goods they even surpassed that level by 12 per cent (at 1913 prices). In the six years 1924-1929, the influx of foreign capital into Germany totalled more than 10-15 billion Reichsmarks in long-term investments and more than 6 billion Reichsmarks in short-term investments. According to some authorities, the volume of capital investments was considerably higher. This led to a colossal growth of Germany's economic and, in particular, her war potential. American investments played the leading part, amounting to no less than 70 per cent of the total long-term loans.

The role played by the American monopolies, headed by the duPont, Morgan, Rockefeller, Lamont and other industrial baronial families, in financing German heavy industry and establishing the closest ties between American and German industry is well known. The leading American monopolies had intimate connections with German heavy industrial, armament and banking concerns. DuPont de Nemours, the leading American chemical concern and one of the biggest shareholders in General Motors, and the British Imperial Chemical Industries maintained close industrial relations with the German chemical concern I. G. Farbenindustrie, with which in 1926 they concluded a cartel agreement for the 'division of the world powder market. Before the war the president of Robin and Haas, Philadelphia (U.S.A.), was a partner of the head of the same company in Darmstadt (Germany). Incidentally, the former director of this concern, Rudolf Muller, is now active in Bizonia and is a prominent figure in the leading circles of the Christian Democratic Union. The German capitalist Schmitz, president of I. G. Farbenindustrie and a member of the board of the Deutsche Bank, from 1931 to 1939 controlled the General Dyestuffs Corporation, an American firm. After the Munich conference (1938), American Standard Oil signed a contract with I. G. Farbenindustrie, under which the latter was given a share in the profits from the production of aviation petrol in the United States, in return for which it willingly agreed to cease exporting from Germany its own synthetic petrol, which Germany was stocking for war purposes.

Such connections are not only typical of the American capitalist monopolies. Extremely close economic relations, of not only commercial but also military significance, existed on the outbreak of the war, between the Federation of British Industries and the German Reichs-Industrie group. In 1939, representatives of these two monopolist associations issued a joint statement in Düsseldorf which said in part that the purpose of the agreement was "to insure the fullest possible co-operation between the industrial systems of their respective countries." And this was at the time when Hitler Germany had swallowed Czechoslovakia! No wonder the London *Economist* wrote in this connection: "Is not there something in the Düsseldorf air that makes reasonable men lose their senses?"¹

The Schröder bank, in which a leading part was played by the German steel trust Vereinigte Stahlwerke A. G., organised by Stinnes, Thyssen and other captains of Ruhr industry with headquarters in New York and London, furnishes a typical example of the close interlocking of American and German, as well as British, capital. Allen Dulles, director of the J. Henry Schröder Banking Corporation in New York, which represented the Schröder interests in London, Cologne and Hamburg, played a leading role in the affairs of this bank. An outstanding role in the New York branch of the Schröder bank was played by the law firm of Sullivan and Cromwell, headed by John Foster Dulles, now Mr. Marshall's chief adviser, and closely connected with the Rockefeller world oil trust, Standard Oil, as well as with the Chase National, the biggest bank in America, which made enormous investments in German industry.

Richard Sasuly, in a book published in New York in 1947, stresses the fact that no sooner had inflation in Germany in the post-Versailles period been checked and the Reichsmark had gained

stability, than a regular torrent of foreign loans poured into Germany. Between 1924 and 1930 Germany's foreign debt increased by over 30 billion Reichsmarks.

With the help of foreign, chiefly American, capital, German industry, especially the Vereinigte Stahlwerke A. G., was extensively reconstructed and modernised. Some of the loans were granted directly to the companies which played a leading part in the re-armament.²

Along with the Anglo-German-American Schröder bank, a leading part in financing the Vereinigte Stahlwerke A. G. in that period was played by Dillon, Read & Co., one of the biggest New York banks, of which the present Secretary of Defence, Forrestal, was a director for a number of years.³

It was this golden rain of American dollars that fertilised the heavy industry, and in particular the war industry, of Hitler Germany. It was the billions of American dollars invested by overseas monopolies in the war economy of Hitler Germany that rebuilt Germany's war potential and placed in the hands of the Hitler regime the weapons it needed for its aggression.

With the financial support chiefly of the American monopolies, Germany within a short period rebuilt a powerful war industry capable of producing enormous quantities of first-rate weapons, many thousands of tanks, aircraft, guns, naval ships of latest design and other armaments.

All this the falsifiers of history would now like to forget in their desire to evade responsibility for their policy, a policy which armed Hitler aggression, unleashed the Second World War, and led to a military holocaust without parallel in history which took a toll of millions upon millions of human lives.

Therefore, it must not be forgotten that the first and foremost prerequisite of Hitler aggression was provided by the resurrection and modernisation of Germany's heavy and war industry, and that this was only made possible by the direct and extensive financial support rendered by the ruling circles of the United States of America.

But this is not all.

Another decisive factor which helped to unleash Hitler aggression was the policy of the ruling circles of Britain and France known as the "appeasement" of Hitler Germany, the policy of renouncing collective security. It should now be clear to everyone that it was precisely this policy of the British and French ruling circles, their renunciation of collective security, their refusal to resist German aggression, their compliance with Hitler Germany's aggressive demands, that led to the Second World War.

Let us turn to the facts.

In 1933, soon after Hitler came to power, as a result of the efforts of the British and the French Governments a Pact of Accord and Co-operation was signed in Rome by four powers — Great Britain, Germany, France and Italy. This pact signified a compact between the British and French Governments and German and Italian fascism, which even at that time made no concealment of its aggressive intentions. The pact with the fascist states furthermore signified a renunciation of the policy of strengthening the united front of the peace-loving powers against the aggressive states. At that very time the Disarmament Conference was discussing the Soviet proposal for the conclusion of a non-aggression pact and a pact defining an aggressor. By coming to terms with Germany and Italy behind the backs of other powers taking part in the conference, Great Britain

and France dealt a blow to the cause of peace and security of nations.

Soon after, in 1934, Britain and France helped Hitler to take advantage of the hostile attitude toward the U.S.S.R. of their allies, the gentry of Poland, the result of which was the conclusion of the German-Polish non-aggression pact, which was an important stage in the preparation of German aggression. Hitler needed this pact as a means of disrupting the ranks of the adherents of collective security and as an example to show that what Europe needed was not collective security but bilateral agreements. This enabled the German aggressor to decide for himself with whom and when to conclude agreements, and whom and when to attack. The German-Polish pact undoubtedly constituted the first serious breach in the edifice of collective security.

Hitler, now grown bold, began to take open measures to rebuild Germany's armed forces, without encountering any opposition from the rulers of Britain and France. On the contrary, soon after, in 1935, a naval agreement between Britain and Germany was concluded in London, where Ribbentrop had arrived for this purpose. Under this agreement Great Britain consented to the restoration of Germany's naval forces to a strength almost equal to that of the French navy. In addition, Hitler obtained the right to build submarines to an aggregate tonnage equal to 45 per cent of the British submarine fleet. During this same period Hitler Germany also took unilateral actions aimed at abolishing all other restrictions on the growth of Germany's armed forces imposed by the Treaty of Versailles. These actions encountered no opposition on the part of Britain, France and the U.S.A.

The appetites of the fascist aggressors grew by leaps and bounds, with the manifest acquiescence of the U.S.A., Great Britain and France. It was certainly not accidental that at that time Germany and Italy got away so easily with their armed interventions in Ethiopia and Spain.

The Soviet Union alone consistently and firmly pursued a policy of peace, championing the principles of equality and independence in the case of Ethiopia, which was moreover a member of the League of Nations, and the right of the lawful Republican Government of Spain to receive support from the democratic countries against the German and Italian intervention. Referring, at the session of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. on January 10, 1936, to Italy's attack on Ethiopia, V. M. Molotov said:

“The Soviet Union has demonstrated in the League of Nations its fidelity to this principle, the principle of the political independence and national equality of all states, in the case of one of the small countries — Ethiopia. The Soviet Union has also taken advantage of its membership of the League of Nations to put into practice its policy toward an imperialist aggressor.”⁴

V. M. Molotov further said:

“the Italo-Ethiopian war shows that the threat of a world war is growing and is steadily spreading over Europe.”²

What were the Governments of the U.S.A., Great Britain and France doing at a time when the fascist bandits were growing ever more brazen in the treatment of their victims? They did not so much as lift a finger to curb the German and Italian aggressors, to defend the outraged rights of nations, to preserve peace and to halt an impending second world war.

The Soviet Union alone was doing everything possible to block the fascist aggressors. The Soviet Union was the initiator and champion of collective security. As early as February 6, 1933, the Soviet representative in the General Commission on Disarmament, M. M. Litvinov, proposed that

a declaration be adopted defining aggression and an aggressor. In proposing that a definition be given of an aggressor, the Soviet Union held that it was necessary in the interest of general security, and in order to facilitate agreement being reached for a maximum reduction of armaments, to define the term “*aggression*” with the utmost possible precision, so as to “forestall every pretext for its justification.” But the conference, acting under the direction of Britain and France, rejected this proposal — to the advantage of German aggression.

Everybody knows what a persistent and prolonged struggle was waged by the Soviet Union and by its delegation to the League of Nations, headed by M. M. Litvinov, to maintain and strengthen collective security. Throughout the whole pre-war period the Soviet delegation upheld the principle of collective security in the League of Nations, raising its voice in defence of this principle at practically every session and in practically every commission of the League. But, as we know, the voice of the Soviet delegation was a voice crying in the wilderness. The whole world is familiar with the proposals concerning measures for the strengthening of collective security which, on August 30, 1936, the Soviet delegation, acting on the instructions of the Soviet Government, addressed to Mr. Avenol, Secretary General of the League of Nations, with the request that they be discussed by the League. But it is also known that these proposals were consigned to the League’s archives without any action being taken on them.

It was clear that Britain and France, who at the time controlled the League of Nations, rejected collective resistance to German aggression. They rejected collective security because it stood in the way of their newly adopted policy of “appeasing” German aggression, their policy of ceding to Hitler aggression. Naturally, this policy could not but result in the intensification of German aggression, but the ruling British and French circles believed that this was not dangerous because, after satisfying Hitler aggression by concessions in the West, it could then be directed to the East and utilised as a weapon against the U.S.S.R.

In his report to the Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.), in March 1939, J. V. Stalin, explaining the reasons for the growth of Hitler aggression, said:

“The chief reason is that the majority of the non-aggressive countries, particularly England and France, have rejected the policy of collective security, the policy of collective resistance to the aggressors, and have taken up a position of non-intervention, a position of ‘neutrality.’”⁶

Neal Stanford, an American journalist, asserts, with the idea of misleading his readers and at the same time vilifying the Soviet Government, that the Soviet Government was opposed to collective security, that M. M. Litvinov was dismissed from the post of People’s Commissar of Foreign Affairs and replaced by V. M. Molotov because he had been pursuing a policy of strengthening collective security. It would be hard to imagine anything more stupid than this fantastic assertion. It should be obvious that M. M. Litvinov was not pursuing his own personal policy but the policy of the Soviet Government. On the other hand, everybody knows how all through the pre-war period the Soviet Government and its representatives, including M. M. Litvinov, fought for collective security.

As regards the appointment of V. M. Molotov to the post of People’s Commissar of Foreign Affairs, it is perfectly clear that in so complex a situation, when the fascist aggressors were preparing a second world war, when Great Britain and France, backed by the United States of America, were directly abetting the aggressors and spurring them on to war against the USSR, it was necessary to have in such a responsible post as that of People’s Commissar of Foreign Affairs a political leader of greater experience and greater popularity in the country than M. M. Litvinov.

The rejection by the Western Powers of a collective security pact was not fortuitous. This was a period when a struggle between two lines in international politics developed. One line strove for peace, for the organisation of collective security and for resistance to aggression by the joint efforts of the peace loving nations. This was the line of the Soviet Union, which consistently and staunchly defended the interests of all peace loving nations, big and small. The other line rejected the organisation of collective security, rejected opposition to aggression, and this inevitably encouraged the fascist countries to intensify their aggressive action and thereby helped to unleash a new war.

The historical truth, as can be seen from all this, is that Hitler aggression became possible, firstly, because the United States helped the Germans to build at fast speed, a war-economic base for German aggression, and thus armed her aggression, and, secondly, because the rejection of collective security by the ruling circles of Britain and France disrupted the ranks of the peace-loving countries, disintegrated their united front against aggression, cleared the way for German aggression and helped Hitler to unleash a second world war.

What would have happened if the United States had not financed Hitler Germany's heavy industry, and if Britain and France had not rejected collective security, but, on the contrary, had together with the Soviet Union organised collective resistance to German aggression?

Hitler's aggression would not have had sufficient arms, Hitler's annexationist policy would have been gripped in the vice of a system of collective security. The Hitlerites chances of successfully unleashing a second world war would have been reduced to a minimum. And if the Hitlerites had nevertheless ventured, in spite of these unfavourable conditions, to unleash a second world war, they would have been defeated in the very first year.

But this unfortunately was not the case, because of the fatal policy pursued by the United States of America, Britain and France throughout the pre-war period.

It is they that are to blame for the Hitlerites being able with some measure of success to unleash a second world war that lasted nearly six years and took a toll of millions of human lives.

II.

Not a Struggle Against German Aggression But a Policy of Isolating the U.S.S.R.

Subsequent developments made it clearer than ever that by yielding and conceding to the fascist countries — which in 1936 formed a military-political bloc under the name of the Berlin-Rome Axis — the ruling circles of Britain and France were only encouraging and impelling Germany to aggression.

Having rejected the policy of collective security, Britain and France adopted a position of so-called non-intervention, of which J. V. Stalin said:

“...the policy of non-intervention might be defined as follows: ‘Let each country defend itself from the aggressors as it likes and as best it can. That is not our affair. We shall trade both with the aggressors and with their victims.’ But, actually speaking, the policy of non-intervention means conniving at aggression, giving free rein to war, and, consequently, transforming the war into a world war.”⁷

J. V. Stalin further said that

“...the big and dangerous political game started by the supporters of the policy of non-intervention may end in a serious fiasco for them.”⁸

Already in 1937 it became quite manifest that things were heading for a big war planned by Hitler with the direct connivance of Great Britain and France.

German Foreign Office documents captured by the Soviet troops after Germany’s defeat reveal the true purport of Great Britain’s and France’s policy at that period. They show that, essentially, British and French policy was not to unite the forces of the peace-loving states for a common struggle against aggression, but to isolate the U.S.S.R. and direct Hitler aggression toward the East, against the Soviet Union using Hitler as a tool for their own ends.

The rulers of Britain and France were well aware of the fundamental trend of Hitler’s foreign policy, which Hitler himself had defined as follows:

“We, National Socialists, consciously put an end to our pre-war foreign policy. We begin where we ended six centuries ago. We stop the Germans’ eternal drive to Europe’s South and West and turn our eyes to the lands in the East. We break, at last, with the colonial and commercial policies of the pre-war times and go over to a territorial policy of the future. But when we, now, in Europe, speak of new lands, we can have in mind first of all only Russia and the bordering countries under her rule. Destiny itself seems to show us the way.”⁹

It was customary until recently to consider that the entire responsibility for the Munich policy of treachery rests with the ruling circles of Britain and France, with the Chamberlain and Daladier Governments. The fact that the American Government undertook to publish materials from the German archives, yet excluded the documents pertaining to the Munich agreement, shows that the United States Government is interested in white-washing the heroes of the Munich betrayal and wants at the same time to put the blame on the Soviet Union.

The basic purpose of Britain’s and France’s Munich policy was sufficiently clear before. However, documents from the archives of the German Foreign Ministry now at the disposal of the Soviet Government furnish abundant additional data shedding light on the true meaning of the pre-war diplomacy of the Western Powers. They show how the destinies of nations were played with, how brazenly other peoples’ territories were bartered, how the map of the world was secretly redrawn, how Hitler aggression was encouraged, and what efforts were made to direct that aggression toward the East, against the Soviet Union.

This is eloquently illustrated by a German document recording a conversation between Hitler and British Minister Halifax, in the presence of von Neurath, the German Foreign Minister, in Obersalzberg, on November 19, 1937.

Halifax declared that:

“he [Lord Halifax] and other members of the British Government were fully aware that the Führer had not only achieved a great deal inside Germany herself, but that, by destroying Communism in his country, he had barred its road to Western Europe, and that Germany, therefore, could rightly be regarded as the bastion of the West against Bolshevism.”¹⁰ Speaking on behalf of British Prime Minister Chamberlain, Halifax pointed out that there was every possibility of finding a solution even of difficult problems if Germany and Britain could reach agreement with France and Italy too.

Halifax said that:

“there should not be the impression that the Berlin-Rome Axis or the good relations between London and Paris would suffer as the result of an Anglo-German rapprochement. After the ground is prepared by the Anglo-German rapprochement, the four great West-European Powers¹¹ must jointly lay the foundation for lasting peace in Europe. Under no conditions should any of the four powers remain outside this co-operation, or else there would be no end to the present unstable situation.”¹²

Thus, already in 1937, Halifax, on behalf of the British Government, proposed to Hitler that Britain, as well as France, join the Berlin-Rome Axis.

To this proposal, however, Hitler replied with a statement to the effect that such a four-power agreement seemed to him very easy to arrange if it was just a matter of mutual good will and courtesy, but it would prove more complex if Germany were not regarded “as a state which no longer carried the moral and material stigma of the Treaty of Versailles.”

In reply to this, Halifax, according to the record, said:

“Britons are realists, and are perhaps more than others convinced that the errors of the Versailles dictate must be rectified. Britain always exercised her influence in this realistic sense in the past. He pointed to Britain’s role with regard to the evacuation of the Rhineland ahead of the fixed time, the settlement of the reparations problem, and the reoccupation of the Rhineland.”¹³

It is further evident from the record of Hitler’s conversation with Halifax that the British Government viewed with favour Hitler’s plans for the “acquisition” of Danzig, Austria and Czechoslovakia. Having discussed with Hitler the questions of disarmament and the League of Nations and having remarked that these questions required further discussion, Halifax said:

“All other questions can be characterised as relating to changes in the European order, changes that sooner or later will probably take place. To these questions belong Danzig, Austria and Czechoslovakia. Britain is only interested that these changes shall be effected by peaceful evolution so its to avoid methods which may cause further convulsions undesired either by the Führer or by the other countries.”¹⁴

This conversation, it will be seen, was not a mere sounding, not a mere probing of an interlocutor which is sometimes called for by political necessity; it was a deal, a secret agreement between the British Government and Hitler to satisfy his annexationist appetites at the expense of other countries.

Noteworthy in this connection is a statement made in Parliament by the British Minister John Simon on February 21, 1938, to the effect that Great Britain had never given special guarantees of

Austria's independence. This was a deliberate lie, because such guarantees were given by the Versailles and St. Germain treaties. British Prime Minister Chamberlain declared at that same time that Austria could not count upon receiving any protection from the League of Nations.

“We must not try to delude ourselves and still more we must not try to delude small weak nations into thinking that they will be protected by the League against aggression and acting accordingly when we know that nothing of the kind can be expected.”¹⁵

In this way the makers of British policy encouraged Hitler to annexationist actions.

In the German archives captured by the Soviet troops in Berlin there is also a record of a conversation between Hitler and the British Ambassador to Germany, Neville Henderson, which took place in the presence of Ribbentrop on March 3, 1938.¹⁶ Henderson began by stressing the confidential nature of the conversation, stating that its content would be withheld from the French, Belgians, Portuguese and the Italians, who would be merely told that the conversation was a continuation of the negotiations that had been carried on between Halifax and Hitler and related to questions concerning Germany and Britain.

Speaking on behalf of the British Government, Henderson in this conversation stressed that:

“this is not a commercial deal but an attempt to establish a basis for genuine and cordial friendship with Germany, beginning with an improvement of the situation and finishing with the creation of a new spirit of friendly understanding.”¹⁷

Henderson offered no objection to Hitler's demand to “unite Europe without Russia,” pointing out that Halifax, who by then had become Foreign Secretary, had already agreed to the territorial changes which Germany intended to make in Europe, and that:

“the purpose of the British proposal was to participate in such a reasonable settlement.”

Henderson, according to the record, also said that Chamberlain

“displayed great courage when, heeding nothing, he unmasked such international phrases as collective security, etc.”

“... Therefore,” added Henderson, “Britain declares her readiness to remove all difficulties and asks Germany whether she is prepared, on her part, to do the same.”¹⁸

When Ribbentrop intervened and drew Henderson's attention to the fact that the British Minister to Vienna had “in a dramatic way” made a statement to von Papen on the events in Austria, Henderson hastened to dissociate himself from the statement of his colleague, declaring that “he, Neville Henderson, had often expressed himself in favour of Anschluss.”

Such was the language of pre-war British diplomacy.

Immediately after this deal, Hitler, on March 12, 1938, annexed Austria, and met with no resistance from Britain or France. At that time only the Soviet Union raised a voice of warning, and once again appealed for the organisation of collective protection of the independence of the countries threatened by aggression. On March 17, 1938, the Soviet Government sent a note to the Powers in which it expressed its readiness to “discuss immediately with other powers in or outside the League of Nations practical measures” which “would have the purpose of stopping

further aggression and eliminating the increased danger of a new world holocaust.”¹⁹ The reply of the British Government to the Soviet note testified to the unwillingness of the British Government to create obstacles to Hitler’s plans of aggression.

The reply stated that a conference for taking

“concerted action against aggression would not necessarily, in the view of His Majesty’s Government, have such a favourable effect upon the prospects of European peace.”²⁰

The next link in the chain of German aggression and preparation of war in Europe was the seizure by Germany of Czechoslovakia. This most important step toward the unleashing of war in Europe could likewise be taken by Hitler only with the direct support of Britain and France.

On July 10, 1938, Dirksen, the German Ambassador to London, reported to Berlin that for the British Government

“one of the most essential planks of its program is to find a compromise with Germany,” and that “this Government displays with regard to Germany the maximum understanding that could be displayed by any of the likely combinations of British politicians.”²¹

Dirksen wrote that the British Government:

“has come nearer to understanding the most essential points of the major demands advanced by Germany, with respect to excluding the Soviet Union, as well as the League of Nations, from the decision of the destinies of Europe, and of the advisability of bilateral negotiations and treaties.”

Dirksen also reported to Berlin that the British Government was prepared to make great sacrifices to “meet Germany’s other just demands.”

Thus far-reaching accord on foreign policy was actually established between the British Government and Hitler, as Dirksen so lucidly reported to Berlin.

It is not necessary to recall the universally known facts directly relating to the Munich deal. But one cannot forget that on September 19, 1938, i.e., four days after Hitler’s meeting with Chamberlain, who flew to Berchtesgaden, Hitler’s residence, for the purpose, representatives of the British and French Governments demanded of the Czechoslovak Government that it cede to Germany the Czechoslovak regions populated mainly by Sudeten Germans. They alleged that if this demand were not complied with it would be impossible to preserve peace and protect Czechoslovakia’s vital interests. The British and French sponsors of Hitler aggression attempted to cover their treachery with the promise of an international guarantee of Czechoslovakia’s new frontiers as “a contribution to the pacification of Europe.”²²

On September 20, the Czechoslovak Government replied to the Anglo-French proposals. It declared that “the acceptance of such proposals would be tantamount to the voluntary and full disruption of the state in all its directions.” The Czechoslovak Government drew the attention of the British and French Governments to the fact that “the paralysis of Czechoslovakia would result in deep political changes in all Central and South-Eastern Europe.”

“The balance of power in Central Europe and in Europe in general,” stated the Czechoslovak Government in its reply, “would be destroyed; that would entail far-reaching consequences for all the other states and especially, for France.”

The Czechoslovak Government made a “last appeal” to the Governments of Britain and France to reconsider their position, emphasising that it would be in the interest not only of Czechoslovakia, but of her friends as well, in the interest of “the entire cause of peace and the cause of the healthy development of Europe.”

The rulers of Britain and France were implacable. The next day the British Government sent a reply to the Czechoslovak Government suggesting that the latter withdraw its answer to the original Anglo-French proposals and “speedily and seriously weigh over the matter” before creating a situation for which the British Government could take no responsibility. The British Government further emphasised that it could not believe that the Czechoslovak proposal of arbitration would now be acceptable. The British Government, the note stated, did not think “the German Government will consider the situation to be such as could be solved by arbitration, as suggested by the Czechoslovak Government.”

The British note concluded with the warning threat that if the Czechoslovak Government rejected Britain’s advice, the Czechoslovak Government “will be free to take any steps it may deem befitting the situation that may develop later.”

The conference between Hitler, Chamberlain, Mussolini and Daladier in Munich on September 29 and 30, 1938, marked the consummation of the disgraceful deal, which had been fully arranged beforehand by the chief participants of the plot against peace. The fate of Czechoslovakia was decided behind her back. Her representatives were invited to Munich only meekly to await the conclusion of the compact of the imperialists.

The entire conduct of Britain and France left no doubt that this unparalleled act of treachery on the part of the British and French Governments toward the Czechoslovak people and the Czechoslovak Republic was not a mere episode in the policy of Britain and France, but, on the contrary, was a major link in their policy of directing Hitler aggression against the Soviet Union.

The true meaning of the Munich conspiracy was exposed at the time by J. V. Stalin, when he said that “the districts of Czechoslovakia were yielded to Germany as the price of an undertaking to launch war on the Soviet Union.”²³

The whole essence of the policy of the ruling circles of Britain and France in that period was disclosed by J. V. Stalin at the Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) in March 1939, in the following words:

“The policy of non-intervention means conniving at aggression, giving free rein to war, and, consequently, transforming the war into a world war. The policy of non-intervention reveals an eagerness, a desire: not to hinder the aggressors in their nefarious work: not to hinder Japan, say, from embroiling herself in a war with China, or, better still, with the Soviet Union; not to hinder Germany, say, from enmeshing herself in European affairs, from embroiling herself in a war with the Soviet Union; to allow all the belligerents to sink deeply into the mire of war, to encourage them surreptitiously in this; to allow them to weaken and exhaust one another; and then, when they have become weak enough, to appear on the scene with fresh strength, to appear, of course, ‘in the interests of peace,’ and to dictate conditions to the enfeebled belligerents.”²⁴

The Munich agreement was greeted with indignation and emphatic condemnation in the democratic circles of various countries, including the United States of America, Great Britain and France. The attitude of these circles toward the Munich treachery of the British and French rulers

may be judged from statements made, for instance, by Sayers and Kahn, who in their book, *The Great Conspiracy: The Secret War Against Soviet Russia*, published in the U.S.A., had the following to say about Munich:

“The Governments of Nazi Germany, fascist Italy, Great Britain and France signed the Munich Pact — the anti-Soviet Holy Alliance of which world reaction had been dreaming since 1918. The Pact left Soviet Russia without allies. The Franco-Soviet Treaty, cornerstone of European collective security, was dead. The Czech Sudetenland became part of Nazi Germany. The gates of the East were wide open for the Wehrmacht.”²⁵

Through all the phases of the Czechoslovak tragedy, the Soviet Union alone of all the Great Powers vigorously championed the independence and the national rights of Czechoslovakia. The Governments of Britain and France, seeking to justify themselves in the eyes of the public, hypocritically declared that they did not know whether or not the Soviet Union would live up to the pledges it gave Czechoslovakia in the treaty of mutual assistance. But this was a deliberate falsehood, for the Soviet Government had publicly announced its readiness to come to Czechoslovakia’s aid, against Germany in accordance with the terms of that treaty, which provided that France should come to Czechoslovakia’s aid simultaneously. France, however, refused to discharge her duty.

All this notwithstanding, on the eve of the Munich deal the Soviet Government again declared that it was in favour of convening an international conference to render Czechoslovakia practical aid and to take practical measures for the preservation of peace.

When the seizure of Czechoslovakia became a fact, and the governments of the imperialist countries, one after another, had proclaimed their recognition of the fait accompli, the Soviet Government, in its note of March 18, branded the annexation of Czechoslovakia by Hitler Germany, with the complicity of Britain and France, as a wanton act of violence and aggression. The Soviet Government stressed that by her acts Germany had created and aggravated a menace to universal peace, had “upset political stability in Central Europe, increased the state of alarm already created in Europe, and dealt a fresh blow to the sense of security of the nations.”²⁶

But the betrayal of Czechoslovakia to Hitler was not the end of it. The Governments of Britain and France ran over one another in their eagerness to sign broad political agreements with Hitler Germany. On September 30, 1938, an Anglo-German declaration was signed by Chamberlain and Hitler in Munich. It stated:

“We have continued today our conversation and have unanimously come to the conviction that Anglo-German relations are of paramount importance to both countries and to Europe. We regard the agreement signed yesterday evening and the Anglo-German naval agreement as symbolical of the desire of both our peoples never again to wage war against each other. We are resolved to consider other questions, too, which concern both our countries by means of consultation and to strive in future to eliminate all causes generating discord, so as to facilitate the maintenance of peace in Europe.”²⁷

This was a declaration of mutual non-aggression on the part of Britain and Germany.

On December 6, 1938, the Bonnet-Ribbentrop Franco-German declaration, similar to the Anglo-German, was signed. It stated that the German and French Governments were at one in their belief that peaceful and good-neighbourly relations between Germany and France were a cardinal condition for the consolidation of European relations and for the maintenance of universal peace,

and that both Governments would do their utmost to maintain such relations between their countries. The declaration further stated that there were no longer any territorial disputes between France and Germany and that the existing boundary between the two countries was final. The declaration concluded by saying that both Governments were firmly resolved, irrespective of their separate relations with third Powers, to maintain contact on all matters concerning their countries and to confer with each other should these matters, in their further development, lead to international complications.

This was a declaration of mutual non-aggression on the part of France and Germany.

Essentially, these agreements meant that both Britain and France had concluded pacts of non-aggression with Hitler.

These agreements with Hitler Germany revealed with perfect clarity that the British and French Governments were seeking to guard themselves from the menace of Hitler aggression, believing that the Munich and similar agreements had already flung the gates wide open for Hitler aggression in the East, in the direction of the Soviet Union.

In this way the political conditions necessary for “uniting Europe, without Russia” were created.

The objective was the complete isolation of the Soviet Union.

III.

Isolation of the Soviet Union. The Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact

Following the seizure of Czechoslovakia, fascist Germany proceeded with her preparations for war quite openly, before the eyes of the whole world. Hitler, encouraged by Britain and France, no longer stood on ceremony or pretended to favour a peaceful settlement of European problems. The most dramatic months of the pre-war period had come. At that time it was already clear that every day was bringing mankind nearer to an unparalleled catastrophic war.

What was the policy at that time of the Soviet Union on the one hand, and of Great Britain and France on the other?

The attempt of the American falsifiers of history to avoid answering this question merely goes to prove that their conscience is not clear.

The truth is that even in the fateful period of the spring and summer of 1939, on the threshold of war, Britain and France, supported by United States ruling circles, continued their former line of policy. This was a policy of maliciously inciting Hitler Germany against the Soviet Union camouflaged by pharisaical avowals of readiness to cooperate with the Soviet Union, as well as by certain simple diplomatic manoeuvres designed to conceal the real character of their policy from the world.

Of these manoeuvres the first were the negotiations which Britain and France decided to open with the Soviet Union in 1939. In order to deceive public opinion the ruling circles of Britain and France tried to create the impression that these negotiations were a serious attempt to prevent the further spread of Hitler aggression. In the light of the subsequent developments, however, it became perfectly clear that as far as the Anglo-French side was concerned these negotiations were from the very beginning nothing but another move in their double game.

This was also clear to the leaders of Hitler Germany, for whom the meaning of the negotiations with the Soviet Union undertaken by the Governments of Britain and France was certainly no secret. Here, as can be seen from documents captured by the Soviet Army at the time of Hitler Germany's defeat, is what the German Ambassador to London, Dirksen wrote in his report to the German Foreign Ministry on August 3, 1939:

“The prevailing impression here was that [Britain's] ties with other states formed during the recent months were only a reserve means for a real reconciliation with Germany and that these ties would cease to exist as soon as the one important aim worthy of effort — agreement with Germany — was achieved.”

This opinion was firmly shared by all German diplomats who watched the situation in London.

In another secret report to Berlin, Dirksen wrote:

“By means of armaments and the acquisition of allies, Britain wants to gain strength and catch up with the Axis, but at the same time she wants to try to reach an amicable agreement with Germany by means of negotiations.”²⁸

The slanderers and falsifiers of history are trying to conceal these documents, since they shed a vivid light on the situation which developed in the last pre-war months, without a correct assessment of which it is impossible to understand the true pre-history of the war. In undertaking negotiations with the Soviet Union and extending guarantees to Poland, Rumania and other states, Britain and France, with the support of U.S. ruling circles, were playing a double game calculated to lead to an agreement with Hitler Germany with the aim of directing her aggression to the East, against the Soviet Union.

Negotiations between Britain and France, on the one hand, and the Soviet Union, on the other, began in March 1939 and continued for about four months.

The whole course of these negotiations made it perfectly manifest that whereas the Soviet Union was striving to reach a broad agreement with the Western Powers, on a basis of equality, an agreement capable of preventing Germany, even if at the eleventh hour, from starting war in Europe, the Governments of Britain and France, backed by support in the United States, set themselves entirely different aims. The ruling circles of Britain and France, who were accustomed to having others pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them, on this occasion too attempted to inveigle the Soviet Union into assuming commitments under which it would have taken upon itself the brunt of the sacrifice in repulsing eventual Hitler aggression, while Britain and France would not be bound by any commitments toward the Soviet Union.

If the rulers of Britain and France had succeeded in this manoeuvre, they would have come much closer to attaining their major objective, which was to set Germany and the Soviet Union at loggerheads as quickly as possible. The Soviet Government, however, saw through the design, and at all stages of the negotiations countered the diplomatic trickery and subterfuges of the

Western Powers with clear and frank proposals designed to serve but one purpose — the safeguarding of peace in Europe.

There is no need to recount all the vicissitudes of the negotiations. We need only bring to mind a few of the more important points. Suffice it to recall the terms put forward in the negotiations by the Soviet Government: conclusion of an effective pact of mutual assistance against aggression between Britain, France and the U.S.S.R.; a guarantee by Britain, France and the U.S.S.R. to the states of Central and Eastern Europe, including all European countries bordering on the U.S.S.R. without exception; conclusion of a concrete military agreement between Britain, France and the U.S.S.R. on the forms and extent of immediate effective aid to each other and to the guaranteed states in the event of an attack by aggressors.²⁹

At the Third Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., on May 31, 1939, V. M. Molotov pointed out that some of the Anglo-French proposals made in the course of these negotiations contained none of the elementary principles of reciprocity and equality of obligations which are indispensable in all agreements between equals.

“While guaranteeing themselves,” said V. M. Molotov, “from direct attack on the part of aggressors by mutual assistance pacts between themselves and with Poland, and while trying to secure for themselves the assistance of the U.S.S.R. in the event of an attack by aggressors on Poland and Rumania, the British and French left open the question of whether the U.S.S.R. in its turn might count on their assistance in the event of its being directly attacked by aggressors, just as they left open another question, namely, whether they would be a party to guaranteeing the small states bordering on the U.S.S.R. and covering its north-western frontiers, should these states prove unable to defend their neutrality from attack by aggressors. Thus the position was one of inequality for the U.S.S.R.”

Even when the British and French representatives gave verbal assent to the principle of mutual assistance on terms of reciprocity between Britain, France and the U.S.S.R. in the event of a direct attack by an aggressor, they hedged it in with a number of reservations which rendered this assent fictitious.

In addition, the Anglo-French proposals provided for the rendering of assistance by the U.S.S.R. to those countries to which the British and French had given a promise of guarantees, but said nothing about themselves coming to the assistance of the countries on the north-western frontier of the U.S.S.R., the Baltic States, in the event of an aggressor attacking them.

Taking into account these considerations, V. M. Molotov announced that the Soviet Union could not undertake commitments in respect of some countries unless similar guarantees were given in respect of the countries bordering on the north-western frontiers of the Soviet Union.

It should also be remembered that when, on March 18, 1939, Seeds, the British Ambassador to Moscow, asked the People’s Commissar of Foreign Affairs what the Soviet Union’s position would be in the event of Hitler aggression against Rumania — concerning the preparation for which the British were in possession of information — and when the question was then raised by the Soviet side as to what Britain’s position would be under those circumstances, Seeds evaded a reply with the remark that Rumania was geographically closer to the Soviet Union than it was to England.

It was thus quite clear from the very first that British ruling circles were endeavouring to bind the Soviet Union to definite commitments while standing aloof themselves. This artless device was

repeated regularly again and again throughout the whole course of the negotiations.

In answer to the British inquiry, the Soviet Government suggested that a conference be called of representatives of the most interested states — namely, Great Britain, France, Rumania, Poland, Turkey and the Soviet Union. In the opinion of the Soviet Government such a conference would offer the best opportunity to ascertain the real state of affairs and determine the position of each of the participants. The British Government, however, replied that it considered the Soviet proposal premature.

Instead of a conference, which would have made it possible to come to agreement on concrete measures to combat aggression, the British Government, on March 21, 1939, proposed that it and the Soviet Government, as well as France and Poland, should sign a declaration in which the signatory governments would obligate themselves to “consult together as to what steps should be taken to offer joint resistance” in case of a threat to “the independence of any European state.” In arguing that this proposal was acceptable, the British Ambassador laid particular emphasis on the point that the declaration was couched in very noncommittal terms.

It was quite obvious that such a declaration could not serve as an effective means of averting the impending threat of aggression. Believing, however, that even so unpromising a declaration might constitute at least some step toward curbing the aggressor, the Soviet Government accepted the British proposal. But already on April 1, 1939, the British Ambassador in Moscow intimated that Britain considered the question of a joint declaration as having lapsed.

After two more weeks of procrastination the British Foreign Secretary, Halifax, through the Ambassador in Moscow, made another proposal to the Soviet Government: namely, that it should issue a statement declaring that “in the event of an act of aggression against any European neighbour of the Soviet Union, who would offer resistance, the assistance of the Soviet Government could be counted upon if desired.”

The underlying meaning of this proposal was that in the event of an act of aggression on the part of Germany against Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, or Finland, the Soviet Union would be obliged to render them assistance, without any commitment on the part of Britain to come to their aid. In other words, the Soviet Union was to go to war with Germany single-handed. As to Poland and Rumania, whom Britain had given guarantees, the Soviet Union was to render assistance to them too against an aggressor. But even in their case Britain refused to assume any joint obligation with the Soviet Union, leaving herself a free hand and a field for any manoeuvre, not to mention the fact that, according to this proposal, Poland and Rumania, as well as the Baltic States, were to assume no obligations whatever toward the U.S.S.R.

The Soviet Government, however, did not want to miss a single opportunity to reach agreement with other powers for joint counteraction to Hitler aggression. Without the least delay it presented to the British Government its counterproposal, which was: first, that the Soviet Union, Britain and France should mutually undertake to render one another every immediate assistance, including military, in the event of aggression against any one of them; secondly, that the Soviet Union, Britain and France should undertake to render every assistance, including military, to the states of Eastern Europe situated between the Baltic and the Black Sea and bordering on the Soviet Union in the event of aggression against these states; thirdly, that the Soviet Union, Britain and France should undertake to determine without delay the extent and forms of military assistance to be rendered to each of these states in both the above mentioned cases.

Those were the most important points of the Soviet proposal. It will be easily seen that there was

a fundamental difference between the Soviet and the British proposals, inasmuch as the Soviet proposal provided for really effective measures for joint counteraction to aggression.

For three weeks no reply to that proposal came from the British Government. This caused growing anxiety in Britain, owing to which the British Government felt constrained in the end to resort to a new manoeuvre in order to deceive public opinion.

On May 8, the British reply, or, to be more exact, the British counterproposals, were received in Moscow. It was again proposed that the Soviet Government should make a unilateral declaration in which it “would undertake that in the event of Great Britain and France being involved in hostilities in fulfilment of these obligations [to Belgium, Poland, Rumania, Greece and Turkey] the assistance of the Soviet Government would be immediately available if desired and be afforded in such manner and on such terms as might be agreed.”

Once again the Soviet Union was expected to assume unilateral obligations. It was to commit itself to render assistance to Britain and France, while they assumed no obligations whatever toward the Soviet Union with regard to the Baltic Republics. Britain was thus proposing to put the U.S.S.R. in a position of inequality — a position unacceptable to and incompatible with the dignity of any independent state.

It was easy to see that the British proposal was really addressed not so much to Moscow as to Berlin. The Germans were being invited to attack the Soviet Union, and were given to understand that Britain and France would remain neutral if only the Germans attacked through the Baltic States.

On May 11, the negotiations between the Soviet Union, Britain and France were still further complicated by a statement made by the Polish Ambassador in Moscow, Grzybowski, to the effect that “Poland does not regard it possible to conclude a pact of mutual assistance with the U.S.S.R...”

It goes without saying that a statement of this kind could only have been made by the Polish representative with the knowledge and approval of the ruling circles of Britain and France.

The behaviour of the British and French representatives in the Moscow negotiations was so provocative that even in the ruling camp of the Western Powers there were some who sharply criticised this crude game. Lloyd George, for one, severely took the makers of British policy to task in an article published in the French newspaper *Ce Soir* in the summer of 1939. There was only one reason, he said, for the endless procrastinations in the Anglo-French negotiations with the Soviet Union:

“Neville Chamberlain, Halifax and John Simon do not want any agreement with Russia whatever.”

It stands to reason that what was obvious to Lloyd George was no less obvious to the bosses of Hitler Germany. They understood perfectly well that the Western Powers had no serious intention of reaching agreement with the Soviet Union, but had an entirely different objective. It was to induce Hitler to speed his attack on the Soviet Union, offering him, as it were, a premium for doing so by placing the Soviet Union in the most unfavourable conditions in the event of a war with Germany.

Furthermore the Western Powers dragged out the negotiations with the Soviet Union endlessly,

seeking to drown the major issues in a swamp of minor amendments and variants. Every time the question of real commitments arose, the representatives of these powers affected an air of perplexed misunderstanding.

Toward the end of May, Britain and France advanced fresh proposals, which somewhat improved their previous, variant, but which still left open the essentially important question for the Soviet Union of guarantees for the three Baltic Republics bordering on the Soviet Union's north-western frontier.

Thus the rulers of Britain and France, while making certain verbal concessions under the pressure of public opinion in their countries, stuck to their previous line and hedged in their proposals with reservations which they knew would make them unacceptable to the Soviet Union.

The behaviour of the British and French representatives in the negotiations in Moscow was so intolerable that V. M. Molotov was constrained, on May 27, 1939, to tell British Ambassador Seeds and French Chargé d'Affaires Payart that their draft agreement for joint counteraction to an aggressor in Europe contained no plan for the organisation of effective mutual assistance by the U.S.S.R., Britain and France, and that it did not even indicate that the British and the French Governments were seriously interested in concluding a pact to this effect with the Soviet Union. It was further plainly stated that the Anglo-French proposal created the impression that the Governments of Britain and France were not so much interested in a pact itself as in talk about a pact. It was possible that this talk was needed by Britain and France for purposes of their own. What these purposes were the Soviet Government did not know. But the Soviet Government was interested, not in talk about a pact, but in organising effective mutual assistance by the U.S.S.R., Britain and France against aggression in Europe. The British and French representatives were warned that the Soviet Government did not intend to take part in pact talks of the purpose of which the U.S.S.R. had no knowledge, and that the British and French Governments might find more suitable partners for such talks than the U.S.S.R.

The Moscow negotiations dragged on endlessly. The London *Times* blurted out the reasons for this inadmissible procrastination when it wrote "A hard and fast alliance with Russia would hamper other negotiations."³⁰ The *Times* was apparently referring to the negotiations which British Minister of Overseas Trade Robert Hudson was conducting with Hitler's economic advisor, Dr. Helmut Wohltat, on the possibility of a very substantial British loan to Hitler Germany, of which more anon.

Furthermore, it is known that on the day Hitler's army entered Prague the press reported that a delegation of the Federation of British Industries was negotiating in Düsseldorf for the conclusion of an extensive agreement with German big industry.

Another circumstance that could not help attracting attention was that, whereas the men who had been sent to Moscow to conduct the negotiations on behalf of Great Britain were officials of secondary rank, Chamberlain himself had gone to Germany to negotiate with Hitler, and moreover on several occasions. It is also important to note that Strang, the British representative in the negotiations with the U.S.S.R., had no authority to sign any agreement with the Soviet Union. .

In view of the Soviet Union's insistence that concrete measures to oppose a possible aggressor be discussed, the Governments of Britain and France were constrained to agree to dispatch military missions to Moscow. However, these missions took an extraordinary long time getting to

Moscow, and when they finally arrived it transpired that they were composed of men of secondary rank, who, furthermore, had not been authorised to sign any agreement. Under these circumstances, the military negotiations proved as sterile as the political ones.

The military missions of the Western Powers demonstrated from the first that they did not even desire seriously to discuss measures of mutual assistance in the event of German aggression. The Soviet military mission held that, since the U.S.S.R. had no common border with Germany, it could render Britain, France and Poland assistance in the event of war only if Soviet troops were permitted to pass through Polish territory. The Polish Government, however, declared that it would not accept military assistance from the Soviet Union, thereby making it clear that it feared an accession of strength of the Soviet Union more than Hitler aggression. Poland's attitude was supported by both the British and the French missions.

In the course of the military negotiations the question also arose as to what armed forces the parties to the agreement were to put in the field immediately in the event of aggression. The British named a ridiculous figure, stating that they could put in the field five infantry divisions and one mechanised division. And this the British proposed at a time when the Soviet Union had declared that it was prepared to send into action against an aggressor 136 divisions, 5,000 medium and heavy guns, up to 10,000 tanks and whippets, over 5,000 war planes, etc. It will be seen from this how unserious was the attitude of the British Government toward the negotiations for a military agreement with the U.S.S.R.

The above-mentioned facts fully confirm the inescapable conclusion:

1. That throughout the negotiations the Soviet Government strove with the utmost patience to secure agreement with Britain and France for mutual assistance against an aggressor on a basis of equality and with the proviso that this mutual assistance would be really effective; in other words, that the signing of a political agreement would be accompanied by the signing of a military convention defining the extent, forms and time limits of assistance. For all preceding developments had made it abundantly clear that only such an agreement could be effective and could bring the Nazi aggressor to his senses, encouraged as he was by the fact that for many years he had been able to act with complete impunity and with the connivance of the Western Powers.
2. That it was fully evident from the behaviour of Britain and France in the negotiations that they had no thought of any serious agreement with the U.S.S.R., since British and French policy was pursuing other aims, aims which had nothing in common with the interests of peace and the struggle against aggression.
3. That it was the perfidious purpose of Anglo-French policy to make it clear to Hitler that the U.S.S.R. had no allies, that it was isolated, and that he could attack the U.S.S.R. without the risk of encountering resistance on the part of Britain and France.

In view of this it is not surprising that the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations ended in failure.

There was, of course, nothing fortuitous about this failure. It was becoming obvious that the representatives of the Western Powers had planned the breakdown of the negotiations beforehand, as part of their double game. The fact was that, parallel with the open negotiations with the U.S.S.R., *the British were clandestinely negotiating with Germany, and that they attached incomparably greater importance to the latter negotiations.*

Whereas the primary purpose of the ruling circles of the Western Powers in their negotiations in

Moscow was to lull public vigilance in their countries and to deceive the peoples who were being drawn into war, their negotiations with the Hitlerites were of an entirely different character.

The program of the Anglo-German negotiations was formulated plainly enough by British Foreign Secretary Halifax, who was making unambiguous overtures to Hitler Germany at the very time his subordinates were negotiating in Moscow. In a speech at a banquet of the Royal Institute of International Affairs on June 29, 1939, he declared his readiness to come to terms with Germany on all the problems "that are today causing the world anxiety." He said:

"In such a new atmosphere we could examine the colonial problem, the problem of raw materials, trade barriers, the issue of *Lebensraum*, the limitation of armaments, and any other issue that affects the lives of all European citizens."³¹

If we recall how the Conservative *Daily Mail*, which was closely associated with Halifax, interpreted the problem of *Lebensraum* as early as 1933, when it recommended the Hitlerites to wrest *Lebensraum* from the U.S.S.R., there can be not the slightest doubt as to what Halifax really meant. It was an open offer to Hitler Germany to come to terms on a division of the world and spheres of influence, an offer to settle all questions without the Soviet Union and chiefly at the expense of the Soviet Union.

In June 1939 British representatives had already inaugurated strictly confidential negotiations with Germany through Hitler's commissioner for the four-year plan, Wohltat, who was then in London. He had talks with Minister of Overseas Trade Hudson and Chamberlain's closest adviser, G. Wilson. The substance of those June negotiations is still buried in the secrecy of the diplomatic archives. But in July Wohltat paid another visit to London and the negotiations were resumed. The substance of this second round of negotiations is now known from captured German documents in the possession of the Soviet Government, which will shortly be made public.

Hudson and Wilson suggested to Wohltat, and later to the German Ambassador in London, Dirksen, that secret negotiations be started for a broad agreement, which was to include an agreement for a world-wide division of spheres of influence and the elimination of "deadly competition in common markets." It was envisaged that Germany would be allowed predominating influence in South-Eastern Europe. In a report to the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated July 21, 1939, Dirksen stated that the program discussed by Wohltat and Wilson comprised political, military and economic issues. Among the political issues, along with a pact of non-aggression, special stress was laid on a pact of non-intervention, which was to provide for a "delimitation of *Lebensraum* between the Great Powers, particularly between Britain and Germany."³²

During the discussion of the questions involved in these two pacts, the British representatives promised that if the pacts were signed, Britain would withdraw the guarantees she had just given Poland.

The British were prepared, if an Anglo-German agreement were signed, to let the Germans settle the Danzig problem and the problem of the Polish Corridor with Poland alone, and undertook not to interfere in the settlement.

Further, and this too is documentarily corroborated in the Dirksen reports shortly to be published, Wilson reaffirmed that if the above-mentioned pacts between Britain and Germany were signed, Britain would in fact abandon her policy of guarantees.

“Then Poland would be left, so to speak, alone, face to face with Germany,” Dirksen comments in his report.

All this signified that, at a time when the ink with which Britain signed her guarantees to Poland had not yet dried, the rulers of Britain were prepared to surrender Poland to Hitler.

Furthermore, if the Anglo-German agreement had been concluded, the purpose which Britain and France had set themselves in starting the negotiations with the Soviet Union would have been achieved, and the possibility of expediting a clash between Germany and the U.S.S.R. would have been further facilitated.

Lastly, it was proposed to supplement the political agreement between Britain and Germany with an economic agreement, which was to include a secret deal on colonial questions, for the partition of raw materials and the division of markets, as well as for a big British loan to Germany.

The rulers of Britain were thus lured by the seductive picture of a firm agreement with Germany and the “canalisation” of German aggression toward the East, against Poland, whom they had only just “guaranteed,” and against the Soviet Union.

Is it, then to be wondered that the slanderers and falsifiers of history are so careful to hush up and conceal these facts, which are of paramount importance to an understanding of the circumstances by virtue of which war was becoming inevitable?

By this time there could already be no doubt that Britain and France, far from seriously intending to undertake anything to prevent Hitler Germany from starting war, were doing everything in their power, by secret deals and agreements and by every possible artifice, to incite Hitler Germany against the Soviet Union.

No counterfeiter can expunge from history or from the minds of the peoples the overriding fact that under these circumstances the Soviet Union was faced with the alternative:

Either, in its self-defence, to accept Germany’s proposal for its pact of non-aggression, and thereby ensure the Soviet Union prolongation of peace for a certain period, which might be utilised to better prepare the forces of the Soviet State for resistance to eventual aggression;

Or to reject Germany’s proposal for a non-aggression pact, and thereby allow the provocateurs of war in the camp of the Western Powers to embroil the Soviet Union immediately in an armed conflict with Germany, at a time when the situation was utterly unfavourable to the Soviet Union, seeing that it would be completely isolated.

Under these circumstances, the Soviet Government was compelled to make its choice and conclude a non-aggression pact with Germany.

In the situation that had arisen this choice on the part of Soviet foreign policy was a wise and farsighted act. This step of the Soviet Government to a very large degree predetermined the favourable outcome of the Second World War for the Soviet Union and all the freedom-loving peoples.

To assert that the conclusion of the pact with the Hitlerites formed part of the plan of Soviet foreign policy is a gross calumny. On the contrary, all the time the U.S.S.R. strove to secure an

agreement with the Western non-aggressive states for the achievement of collective security, on a basis of equality, against the German and Italian aggressors. But there must be two parties to an agreement. And, whereas the U.S.S.R. insistently urged an agreement for combating aggression, Britain and France systematically rejected it, preferring to pursue a policy of isolating the U.S.S.R., of conceding to the aggressors, of directing aggression toward the East, against the U.S.S.R. The United States of America, far from counteracting this fatal policy, backed it in every way. As to the American billionaires, they went on investing their capital in German heavy industry, helping the Germans to expand their war industries and thus supplying the arms for German aggression. It was as good as saying: "Go on, you Europeans, fight to your heart's content, and God be with you! Meanwhile we modest American billionaires will make fortunes out of your war by raking in hundreds of millions of dollars in super-profits."

This being the state of affairs in Europe, the Soviet Union had naturally only one choice, which was to accept the German proposal for a pact. After all, it was the best of all available alternatives.

Just as in 1918, when, owing to the hostile policy of the Western Powers, the Soviet Union was forced to conclude the Peace of Brest-Litovsk with the Germans, so in 1939, twenty years after the Peace of Brest-Litovsk, the Soviet Union was compelled to conclude a pact with the Germans owing again to the hostile policy of Britain and France.

The slanderous claptrap that all the same the U.S.S.R. should not have agreed to conclude a pact with the Germans can only be regarded as ridiculous. Why was it right for Poland, who had Britain and France as allies, to conclude a non-aggression pact with the Germans in 1934, and not right for the Soviet Union, which was in a less favourable situation, to conclude a similar pact in 1939? Why was it right for Britain and France, who were the dominant force in Europe, to issue a joint declaration of non-aggression with the Germans in 1938, and not right for the Soviet Union, isolated as it was because of the hostile policy of Britain and France, to conclude a pact with the Germans?

Is it not a fact that of all the non-aggressive Great Powers in Europe, the Soviet Union was the last to agree to a pact with the Germans?

Of course, the falsifiers of history and similar reactionaries are displeased with the fact that the Soviet Union was able to make good use of the Soviet-German pact to strengthen its defences; that it succeeded in shifting its frontiers far to the West and thus putting up a barrier to the unhampered eastward advance of German aggression; that Hitler's troops had to begin their Eastern offensive, not from the Narva-Minsk-Kiev line, but from a line hundreds of kilometres farther West; that the U.S.S.R. was not bled to death in its Patriotic War but emerged from the war victorious. But this displeasure can only be regarded as a manifestation of the impotent rage of bankrupt politicians.

The vicious displeasure of these gentlemen only serves to bear out the indubitable fact that the policy of the Soviet Union was and is a correct policy.

IV.

Creation of an “Eastern” Front, Germany’s Attack Upon the U.S.S.R., the Anti-Hitler Coalition and the Question of Inter-Allied Obligations

When concluding the pact of non-aggression with Germany in August 1939, the Soviet Union did not doubt for a moment that sooner or later Hitler would attack it. This certainty was based on the fundamental political and military line of the Hitlerites. It was borne out by the practical activities of the Hitler government throughout the pre-war period.

That was why the first task of the Soviet Government was to create an “Eastern” front against Hitler aggression, to build up a defence line along the western frontiers of the Byelorussian and Ukrainian territories and thus set up a barrier to prevent an unhindered advance of the German troops eastward. For this it was necessary to re-unite Western Byelorussia and the Western Ukraine, which the Poland of the gentry had seized in 1920, with Soviet Byelorussia and the Soviet Ukraine, and to move Soviet troops into these territories. This matter brooked no delay, as the poorly supplied Polish troops were unstable, the Polish command and the Polish Government were already in flight, and Hitler’s troops, meeting no serious obstacle, might occupy the Byelorussian and Ukrainian territories before Soviet troops arrived.

On September 17, 1939, the Soviet troops, at the order of the Soviet Government, crossed the pre-war Soviet-Polish border, occupied Western Byelorussia and the Western Ukraine and proceeded to build defences along the western line of the Ukrainian and Byelorussian territories. This was, in the main, what was known as the “Curzon Line,” which had been established by the Allies at the Versailles Conference,

A few days later, the Soviet Government signed pacts of mutual assistance with the Baltic States, providing for the stationing Soviet Army garrisons, the organisation of Soviet airfields and the establishment of naval bases on the territories of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

In this way the foundation was laid for an “Eastern” front.

It was not hard to see that the creation of an “Eastern” front was an important contribution not only to the organisation of the security of the U.S.S.R., but to the common cause of the peace-loving states that were fighting Hitler aggression. Nevertheless, the answer of Anglo-Franco-American circles, in their overwhelming majority, to this step of the Soviet Government was to start a malicious anti-Soviet campaign, qualifying the Soviet action as aggression

There were, however, some political leaders sufficiently discerning to understand the meaning of the Soviet policy and to admit that it was the right thing to create an “Eastern” front. First among them was Mr. Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, who in a radio speech on October 1, 1939, after a number of unfriendly sallies against the Soviet Union, stated:

“That the Russian armies should stand on this line was clearly necessary for the safety of Russia

against the Nazi menace. At any rate, the line is there, and an Eastern front has been created which Nazi Germany does not dare assail. When Herr von Ribbentrop was summoned to Moscow last week it was to learn the fact, and to accept the fact, that the Nazi designs upon the Baltic States and upon the Ukraine must come to a dead stop.”

While the situation with regard to the security of the U.S.S.R. was more or less satisfactory on the western frontiers, at a considerable distance from Moscow, Minsk and Kiev, this could not be said of its northern frontier. Here, at a distance of some thirty-two kilometres from Leningrad stood Finnish troops, the majority of whose commanding officers leaned toward Hitler Germany. The Soviet Government was well aware that fascist elements among the ruling circles of Finland closely connected with the Hitlerites and wielding strong influence in the Finnish army, were anxious to seize Leningrad. The fact that Halder, Chief of the General Staff of Hitler’s army, had arrived in Finland in the summer of 1939 to instruct top leaders of the Finnish army could not be dismissed as accidental. There could hardly be any doubt that Finland’s leading circles were in league with the Hitlerites, that they wanted to turn Finland into a springboard of attack by Hitler Germany upon the U.S.S.R.

It is therefore not surprising that all the attempts of the U.S.S.R. to find a common language with the Finnish Government with a view to improving relations between the two countries proved unsuccessful.

The Government of Finland declined, one after another, all the friendly proposals made by the Soviet Government with the object of safeguarding the security of the U.S.S.R., particularly of Leningrad, and this in spite of the fact that the Soviet Union was willing to go out to meet Finland and satisfy her legitimate interests.

The Finnish Government declined the proposal of the U.S.S.R. to shift back the Finnish border on the Karelian Isthmus a few dozen kilometres, although the Soviet Government was willing to compensate Finland with an area twice as large in Soviet Karelia.

The Finnish Government also declined the proposal of the U.S.S.R. to conclude a pact of mutual assistance, thereby making it clear that the security of the U.S.S.R. from the direction of Finland was not safeguarded.

By these and similar hostile acts and by provocative actions on the Soviet-Finnish border, Finland unleashed the war with the Soviet Union.

The results of the Soviet-Finnish war are known. The frontiers of the U.S.S.R. in the northwest, and particularly in the Leningrad area, were shifted farther back, and the security of the U.S.S.R. was strengthened. This was an important factor in the defence of the Soviet Union against Hitler aggression, inasmuch as Hitler Germany and her Finnish accomplices had to begin their offensive in the northwest of the U.S.S.R. not in immediate proximity to Leningrad, but from a line nearly 150 kilometres to the northwest of it.

In his speech at the session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. on March 29, 1940, V. M. Molotov said:

“...The Soviet Union, having smashed the Finnish army, and having had every opportunity of occupying the whole of Finland, did not do so and did not demand any indemnity for its war expenditure as any other Power would have done, but confined its demands to a minimum...”

“We pursued no other object in the Peace Treaty than that of safeguarding the security of Leningrad, Murmansk, and the Murmansk railway.”

It should be noted that, although in their whole policy toward the U.S.S.R. Finland’s ruling circles were playing the game of Hitler Germany, the British and French bosses of the League of Nations immediately took the side of the Finnish Government, declared through the League that the U.S.S.R. was the “aggressor,” and thereby openly approved and supported the war which the Finnish rulers had started against the Soviet Union. The League of Nations — which had besmirched itself by its connivance at and encouragement of Japanese and German-Italian aggression — acting at the bidding of its British and French bosses, obediently passed a resolution against the Soviet Union and demonstratively “expelled” the latter from the League.

But matters did not end there. In the war started by the Finnish reactionaries against the Soviet Union, Britain and France rendered every assistance to the Finnish militarists. British and French ruling circles kept inciting the Finnish Government to continue hostilities.

The British and French rulers systematically supplied Finland with arms and made energetic preparations to dispatch to Finland an expeditionary corps of a hundred thousand men.

In the first three months of the war, Britain, according to a statement made by Chamberlain in the House of Commons on March 19, 1940, delivered to Finland 101 aircraft, over 200 artillery pieces, and hundreds of thousands of shells, aerial bombs and anti-tank mines. At the same time Daladier reported to the Chamber of Deputies that France had given Finland 175 aircraft, about 500 artillery pieces, over 5,000 machine guns, 1,000,000 shells and hand grenades and various other munitions.

An exhaustive idea of the plans of the British and French Governments of that time may be obtained from a memorandum handed by the British to the Swedes on March 2, 1940, which read:

“The Allied Governments understand that the military position of Finland is becoming desperate. After carefully considering all the possibilities they have reached the conclusion that the only means by which they can render effective help to Finland is by the dispatch of an Allied force, and they are prepared to send such a force in response to a Finnish appeal.”³³

Meanwhile, as Chamberlain stated in the House of Commons on March 19,

“preparations for the expedition were carried on with all rapidity, and at the beginning of March the expedition was ready to leave ... two months before Mannerheim had asked for it to arrive.”

Chamberlain added that this force numbered 100,000 men.

At the same time the French Government was preparing a first expeditionary corps of 50,000 men, which was to be sent to Finland via Narvik.

The British and French rulers, be it remarked, were engaging in these belligerent activities at the time of the “phoney war,” when Britain and France were absolutely inactive on the front against Hitler Germany.

But military assistance to Finland against the Soviet Union was only part of a broader scheme of the British and French imperialists.

The above-quoted White Paper of the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs contains a document penned by Swedish Foreign Minister Gunther. In this document we read that

“the dispatch of this force is part of the general plan of an attack upon the Soviet Union” and that, “beginning March 15, this plan will be put into effect against Baku and still earlier through Finland.”³⁴

Henri de Kerillis, in his book, *De Gaulle dictateur*, wrote the following about this plan:

“According to this plan, the main features of which were explained to me by Paul Reynaud³⁵ in a letter, which is in my possession, the motorised expeditionary corps, after landing in Finland through Norway, would quickly disperse Russia’s disorganised hordes and march on Leningrad. . .”³⁶

This plan was drawn up in France by de Gaulle and General Weygand who was then in command of the French troops in Syria and who boasted that:

“with certain reinforcements and 200 aircraft he would seize the Caucasus and enter into Russia as a knife cuts butter.”

It is also known that in 1940 the French General Gamelin worked out a plan of military operations by the British and French against the U.S.S.R., in which special stress was laid on bombing Baku and Batumi.

The preparations of the British and French rulers for an attack upon the U.S.S.R. were in full blast. The General Staffs of Britain and France were working diligently on the plans for the attack. These gentry, *instead of waging the war against Hitler Germany, wanted to start war against the Soviet Union.*

But those plans were not fated to materialise. Finland was defeated by the Soviet troops and forced to surrender, in spite of all the efforts of Britain and France to prevent her capitulation.

On March 12, 1940, the Soviet-Finnish Peace Treaty was signed.

Thus the defence of the U.S.S.R. against Hitler aggression was strengthened also in the north, in the Leningrad area, where the defence line was shifted to, a distance of 150 kilometres north of Leningrad up to and including Viborg.

But this did not yet mean that the formation of an “Eastern” front from the Baltic to the Black Sea had been completed. Pacts had been concluded with the Baltic States, but there were as yet no Soviet troops there capable of holding the defences. Moldavia and Bukovina had formally been re-united with the U.S.S.R., but there were no Soviet troops capable of holding the defences there either. In the middle of June 1940 Soviet troops entered Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. On June 27, Soviet troops entered Bukovina and Moldavia, the latter of which had been severed by Rumania from the U.S.S.R. after the October Revolution.

In this way the formation of an “Eastern” front against Hitler aggression from the Baltic to the Black Sea was completed.

The British and French ruling circles, who continued to abuse the U.S.S.R. and call it an

aggressor for creating an “Eastern” front, evidently did not realise that the appearance of an “Eastern” front signified a radical turn in the development of the war — to the disfavour of the Hitler tyranny and to the favour of the victory of democracy.

They did not realise that it was not a question of infringing or not infringing upon the national rights of Finland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, or Poland, but of preventing the conversion of those countries into downtrodden colonies of Hitler Germany by organising victory over the Nazis.

They did not realise that the point was to build up a barrier against the advance of ‘the German troops in all areas where that was possible, to organise a strong defence and then to launch a counter-offensive, smash Hitler’s armies and thereby create the conditions for the free development of those countries.

They did not realise that there was no other way to defeat Hitler aggression.

Was the British Government right when it stationed its troops in Egypt during the war, in spite of Egyptian protest and even resistance on the part of certain elements in Egypt? Unquestionably, it was right. That was a highly important means of barring the way to Hitler aggression in the direction of the Suez Canal, of safeguarding Egypt from attack by Hitler, of organising victory over him and thus preventing the conversion of Egypt into a colony of Hitler Germany. Only enemies of democracy or people who have lost their senses can assert that the action of the British Government in that case constituted aggression.

Was the United States Government right when it landed its troops at Casablanca, in spite of the protests of the Moroccans and direct military resistance on the part of the Pétain Government of France, whose authority extended to Morocco? Unquestionably, it was right. That was a highly effective means of creating a base of counteraction to German aggression in immediate proximity to Western Europe, of organising victory over Hitler’s armies and thus making it possible to liberate France from Nazi colonial oppression. Only enemies of democracy or people who have lost their senses can regard these actions of the American troops as aggression.

But, then, the same must be said of the actions of the Soviet Government in organising, by the summer of 1940, an “Eastern” front against Hitler aggression and stationing its troops as far to the west as possible from Leningrad, Moscow and Kiev. That was the only means of preventing an unhindered advance of the German armies eastward, of building up strong defences, and then launching a counter-offensive in order, jointly with the Allies, to smash Hitler’s army and thereby prevent the conversion of the peace-loving countries of Europe, including Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, into colonies of Hitler Germany. Only enemies of democracy or people who had lost their senses could qualify these actions of the Soviet Government as aggression.

But it follows from this that Chamberlain, Daladier and their entourage, who did qualify this policy of the Soviet Government as aggression and engineered the expulsion of the Soviet Union from the League of Nations, acted as enemies of democracy or as people who had lost their senses.

From this it follows, further, that the present-day slanderers and falsifiers of history who work in company with Messrs. Bevin and Bidault and qualify the creation of the “Eastern” front against Hitler as aggression, are also acting as enemies of democracy or as people who have lost their senses.

What would have happened if the U.S.S.R. had not, before Germany attacked it, created an “Eastern” front far to the west of the old Soviet frontiers, if that front had not followed the line Viborg-Kaunas-Byelcostok-Brest-Lvov, but the old frontier — Leningrad-Narva-Minsk-Kiev?

That would have enabled Hitler’s forces to win a stretch of territory hundreds of kilometres deep and would have brought the German front some two to three hundred kilometres nearer to Leningrad-Moscow-Minsk-Kiev. It would have greatly accelerated the Germans’ advance into the interior of the U.S.S.R., hastened the fall of Kiev and the Ukraine, led to the capture of Moscow by the Germans and of Leningrad by the combined German and Finnish forces, and would have compelled the U.S.S.R. to pass to the defensive for a long time, thus making it possible for the Germans to release some fifty divisions in the East for a landing on the British Isles and for reinforcing the German-Italian front in the Egypt area. Quite likely the British Government would then have had to evacuate to Canada, while Egypt and the Suez Canal would have fallen under Hitler’s sway.

Nor is that all. The U.S.S.R. would have been compelled to transfer a large part of its troops from the Manchurian border to strengthen its defences on the “Eastern” front, and that would have enabled the Japanese to release some thirty divisions in Manchuria, and send them against China, the Philippines and South-Eastern Asia in general, and, in the final analysis, against the American armed forces in the Far East.

As a result of all this the war would have been prolonged for at least two years more. The Second World War would then have ended not in 1945, but in 1947 or somewhat later.

That was how matters stood with regard to the “Eastern” front.

Meanwhile events in the West were taking their course. In April 1940, the Germans occupied Denmark and Norway. In the middle of May, German troops invaded Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg. On May 21, the Germans reached the Channel and cut off the Allies in Flanders. Toward the end of May the British troops evacuated Dunkirk, withdrawing from France to England. In the middle of June, Paris fell. On June 22 France surrendered to Germany.

In a word, Hitler trampled on all and every declaration of non-aggression issued jointly with France and Britain.

This meant the complete bankruptcy of the policy of appeasement, the policy of renouncing collective security, the policy of isolating the U.S.S.R.

It became clear that, by isolating the U.S.S.R., France and Britain had smashed the united front of the freedom-loving countries, weakened themselves and were now themselves isolated.

On March 1, 1941, the Germans occupied Bulgaria.

On April 5, the U.S.S.R. signed a pact of non-aggression with Yugoslavia.

On June 22 of that year Germany attacked the U.S.S.R.

Italy, Rumania, Hungary and Finland joined Germany in the war against the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union entered the war of liberation against Hitler Germany.

The attitude toward this event in Europe and America varied in different circles.

The nations enslaved by Hitler breathed a sigh of relief, convinced that Hitler would break his neck between the two fronts, the Western and the “Eastern.”

The ruling circles of France were full of malicious glee, as they did not doubt that “Russia would be smashed” in practically no time.

A prominent member of the U.S. Senate, Mr. Truman, now President of the United States, stated the day after Germany’s attack upon the U.S.S.R.:

“If we see that Germany is winning we ought to help Russia and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany and that way let them kill as many as possible.”³⁷

A similar statement was made in 1941 in Great Britain by the then Minister of Aircraft Production, Moore-Brabazon, who said that its far as Britain was concerned, the best outcome of the struggle on the Eastern front would be the mutual exhaustion of Germany and the U.S.S.R., as a consequence of which Britain would be able to attain a position of dominance.

These statements undoubtedly voiced the attitude of the reactionary circles in the U.S.A. and Great Britain.

However, the overwhelming majority of the British and American people were favourably disposed toward the U.S.S.R. and demanded unity with the Soviet Union for a successful struggle against Hitler Germany.

It may be taken that the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr. Churchill, reflected these sentiments when he said on June 22, 1941:

“The Russian danger is our danger, and the danger of the United States, just as the cause of any Russian fighting for his hearth and home is the cause of free men and free peoples in every quarter of the globe...”

This too was the attitude toward the U.S.S.R. of the Roosevelt administration in the U.S.A.

A beginning was thus laid for the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition against Hitler Germany.

The anti-Hitler coalition set itself the aim of smashing the Hitler regime and liberating the nations enslaved by Hitler Germany. Despite differences in the ideologies and economic systems of the Allied states, the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition became a mighty alliance of nations who had united their efforts in the liberation struggle against Hitlerism.

Of course there were differences among the Allies on certain questions even then, during the war. It is well known, for example, how significant were the differences on such major questions as the opening of a second front, the duties of allies, their moral obligation toward each other.

The falsifiers of history and calumniators of every description, are now seizing on these differences to “prove,” contrary to obvious fact, that the U.S.S.R. was not, and could not be, a loyal and sincere ally in the struggle against Hitler aggression. But since the joint struggle against Hitler Germany and the behaviour of the U.S.S.R. in that struggle provide no warrant for such accusations, they turn to the past, to the pre-war period, and assert that in the “negotiations” with

Hitler in Berlin in 1940, the representatives of the Soviet Union behaved perfidiously, not as allies should behave.

They assert that during the Berlin “negotiations” perfidious “plans for partitioning Europe,” Soviet territorial claims “southward from the Soviet Union towards the Indian Ocean,” “plans” concerning Turkey, Iran, Bulgaria and other “problems” were discussed and agreed upon. For this purpose the calumniators make use of reports of German ambassadors and other Nazi officials, all sorts of memoranda and German drafts of “protocols,” and “documents” of a similar nature.

What did actually take place in Berlin? It must be said that the so-called “Berlin negotiations” of 1940 actually represented nothing more than a return visit of V. M. Molotov to two visits paid by Ribbentrop to Moscow. The talks chiefly concerned Soviet-German relations. Hitler tried to make them the basis for a broad agreement between the German and Soviet parties. The Soviet side, on the contrary, used them to sound out, to probe the position of the German side without having any intention of concluding an agreement of any kind with the Germans. In the course of these talks Hitler maintained that the Soviet Union ought to acquire an outlet to the Persian Gulf by occupying Western Iran and the British oil fields in Iran. He further said that Germany could help the Soviet Union to settle its claims against Turkey, even to the amendment of the Montreux Treaty on the Straits. While he completely ignored the interests of Iran, he carefully protected the interests of Turkey, obviously regarding the latter as his present, or at any rate, future ally. The Balkan countries and Turkey, Hitler regarded as a sphere of influence of Germany and Italy.

The Soviet Government drew the following conclusions from these talks: Germany did not value her connections with Iran; Germany was not bound and did not intend to bind herself with Britain, which meant that the Soviet Union might find a reliable ally in Britain against Hitler Germany; the Balkan States had either been already bought over and converted into Germany’s satellites (Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary), or had been enslaved, like Czechoslovakia, or were on the way to being enslaved, like Greece; Yugoslavia was the only Balkan country that could be relied on as a future ally of the anti-Hitler camp; Turkey was already either bound by close ties to Hitler Germany or intended to form such ties.

Having drawn these useful conclusions the Soviet Government never again resumed the talks on these questions, despite Ribbentrop’s repeated reminders.

As will be seen, this was a sounding out, a probing by the Soviet Government of the position of the Hitler government, which, did not lead, and could not lead to an agreement of any kind.

Is such a sounding of an enemy’s position by peace-loving states permissible? Unquestionably, it is. It is not only permissible but at times a direct political necessity. With the proviso, however, that such soundings must be undertaken with the knowledge and consent of one’s allies and their results must be communicated to one’s allies. At that time, however, the Soviet Union had no allies, it was isolated and, unfortunately, had nobody with whom to share the results of its soundings.

It should be noted that a similar, although very dubious, sounding of the position of Hitler Germany was undertaken by representatives of Britain and the United States already *during* the war, *after* the formation of the anti-Hitler coalition of Britain, the United States and the U.S.S.R. This is evident from documents captured by Soviet troops in Germany.

From these documents it can be seen that in the autumn of 1941, and also in 1942 and 1943, in Lisbon and in Switzerland, negotiations were carried on behind the back of the U.S.S.R. between

representatives of Britain and Germany, and later between representatives of the United States and Germany, on the subject of concluding peace with Germany.

One of the documents — a supplement to a report by Weizsacker, the German Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs — reviews the course of the negotiations in Lisbon in September 1941. This document shows that on September 13, a meeting took place between Aitken, son of Lord Beaverbrook, an officer of the British army and later a Member of Parliament, representing Britain, and Gustav von Koeber, a Hungarian acting on the authority of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as can be gathered from a letter addressed by Krauel, German Consul General in Geneva, to Weizsacker.

In the course of these negotiations Aitken bluntly put the question: “Could not the coming winter and spring be utilised for a confidential discussion of the possibility of peace?”

Other documents tell of negotiations which took place between representatives of the Governments of the U.S.A. and Germany in Switzerland in February 1943. In these negotiations the U.S.A. was represented by a special delegate of the United States Government, Allen Dulles (brother of John Foster Dulles), who figured under the pseudonym “Bull” and had “direct instructions and authority from the White House.” His partner on the German side was Prince M. Hohenlohe, a man closely connected with the ruling circles of Hitler Germany, who acted as Hitler’s representative under the assumed name of “Pauls.” The document containing a summary of these negotiations belonged to the German Security Service (S.D.).

As is evident from this document, the conversation touched on important questions relating to Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania and Hungary and, which is especially important, to the conclusion of peace with Germany.

In the course of the conversation A. Dulles (Bull) stated that:

“In future, a situation will never again be permitted to arise where nations like the German would be compelled to resort to desperate experiments and heroism as a result of injustice and want. The German state must continue to exist as a factor of order and rehabilitation. The partition of Germany or the separation of Austria is out of the question.”

Concerning Poland, Dulles (Bull) stated:

“ . . . by extending Poland to the East and preserving Rumania and a strong Hungary the establishment of a cordon sanitaire against Bolshevism and Pan-Slavism must be supported.”³⁸

The record of the conversation further says that:

“Mr. Bull more or less agrees to the political and industrial organisation of Europe on the basis of large territories, on the assumption that a federated Greater Germany (similar to the U.S.A.), with the adjoining Danubian Confederation, will constitute the best guarantee of order and rehabilitation in Central and Eastern Europe.”³⁹

Dulles (Bull) also stated that he fully recognised the claim of German industry to the leading role in Europe.

It must be noted that this sounding was effected, by the British and Americans without the knowledge or consent of their ally the Soviet Union, and that nothing was communicated to the

Soviet Government concerning the results of it, even by way post factum information.

This might warrant the assumption that the Governments of the U.S.A. and Great Britain had in this instance made an attempt to inaugurate negotiations with Hitler for a separate peace.

Clearly, such behaviour on the part of the Governments of Britain and the U.S.A. can only be regarded as an infringement of the most elementary duties and obligations of allies.

It therefore follows that when the falsifiers of history accuse the U.S.S.R. of “insincerity” they are shifting the blame from the guilty to the innocent.

There can be no doubt that the falsifiers of history and the other calumniators know of these documents. And if they conceal them from the public, if they say nothing about them in their slander campaign against the U.S.S.R., it is because they are mortally afraid of the historical truth.

As regards the differences concerning the opening of a second front, they were a reflection of the different conceptions as to the duties of allies toward each other. Soviet people believe that if an ally is in trouble one should help him out by all available means, that one should not treat an ally as a temporary fellow traveller but as a friend, should rejoice in his successes and in his growing strength. British and American representatives do not agree with this and regard these ethics as naïve. They are guided by the notion that a strong ally is dangerous, that the strengthening of an ally is not in their interests, that it is better to have a weak ally than a strong one, and if the ally, nevertheless, grows stronger, then measures should be taken to weaken him.

Everybody knows that in the Anglo-Soviet and the Soviet-American communiqués of June 1942, the British and Americans assumed the obligation to open the second front in Europe as early as 1942. This was a solemn promise, a vow, if you will, which should have been fulfilled in time, in order to make things easier for the Soviet forces, who in the first period of the war had borne the entire burden of resistance to German fascism. However, it is also known that this promise was not fulfilled either in 1942 or in 1943, despite the fact that the Soviet Government had declared on several occasions that the Soviet Union could not reconcile itself to the postponement of the second front.

There was nothing fortuitous about the delay in opening the second front. It was a policy, fostered by the aspirations of those reactionary circles in Britain, and the U.S.A. who were pursuing their own aims in the war against Germany, aims that were entirely alien to a war of liberation from German fascism. Their plans did not call for the utter defeat of German fascism. They were interested in undermining Germany’s power and, mainly, in eliminating Germany as a dangerous rival in the world market, in conformity with their narrow, selfish aims. But it did not come within their intention to liberate Germany and other countries from the rule of the reactionary forces, which are constant vehicles of imperialist aggression and of fascism or to carry out radical democratic reforms.

At the same time they were calculating that the U.S.S.R. would be weakened, bled white, that it would be so exhausted in the war that it would for a long time lose the status of a great and mighty power, and that after the war it would fall into dependence on the United States of America and Great Britain.

Naturally, this is not an attitude toward an ally which the Soviet Union can regard as normal.

Diametrically opposite to this policy is the Soviet Union's policy of inter-allied relations. This policy is characterised by unswerving disinterestedness, consistent and honest observance of undertakings, and by readiness at all times to render assistance to an ally. This attitude of a genuine ally toward other countries, its comrades-in-arms in the struggle against a common enemy was exemplified by the Soviet Union in the last war.

Here is one instance.

It will be remembered that at the end of December 1944 Hitler's troops launched an offensive on the Western front in the Ardennes, pierced the front, and placed the Anglo-American troops in a difficult situation. According to the Allies, the Germans hoped, by striking at Liege to crush the American First Army, reach Antwerp, cut off the American Ninth, the British Second and Canadian First Armies, and arrange a second Dunkirk for the Allies, with the idea of putting Britain out of the war. In connection with this, on January 6, 1945, Winston Churchill addressed to J. V. Stalin the following message:

"The battle in the West is very heavy and, at any time, large decisions may be called for from the Supreme Command. You know yourself from your own experience how very anxious the position is when a very broad front has to be defended after temporary loss of the initiative. It is General Eisenhower's great desire and need to know in outline what you plan to do, as this obviously affects all his and our major decisions. Our envoy, Air Chief Marshal Tedder, was last night reported weather-bound in Cairo. His journey has been much delayed through no fault of yours. In case he has not reached you yet, I shall be grateful if you can tell me whether we can count on a major Russian offensive on the Vistula front, or elsewhere, during January, with any other points you may care to mention. I shall not pass this most secret information to anyone except Field Marshal Brooke and General Eisenhower, and only under conditions of the utmost secrecy. I regard the matter as urgent."

On January 7, 1945, J. V. Stalin sent Winston Churchill the following answer:

"I received your message of January 6, 1945, on the evening of January 7.

"Unfortunately, Air Chief Marshal Tedder has not yet reached Moscow.

"It is very important to make use of our superiority over the Germans in artillery and air force. For this we need clear weather for the air force and an absence of low mists which prevent aimed fire by the artillery. We are preparing an offensive, but at present the weather does not favour our offensive. However, in view of the position of our Allies on the Western front, Headquarters of the Supreme Command has decided to complete the preparations at a forced pace and, regardless of the weather, to launch wide-scale offensive operations against the Germans all along the Central front not later than the second half of January. You need not doubt but that we shall do everything that can possibly be done to render help to the glorious troops of our Allies."

In his reply message to J. V. Stalin on January 9, Winston Churchill wrote:

"I am most grateful to you for your thrilling message. I have sent it over to General Eisenhower for his eye only. May all good fortune rest upon your noble venture."

In its desire to expedite aid to the Allied forces in the West, the Supreme Command of the Soviet forces decided to advance the date of the offensive against the Germans on the Soviet-German front from January 20 to January 12. On January 12, a big Soviet offensive was launched on a

wide front stretching from the Baltic to the Carpathians. One hundred and fifty Soviet divisions were sent into, action, supported by large quantities of artillery and aircraft; they broke through the German front and threw the Germans back hundreds of kilometres.

On January 12, the German troops on the Western front, amongst them the 5th and 6th Panzer Armies, which were poised for another drive, ceased their offensive and in the following five or six days were withdrawn from the front and transferred to the East, against the attacking Soviet troops. The German offensive in the West was thwarted. On January 17, Winston Churchill wrote to J. V. Stalin

“I am most grateful to you for your message and am extremely glad that Air Marshal Tedder made so favourable, an impression upon you. On behalf of His Majesty’s Government, and from the bottom of my heart, I offer you our thanks and congratulations on the immense assault you have launched upon the Eastern front.

“You will now, no doubt, know the plans of General Eisenhower and to what extent they have been delayed by Rundstedt’s spoiling attack. I am sure that fighting along our whole front will be continuous. The British 21st Army Group under Field Marshal Montgomery have today begun an attack in the area south of Roermond.”

An Order of the Day issued by J. V. Stalin to the Soviet troops in February 1945 said in reference to this Soviet offensive:

“In January of this year, the Red Army brought down upon the enemy a blow of unparalleled force along the entire front from the Baltic to the Carpathians. On a stretch of 1,200 kilometres it broke up the powerful defences which the Germans had been building for a number of years. In the course of the offensive, the Red Army by its swift and skilful actions has hurled the enemy far back to the west.

“The first consequence of the successes of our winter offensive was that they thwarted the Germans’ winter offensive in the West, which aimed at the seizure of Belgium and Alsace, and enabled the armies of our Allies in their turn to launch an offensive against the Germans and thus link up their offensive operations in the West with the offensive operations of the Red Army in the East.”

That is how J. V. Stalin acted. That is how true allies in a common struggle act.

* * * * *

These are the facts.

Of course, the falsifiers of history and slanderers have no respect for facts — that is why they are dubbed falsifiers and slanderers. They prefer slander and calumny. But, there is no reason to doubt that in the end these gentry will have to acknowledge a universally recognised truth — namely, that slander and calumny perish, but the facts live on.

Soviet Information Bureau

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- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 177.
- 6 J. V. Stalin, *Report on the Work of the Central Committee to the Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B)*. (*Problems of Leninism*, p. 570.)
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- 8 *Ibid.* p. 14.
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- 18 *Ibid.*
- 19 *Izvestia*, March 18, 1938.
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- 26 *Izvestia*, March 20, 1939.
- 27 "Archiv für Aussenpolitik und Länderkunde," September, 1938, S. 483.
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- 33 "Note of the British Legation, dated March 2, 1940"; White Paper of the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Stockholm, 1947, p. 120.

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39 *ibid.*