

Dariusz Miszewski, PhD habil.

Institute of Military History, War Studies University, Warsaw, Poland

ORCID 0000-0002-3821-8844

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THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS OPPOSING THE CONCEPT OF ESTABLISHING UNIONS OF STATES ON ITS WESTERN BORDERS IN 1939–45, AS REPORTED BY THE SOVIET PRESS

Abstract

In 1939–40, in the agreements imposed by the Soviet Union by force on Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia, these nations were forced to withdraw from the Baltic Entente, and in the agreements of 1940 and 1944, it forbade Finland from joining the Scandinavian states. It also rejected the right of “small states”—Poland and Czechoslovakia, as well as Yugoslavia and Greece (1942)—to join plans for regional integration supported by Great Britain. It should be recalled that in the interwar period, the Soviet Union had opposed Aristide Briand’s plan (1929) for a united Europe, which Soviet propaganda called “the holy capitalist alliance”.

The Soviet Union policy believed that as a socialist state it resolved national, economic and social problems in the spirit of brotherhood and cooperation between nations. Capitalist states were allegedly incapable of equal unions of states. The Soviet Union described itself as a union of republics which were formally independent and equal states. In fact their independence was superficial, and the republican institutions were strictly controlled by the Communist party and the Soviet secret services. In foreign policy, the concept of Soviet federalism served to justify the successive annexation of neighbouring nations as republics “liberated” by the Red Army. The Soviet goal was to unite Europe, and even the whole world, on the basis of Communist ideology.

Keywords: Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, Central Europe, Soviet imperialism, Soviet propaganda, Central European federation

Introduction

The primary source basis for this article is the Polish-language Soviet-produced *Czerwony Sztandar* [Red Standard, hereafter *Czerwony Sztandar*], which was distributed to the Polish population during the Soviet occupation of Lvov in 1939–41 and 1944–5 by the Communists and their Polish collaborators. Its task was to influence Polish public opinion in accordance with the interests of the Soviet occupier. *Czerwony Sztandar* belongs to the category of occupation war newspapers which are described in Polish press studies as “the legal press of the occupation” [*okupacyjna prasa legalna*], and colloquially as “the vermin-press” [*prasa gadzinowa*] (Bernacki 2007, pp. 306–10; compare with Gogol 2000; Hryciuk 2000; Cieślíkowa 1997). The author of this article carried out the research into this class of press in the archives at the Ossoliński National Institute. It is part of the Lvov collection which was transferred to Wrocław after World War II. This article uses newspapers published by Polish Communists and financed by the Soviet Union, such as *Wolna Polska*, *Rada Narodowa* and *Rzeczpospolita*. Other sources include reprints of Soviet newspapers from World War II, such as *Pravda*, *Izvestia*, *Voyna i Rabochiy Klass* [Война и рабочий класс, *War and the Working Class*] and *Partyzant*.

The social and national problems prevalent in centrally-ruled tsarist Russia during World War I were used by the Bolsheviks in order to dismantle it internally (Heller 2002, pp. 730–1). In the November 1917 declaration of the rights of the peoples of Russia, the Soviet Council of People's Commissars promised the equality and sovereignty of its peoples, the right to self-determination, the abolition of national and religious privileges, and the free development of national minorities. The Council played a propaganda role in weakening the counter-revolution of the "White" Russians, who denied the non-Russian nations any right to withdraw from Russia (Bazyłow and Wiczorkiewicz 2005, p. 409; Dziewanowski 1979, pp. 105–6). In international propaganda, the Council's declaration was intended to weaken the intervention of the capitalist states on the side of the "Whites".

In January 1918, Lenin said that "individual, diverse federations of free nations will gather more and more around revolutionary Russia" ("Wielki Związek 16 Republik" [The Great Union of 16 Republics], *Pravda* August 8, 1940; Polish translation in *Czerwony Sztandar* 268, August 9, 1940). To this end, the Bolsheviks created Communist republics bordering on the states which were established in the years 1917–18 on the lands of the Russian Empire occupied by Germany and Austria-Hungary. One of the goals of Germany's war was the implementation in Central and Eastern Europe of the so-called *Mittleuropa* concept, that is the emergence of politically and economically dependent states in territories detached from Russia (Wolff-Powęska and Schulz 2000, pp. 50 *et seq.*, 280 *et seq.*; Pajewski 1991, pp. 88–90, 661 *et seq.*; cf. Goworowska-Puchala 1997). After the capitulation of Germany and its allies in November 1918, the Red Army strived to integrate those of its former non-Russian nations which had become independent in 1918–21, from Finland to the Southern Caucasus, back into Russia (Nowak 1999, pp. 335–340; Dziewanowski 1979, p. 113–14).

The Bolsheviks' victory in the Russian Civil War ended the right of the peoples of Russia to self-determination. Lenin created a centralised state of the proletarian dictatorship, led by the Communist party ("Lenin założyciel i organizator państwa socjalistycznego" [Lenin, the founder and organiser of the socialist state], *Czerwony Sztandar* 12, January 15, 1940;



13, January 16, 1940; “Czego uczy historia WKP(b)” [What the history of the All-Russian Communist Party (B[olsheviks]) teaches us], *Czerwony Sztandar* 294, September 8, 1940). Within its framework, Soviet propaganda presented the Soviet republics as independent states, but without bourgeois nationalism (Anczewicz 2001, 65–70, 117–19). In fact, Lenin rejected the Austrian Social Democrats’ ideas of solving the national question through territorial autonomy, which Karl Renner and Otto Bauer had advocated for the preservation of Austria-Hungary (Pipes 2005, pp. 159–61), or by means of a federation. From 1918, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Bessarabia, the Ukrainian People’s Republic, the Belarusian People’s Republic, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia fought against the Bolsheviks for independence as “artificial state-creations” of the imperialism of the Western powers (“Wielki Związek 16 Republik” [The Great Union of 16 Republics], Polish translation based on *Pravda*, August 8, 1940; *Czerwony Sztandar* 268, August 9, 1940; Bazylow and Wiczorkiewicz 2005, pp. 409–10; Nowak 2000, p. 77; Dziewanowski 1979, pp. 123–7). The defeats for the Red Army in clashes with Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and above all Poland (1919–20) stopped its march towards Europe for 19 years. In order to conceal the aggressive superpower policy of Soviet Russia from international public opinion, its authorities entrusted the propagation of the revolution to the Third Communist International (Comintern), established in March 1919 by Lenin, as “the battle command of the world proletariat, fighting for the victory of the cause of Communism” (“Bojowy sztab międzynarodowego proletariatu” [The battle staff of the international proletariat], *Czerwony Sztandar* 52, March 4, 1941; Marples 2006, pp. 148–9; Anczewicz 2001, p. 124). The Communist parties were to strive for revolution following the Soviet pattern (Dziewanowski 1959, p. 87).

In the interwar period, Poland initiated regional integration projects in Central and Eastern Europe (a federation with the eastern nations, the Baltic Union, a union of agricultural states, the *Intermarium* concept) in order to eliminate the influence of Germany and the Soviet Union (cf. Madera 2004, p. 65; Okulewicz 2001, p. 20, 117–19; Moczulski 1999, pp. 560–2; Stawowy-Kawka 1995, pp. 97–8; *Historia Dyplomacji Polskiej* 1995, pp. 86–7, 125–7, 194–5, 384; Fiedor 1991,

p. 21; Skrzypek 1972; Balcerak 1970, 31–54). Both these states were hostile to these plans, describing them as “Polish imperialism” (Michał Sokolnicki, “Polacy wobec zagadnień międzynarodowych” [Poles in the face of international issues], *Sprawy Obce* 3, April 1930, p. 491; “Bezczelna prowokacja fińskiej soldateski” [The brazen provocation by the Finnish military], *Czerwony Sztandar* 56, November 29, 1939; “Nowe dokumenty o krwawej pacyfikacji na Zachodniej Ukrainie” [New documents about the bloody pacification in Western Ukraine], *Czerwony Sztandar* 304, September 20, 1940; “Proletariat polski w obronie Republik Radzieckich” [The Polish proletariat in defence of the Soviet Republics], *Czerwony Sztandar* 136, June 12, 1941). They were assessed similarly by public opinion in Western Europe until 1939 (Nowak 2015, pp. 34, 62–5; Okulewicz 2001, pp. 121–3). In the interwar period, Poland did not receive support for its regional projects from Czechoslovakia and Lithuania, with which it was in conflict over territorial disputes, or Finland.

In 1922, Soviet Russia was transformed into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics composed of 4 republics. It was allegedly a union state, realising the self-determination and equal rights of nations, in which the union’s republics constituted the state structures of the peoples inhabiting them, free from national, economic, social and religious quarrels, and all with the right to withdraw from the Soviet Union. However, the attributes of statehood within the “federation” were façades, and the republican institutions were strictly controlled by Moscow (Pipes 2005, p. 161; Ancewicz 2001, pp. 136–8). Federalism in the Soviet constitution only served to promote the superiority of the socialist state over the capitalist one, as the former allegedly resolved national conflicts “in the spirit of brotherhood and cooperation between nations” (“Konstytucja zwycięskiego socjalizmu” [The constitution of victorious socialism] and “Dzień radości narodów kraju rad” [The day of joy of the nations of the Soviets], *Czerwony Sztandar* 367, December 5, 1940; Czajowski 1998, pp. 144–8). Thanks to the Soviet Union’s Leninist-Stalinist national policy, it was supposed to grow in strength. According to the official rhetoric, by rejecting “bourgeois nationalism” the Soviet working class had become “a vehicle of internationalist cooperation between nations”. Therefore, the capitalist states

were—in Soviet opinion—incapable of creating such state unions of equal status. The Soviet Union rejected the 1929 project of the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Aristide Briand, to create a union of European states, deeming it a “Capitalist ‘Holy Alliance’” (Mieczysław Szawleski, “Stany Zjednoczone Europy” [The United States of Europe], *Sprawy Obce*, January 1930, issue 2, p. 369). According to Ancewicz, the Soviet Union was a multinational centralised state, which granted only linguistic autonomy to its provinces. The goal was to create a Soviet nation out of these nationalities. Soviet federalism resulted from the ethnic problems inherited from tsarist Russia (Ancewicz 2001, pp. 188–90). In fact, the Soviet state was a Communist party dictatorship, centralised and controlled by special services. In international politics, Soviet federalism served to incorporate neighbouring nations as successive republics “liberated” by the Red Army.

In the 1930s, Adolf Hitler’s policy of violating the Versailles treaty and forced rearmament greatly disturbed France (Tebinka 2009, pp. 209–10; Kissinger 1996, pp. 314–19; Wandycz 1988, pp. 59, 68). France considered the system of alliances it concluded in the 1920s in Central Europe with Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia as insufficient for its security. In order to preserve the Versailles system, it drew the previously isolated Soviet Union into European politics, that joined the League of Nations in 1934. In May 1935, France and Czechoslovakia concluded anti-German pacts on mutual assistance with the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union propagated the collective security system in Europe in the League of Nations (Marple 2006, pp. 156–8). From 1935, through the Comintern, it proclaimed the idea of anti-fascist people’s fronts with socialist and democratic parties and trade unions, which the Communists had previously broken up since 1920 (Pipes 2005, p. 195). Moscow’s aggressive actions were triggered by Hitler’s anti-Communist rhetoric and his restriction of previous Germany’s cooperation with the Soviet Union, initiated in 1922 by the treaty of Rapallo, and continued after the conclusion of the Berlin treaty in April 1926.

The European post-Versailles political order inhibited the Soviet Union’s drive to revolutionary expansion (Adam Romer, “Krucjata przeciw Sowietom” [Crusade against the

Soviets], *Nasza Przyszłość*, vol. 9, March 1931, pp. 64–70; Józef Czarnecki, “Złudny panslawizm” [The Illusions of Pan-Slavism], *Nasza Przyszłość*, vol. 17, January 1932, p. 30–7; “20-lecie II Kongresu Międzynarodówki Komunistycznej” [20th anniversary of the Second Congress of the Communist International], *Czerwony Sztandar* 250, 19 July 1940; Kissinger 1996, pp. 371–375; Bullock 1994, pp. 103–104). The Soviet Union, which was interested in war breaking out in Europe, called on France to enter into conflict with Germany in defence of Czechoslovakia in 1938, but despite being itself in alliance with Prague, proclaimed neutrality (Gardner 1999, pp. 24–5, 58–9; Dziwianowski 1979, p. 237; 250–2). In order to keep the peace, the governments of Great Britain, France and Italy agreed at a 1938 conference in Munich on the partition of Czechoslovakia by Germany, and in March 1939 failed to prevent its liquidation. The military negotiations between the Soviet Union, Great Britain and France conducted from the spring of 1939 were burdened with mutual suspicion (Kissinger 1996, pp. 339–43, 367–75). They failed when Poland and Romania rejected Soviet demands to establish military bases. At the same time, the Soviet Union held talks with Germany, culminating in the August 1939 signing of a non-aggression treaty, the secret Ribbentrop-Molotov protocol on creating “spheres of influence” from Finland to Romania. By making it easier for the Germans to unleash World War II (Bazyłow and Wiczorkiewicz 2005, p. 445; Nevezhin 2000, pp. 77, 128, 133; Dębski 2009, 14–15; Smirnow 2009, pp. 79–82), the Soviets counted on attaining global hegemony at the expense of the weakened West (Kissinger 1996, pp. 377–8). After concluding the agreement with Germany, the People’s Commissar for Defence, Marshal Kliment Voroshilov, stated that Poland had forced the Soviet Union to take this step (Stachiewicz 1979, p. 48).

Following the emergence of the independent Central European states from the tsarist empire in 1918, the Soviet authorities treated them as the starting points of French and British imperialism against the Soviet Union, because of their alliance or close cooperation with these Western powers. The Soviets believed that these new states were ruled by anti-Soviet classes of property owners, who oppressed the peasants, workers and national minorities, and who persecuted

the Communists, as happened in any unitary or complex capitalist state (“ZSRR – potężne państwo socjalistyczne” [The USSR—the mighty socialist state], *Czerwony Sztandar* 388, December 30, 1940; “Prawda o polityce narodowościowej” [The truth about national politics], *Czerwony Sztandar* 4, January 5, 1941). At the 10th congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) in 1921, Stalin recognised that the creation of these states did not mean peaceful coexistence between nations, and did not remove national inequalities or ethnic oppression, because they were based on private property and class inequalities. Due to their weakness, they were destined to yield politically, economically and militarily to the imperialist powers (“Stalinowska przyjaźń narodów” [The Stalinist friendship of nations], *Czerwony Sztandar* 39, November 7, 1939). According to Stalin, by overthrowing capitalism, the Soviet state had resolved the nationalist problem in the spirit of equality. He argued that until the disappearance of capitalism, the Soviet Union had to arm itself because, from an ideological point of view, capitalist states were constantly instigating wars and seeking to destroy it (“Świat kapitalistyczny u progu 1941 roku” [The capitalist world on the threshold of 1941], *Czerwony Sztandar* 385, December 27, 1940). The Red Army therefore had to withstand any aggression and “liberate the working masses”, because it was “the army of the world proletarian revolution, an army of the oppressed and exploited of all countries”. From the very beginning, “it was created and raised in the spirit of internationalism and international solidarity” (“Armia Wyzwolenia Narodów” [The Army of the Liberation of Nations], *Czerwony Sztandar* 124, February 20, 1940). Strengthening the power of the Soviet Union, Stalin supposed, following Soviet propaganda, would lead socialism to victory over capitalism (“Nauka Lenina-Stalina o zwycięstwie socjalizmu w jednym kraju” [Lenin-Stalin’s teachings on the victory of socialism in one country], *Czerwony Sztandar* 239, July 6, 1940). In September 1939, Germany and the Soviet Union said in a statement that they were introducing the “law and order” which had been violated by the “decay of the Polish state”, and were bringing help to its population in the reconstruction of the state and national life (“Komunikat radziecko-niemiecki” [Soviet-German Communiqué], *Słowo Żołnierza* 3, September 20, 1939). The chairman of the Council

of People's Commissars and the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Vyacheslav Molotov, said that the attack on Poland was a great achievement, of which "the Soviet Union, loyal to the principles of its peaceful foreign policy and proletarian internationalism, can be proud" ("XXII rocznica Rewolucji Październikowej" [The 22nd anniversary of the October Revolution], *Czerwony Sztandar* 41, November 11, 1939).

Public opinion in Western Europe did not see the Soviet Union as an aggressor against Poland on a par with Germany (Szarota 1995, pp. 168–9). It was only the December 1939 attack on Finland which brought forth any condemnation of Soviet imperialism, although the case of the Baltic states in 1940 was also met with silence (Kissinger 1996, p. 381).

Soviet Propaganda and Policy towards the States of Central and Northern Europe, 1939–41



After the outbreak of World War II, the Comintern supported the German/Soviet peace policy. Comintern propaganda argued that

"working-class unity, a united popular front, should be created from below, in the struggle against the imperialist bourgeoisie, against the bankrupt social-democratic rulers and other petty-bourgeois parties that have passed into the imperialist camp, in the struggle to end imperialist war, which brings ruin, hunger and death to millions of working people," ("Bojowy sztab międzynarodowego proletariatu" [The battle command of the international proletariat] *Czerwony Sztandar* 52, March 4, 1941).

The Comintern followed Stalin's guidelines from the 18th Congress of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) in 1939, where France and Great Britain were considered enemies ("Historyczny XVIII Zjazd bolszewików" [The historic 18th Congress of the Bolsheviks], *Czerwony Sztandar* 58, March 11, 1941). In the light of the approaching "second imperialist war", he ordered a rapid increase in the Soviet economic and military potential.

The Red Army entered Poland on September 17, 1939, proclaiming the liberation of the working people and national minorities (Ukrainians and Belarusians) from the oppression of the “Polish lords and colonisers” (“Wyzwolimy naszych braci – Ukraińców i Białorusinów z jarzma pańskoburżuazyjnej Polski” [We will liberate our brother Ukrainians and Belarusians from the yoke of the Poland of the lords and bourgeois] and “Do wojsk polskich”, [To the Polish troops], *Słowo Żołnierza* 1, September 18, 1939; Strzembosz 2000, p. 45), while remaining silent about the “liberation” of the Jewish minority. It should be emphasised that during the war with Poland in 1919–20 (Julian Marchlewski [co-founder of the Comintern and a member of the Provisional Revolutionary Committee of Poland in 1920] wrote in 1919: “Every border will lose its meaning in the near future, as the revolutionary tide throughout Europe, and therefore also in Poland, will arrive in just a matter of time, a matter of a few years.”; compare with Marchlewski 1956, p. 755), and also in 1939, Moscow was guided by the state’s interest in delimiting the Soviet border on its territory, and not by ethnicity. According to Soviet propaganda, Poland collapsed in 1939 because the internally weak state had pursued an “unrealistic policy” towards Germany and the Soviet Union, its government “oppressed the nation and national minorities”, and Paris and London had betrayed her (“O wewnętrznych przyczynach klęski wojennej Polski” [On the internal causes of Poland’s military defeat], *Pravda*, September 14, 1939, translation into Polish in *Słowo Żołnierza* 1, September 18, 1939; “Kto rządził Polską” [Who ruled Poland], *Czerwony Sztandar* 10, October 2, 1939; “Zachodnia Ukraina i Zachodnia Białoruś” [Western Ukraine and Western Belarus], *Czerwony Sztandar* 12, October 6, 1939). The Soviet Union did not see itself as an aggressor against Poland. In its propaganda Soviet Union proclaimed that the Polish state had ceased to exist on September 17, 1939, because it did not offer any resistance, and the Polish government had allegedly fled, as a result of which all Polish/Soviet treaties had been invalidated (“Komu idziemy z pomocą” [Whom we shall come to help], *Słowo Żołnierza* 5, September 24, 1939; “O polityce zagranicznej Związku Radzieckiego towarzysz W.M. Mołotow” [Comrade V.M. Molotov on the Soviet Union’s foreign policy], *Czerwony Sztandar* 37, November 4, 1939).

The Soviet war aim was to destroy the Polish state (Szarota 1995, pp. 168–9). As early as 1920, Lenin believed that “by destroying the Polish army, we will break the peace of Versailles,” and the Red Army would take Europe (Pipes 2005, p. 193). In October 1939, Molotov said

“Poland’s ruling circles boasted a lot about the ‘durability’ of their state and the ‘power’ of their army. Meanwhile, one lightning strike on Poland by the German army, and then the Red Army, was enough for nothing to be left of this twisted abortion of the Treaty of Versailles, which had been living off the oppression of non-Polish nationalities. Traditional politics without principles, the politics of manoeuvring and playing off Germany and the USSR, turned out to be inadequate and completely bankrupt.” (“O polityce zagranicznej Związku Radzieckiego towarzysz W.M. Mołotow” [Comrade V.M. Molotov on the Soviet Union’s foreign policy], *Czerwony Sztandar* 37, November 4, 1939).

On September 28, Germany and the Soviet Union concluded a pact of friendship and agreement on their borders, dividing the territory of Poland once again. *Pravda* called it a great contribution to peace in Europe (“Radziecka polityka pokoju i przyjaźni narodów” [The Soviet policy of peace and friendship between nations], *Pravda*, September 30, 1939, Polish translation in *Czerwony Sztandar* 11, October 5, 1939), and threatened war if it was violated. It stated that by its alliances with France and Great Britain, Poland had provoked war with the Soviet Union and Germany, who had now “introduced law and order” to Central Europe. In order to fuel Polish-Lithuanian antagonism, the Soviet Union handed over Vilnius and the Vilnius region to Lithuania in 1939, as the Germans did to Slovakia, returning Spisz and Orawa in thanks for its participation in the war with Poland.

In October 1939, the Soviet occupation authorities organised and conducted fake elections in the territories of the Second Republic of Poland which it had annexed, to the “people’s assemblies” of what were now called Western Ukraine and Western Belarus (Gnatowski 2001). After these bodies met, they voted to join the Soviet republics of Ukraine and Belarus respectively. The Soviet authorities

had to “definitively eliminate all the nationalist remnants of nobility’s Poland” (“Stalinowska przyjaźń narodów” [The Stalinist friendship of nations], *Czerwony Sztandar* 39, November 7, 1939; see Gnatowski and Boćkowski 2005; Milewski 2017). The Polish government-in-exile, as well as its Belarusian and Ukrainian Polish citizens, did not recognise the Soviet republics of Ukraine and Belarus as independent states (Archiwum Akt Nowych, hereafter AAN, collection Narodowe Siły Zbrojne, hereafter NSZ, ref. no. 207/7, “Threat of extermination in Volhynia and the Czerwieńsk region. Causes, effects, indications”, pp. 8–9). Likewise disregarding the truth regarding Marshal Piłsudski’s eastern political plans, Soviet propaganda proclaimed that since 1918, under his leadership, Poland had been expanding into Belarus and Ukraine (“Platforma programowa imperializmu polskiego” [The political platform of Polish imperialism], *Czerwony Sztandar* 218, June 11, 1940 r; “Proletariat polski w obronie Republik Radzieckich” [The Polish proletariat in defence of the Soviet Republics], *Czerwony Sztandar* 136, June 12, 1941), which was a duplication of the allegedly expansionist policy of the former First Republic (“Krótki kurs historii Ukrainy” [A short course in the history of Ukraine], *Czerwony Sztandar* 20, January 25, 1941; “Bohdan Chmielnicki i jego epoka” [Bohdan Khmelnytsky and his epoch], *Czerwony Sztandar* 68, March 22, 1941). The Soviet press praised the Red Army, which in 1920 had smashed the alleged “imperialist Polish-Ukrainian Piłsudski-Petlura alliance”, thus preventing the transformation of Belarus and Ukraine into a “colony of Polish imperialism” (“Wspaniałe zwycięstwo” [The great victory], *Czerwony Sztandar* 213, June 5, 1940; “Z dokumentów niedawnej przeszłości” [From documents of the recent past], *Czerwony Sztandar* 112, May 15, 1941; “Wróg narodu ukraińskiego” [The enemy of the Ukrainian nation], *Czerwony Sztandar* 137, June 13, 1941). However, they regretted that the Polish working class had not been “liberated” because the “treacherous” Polish Socialist Party had supported the Polish bourgeoisie. Poland, established with the consent of Great Britain and France at the Paris Conference in 1919, was to be the West’s launchpad against the East. In the interwar period, the Poles intended to continue to implement their “over-inflated” anti-Soviet idea of the Baltic-Black Sea alliance

“Nowe dokumenty o krwawej pacyfikacji na Zachodniej Ukrainie” [New documents on the bloody pacification in Western Ukraine], *Czerwony Sztandar* 304, September 20, 1940). The Soviet war propaganda about the anti-Soviet Polish state, artificially created by the Western powers at the peace conference in Paris (Molotov: “the abortive fetus of the Versailles Treaty”) completely ignored the efforts of the Polish nation to rebuild its statehood from the very moment of the partition of the First Republic (1795), the great national uprisings of the 19th century, and in particular, Polish independence activity both on Polish territory and the international arena during World War I.

After the fall of Poland, Soviet propaganda called on its Western allies to make peace with Germany. It argued that, apart from the narrow circles of the Polish “landowners and bourgeois”, no one wanted to rebuild the “artificially created Polish state based on lawlessness and the oppression of all peoples who inhabited it”, including the Polish people (“Pokój czy wojna?” [Peace or war?], *Izvestia*, October 9, 1939, Polish translation in *Czerwony Sztandar* 20, October 15, 1939). Poland “in its former form and on its pre-September 1939 territory cannot be restored.” *Izvestia* supported Hitler’s peace plan of October 6, 1939, for a conference of powers to create a new order in Europe and “a new Polish state within ethnographic borders”. After France and Great Britain rejected Germany’s “goodwill”, the Soviet Union assessed that the former countries were waging an “ideological war”, for which Poland was only a pretext, and that their goal was to maintain their colonies and global hegemony and oppress the working classes. In a polemic with the British and French press, *Izvestia* emphasised that the fight against Nazism was a manifestation of “the savagery of the cultured nations and their stupidity”, leading to the destruction of states and nations, intended to take Europe back to the times of religious wars, because “fire and sword cannot destroy any ideology or worldview”, and that Hitlerism itself “was a matter of taste”. At a session of the USSR Supreme Soviet on October 31, 1939, Molotov emphasised that Soviet-German relations had always been aimed at changing the Versailles system (“O polityce zagranicznej Związku Radzieckiego towarzysz W.M. Mołotow” [Comrade V.M. Molotov on

the Soviet Union's foreign policy], *Czerwony Sztandar* 37, November 4, 1939). He described their relations as friendly, bringing political and economic benefits to both sides. He believed that after the fall of Poland, France and Great Britain should recognise the new realities in Europe.

On the 22nd anniversary of the October Revolution on November 6, 1939, Molotov argued that it was the great economic crisis of capitalism in the 1930s that had led to the "second imperialist war". The United States, France and Great Britain had drawn more "small states" into it. On the other hand, the Soviet Union had pursued a policy of peace and neutrality by concluding non-aggression pacts with its neighbours. However, the hostile Western empires made the anti-Soviet governments of the neighbouring "small states" dependent on them. With the help of diplomacy and the necessary military interventions, the Soviet Union had been forced to secure its borders. Molotov predicted the further expansion of the war because the neutral "small states" had not adequately defended their independence, and they expected to make profits from their trade with the belligerents. This posed a threat to Soviet security. After the liberation and unification of the Belarusians and Ukrainians, Molotov predicted a further shrinkage of capitalism and the emergence of new liberated nations, living in brotherhood with the Soviet peoples. He stressed that the expansion of "the forces of peace and the liberation of the masses is a sacred duty of the Soviet Union, its historical mission." He announced that in 10–15 years the Soviet Union would catch up with and even surpass the capitalist states ("XXII rocznica Rewolucji Październikowej" [The 22nd anniversary of the October Revolution], *Czerwony Sztandar* 41, November 11, 1939).

In line with the Soviet "policy of peace and friendship between nations", at the turn of October 1939, the Soviet Union demanded that Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Turkey and Finland conclude mutual aid agreements with it and allow Moscow to install military bases on their territories. He emphasised that the Soviet Union was "attentive and caring" to the independence of small and militarily weak states; however, it could not allow them to be a tool of French and British warmongers against the Soviet Union, as Poland

had been (“Radziecka polityka pokoju i przyjaźni narodów” [The Soviet policy of peace and friendship of nations], *Pravda*, September 30, 1939, translated into Polish in *Czerwony Sztandar* 11, October 5, 1939; see Falcov 2019, pp. 96–119). This resembled the imperial policy of Lenin in 1918–21 (Pipes 2005, pp. 177, 186–8, 212–3).

The Soviet Union demanded permission from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to install air and sea bases of the Red Army on their territories (“Komunikat TASS” [TASS communiqué] [on the Soviet-Estonian mutual assistance pact of September 28, 1939 in Moscow], *Czerwony Sztandar* 10, October 2, 1939; “Pakt o wzajemnej pomocy między ZSRS a Republiką Łotewską” [Pact on mutual assistance between the USSR and the Republic of Latvia], *Czerwony Sztandar* 13, October 7, 1939). Soviet propaganda and diplomacy guaranteed that Soviet troops would not interfere in the internal affairs of these states, but would merely protect them against external attacks. At the same time, they were obliged not to participate in any alliances that the Soviet authorities considered hostile. In order to convince international public opinion that the Soviet Union did not intend to enslave the “small states”, he handed over Vilnius and the Vilnius region to Lithuania in 1939. This was provided for in the Soviet-Lithuanian treaty of 1920. He demonstrated that Poland was a hostile neighbour to Lithuania. (“O polityce zagranicznej Związku Radzieckiego towarzysz W.M. Mołotow” [Comrade V.M. Molotov on the Soviet Union’s foreign policy], *Czerwony Sztandar* 37, November 4, 1939). Soviet propaganda admitted that although Vilnius was not an ethnically Lithuanian city, Lithuania deserved it for historical and moral reasons. The Soviet press praised this as another agreement “strengthening peace” in Central Europe, emphasising the role of the Soviet Union as a guarantor of security and stability in the region, operating supposedly without violating the freedom and independence of “small states” (“Porozumienie litewsko-radzieckie” [The Lithuanian-Soviet agreement], *Czerwony Sztandar* 18, October 13, 1939).

Turkey rejected the treaty with the Soviet Union, as the latter demanded border adjustments in the Southern Caucasus and the establishment of Soviet bases in the Hellespont to close them to warships from non-Black Sea states (“Przybycie

ministra spraw zagranicznych Turcji Sziukriu Saradżoglu do Moskwy” [Arrival of the Turkish Foreign Minister Şükrü Saracoğlu to Moscow], *Czerwony Sztandar* 7, September 28, 1939; “Pobyty w Moskwie ministra spraw zagranicznych Turcji Saradżoglu” [The visit to Moscow by the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Saracoğlu], *Czerwony Sztandar* 23, October 19, 1939; “O polityce zagranicznej Związku Radzieckiego towarzysz W.M. Mołotow” [Comrade V.M. Molotov on the Soviet Union’s foreign policy], *Czerwony Sztandar* 37, November 4, 1939; “Zaprzeczenie TASS” [TASS denial], *Czerwony Sztandar* 150, June 27, 1941). Fearing Soviet aggression, Turkey concluded agreements with France and Great Britain in October 1939, which the Soviet Union perceived as a hostile act (“Umowa angielsko-francusko-turecka” [The Anglo-Franco-Turkish agreement], *Czerwony Sztandar* 27, October 24, 1939; “Angielsko-francusko-tureckie rozmowy handlowe” [The Anglo-French-Turkish trade talks], *Czerwony Sztandar* 92, January 11, 1940; see Zdulski 2012, pp. 148–9). In 1944–5, the Soviet Union demanded that London and Washington amend the 1936 Turkish Straits Agreement. Soviet pressure was one of the reasons for Turkish neutrality during World War II. This complicated the British plan to invade the Balkans in 1943–4, supported by Poland (Kastory 2004, pp. 265–8; Gardner 1999, p. 183; Kissinger 1996, pp. 438–40; Mitkiewicz 1968, pp. 318–19). President Roosevelt, like Stalin, called for a second front in western, not southern Europe (Grzeloński 2013, pp. 302, 308; Gardner 1999, pp. 190–1).

Under the pretext of a threat to Leningrad and the Gulf of Finland, the Soviet Union made territorial and military demands of Finland (“Konferencja między towarzyszem Mołotowem a posłem fińskim P. Paskiwi” [Conference between Comrade Molotov and Finnish envoy P. Paskiwi], *Czerwony Sztandar* 19, October 4, 1939; “Przyjazd pełnomocnika rządu fińskiego” [Arrival of the Finnish government plenipotentiary], *Czerwony Sztandar* 27, October 24, 1939; see Moorhouse 2015, pp. 117–18; Dębski 2007, p. 284; Vehviläinen 2002, pp. 39–49, 65–75; Trotter 2007; Piotrowski 1997). At the session of the Supreme Soviet on October 31, 1939, Molotov said that the Soviet security policy towards the Baltic states and Finland had been dictated by the outbreak

of World War II and the concert of anti-Soviet forces in those countries (“O polityce zagranicznej Związku Radzieckiego towarzysz W.M. Mołotow” [Comrade V.M. Molotov on the foreign policy of the Soviet Union], *Czerwony Sztandar* 37, November 4, 1939). He regretted that Finland did not share Soviet security concerns and was clinging to neutrality. He proposed territorial changes in the Leningrad area and the Gulf of Finland in exchange for part of Soviet Karelia, a non-aggression pact, and the removal of fortifications on the Finnish-Soviet border and on the Åland Islands. The Finnish side rejected the Soviet demands for “peace” and security guarantees (“Prasa zagraniczna o referacie towarzysza Mołotowa” [The foreign press on Comrade Molotov’s paper], *Czerwony Sztandar* 37, November 4, 1939; Żmudzki 1998, p. 13–15).

The Soviet press accused Finland of imitating the disastrous policy of Polish Foreign Minister Józef Beck, who, by rejecting German demands, had provoked war with Germany. It argued that the Soviet Union had the right to protect Leningrad, and warned that Finland would be disappointed in Britain and France, as Poland had been. Soviet press threatened Sweden of war if aid was offered to Finland (“Wokół zagadnienia rokowań radziecko-fińskich” [On the issue of the Soviet-Finnish negotiations], *Czerwony Sztandar* 39, November 7, 1939). The Soviet authorities unleashed an anti-Finnish press campaign and organised demonstrations against the “Finnish imperialists” who had allegedly shelled the Soviet border and massed troops in readiness to attack the Soviet Union (“Koła rządowe Finlandii prowokują wojnę z ZSRR” [Finnish government circles provoke war with the USSR], *Czerwony Sztandar* 50, November 22, 1939; “Kampania antyradziecka w Finlandii” [Anti-Soviet campaign in Finland], *Czerwony Sztandar* 53, November 25, 1939; “Nota rządu radzieckiego” [Note from the Soviet Government] and “Potężny głos wielkiego narodu radzieckiego” [The mighty voice of the great Soviet people], *Czerwony Sztandar* 55, November 28, 1939; “Niech drżą podżegacze” [Let the instigators tremble], *Czerwony Sztandar* 56, November 29, 1939; “Położyć kres zakusom podżegaczy” [Put an end to the temptations of the instigators] and “Precz z burzycielami pokoju” [Down with the destroyers of peace], *Czerwony Sztandar* 57,

November 30, 1939). Soviet propaganda accused Finland of becoming a “British-French imperialist base against the USSR” since gaining independence. It reminded Finland’s participation in 1922–5 in the anti-Soviet Baltic bloc created by Poland with France’s help (“Bezczelna prowokacja fińskiej soldateski” [A brazen provocation by the Finnish military], *Czerwony Sztandar* 56, November 29, 1939). In December 1939, the Soviet Union created the Communist government of the Finnish Democratic Republic to replace the “imperialist mafia” in Helsinki (“Utworzenie rządu ludowego w Finlandii” [The creation of a people’s government in Finland] and “Deklaracja ludowego rządu Finlandii” [Declaration of the people’s government in Finland], *Czerwony Sztandar* 59, December 2, 1939).

After the Soviet-Finnish war began, the Comintern ordered Communists in the United States, Great Britain, France, Norway and Sweden to organise support for the Soviet Union against the “White Finns” in order to prevent them from receiving military aid (“Przeciw pomocy Białofinom” [Against aid to the White Finns] and “Solidarność pracujących Anglii ze Związkiem Radzieckim” [Solidarity between the working people of England and the Soviet Union], *Czerwony Sztandar* 91, January 10, 1940; “Przeciw polityce biurokratów związkowych” [Against the union bureaucrats’ policy] and “Przeciw kampanii antyradzieckiej” [Against the anti-Soviet campaign], *Czerwony Sztandar* January 16, 1940; “Dziennik norweski demaskuje robotę Anglii i Francji w Skandynawii” [Norwegian newspaper exposes the work of England and France in Scandinavia], *Czerwony Sztandar* 97, January 17, 1940; “Kampania przeciw pomocy dla Białofinów w Stanach Zjednoczonych” [Campaign against aid to the White Finns in the United States], *Czerwony Sztandar* 101, January 22, 1940). The Soviet Union threatened war against Sweden and Norway for supplying weapons to Finland, for their anti-Soviet press campaign, and for transporting foreign volunteers, most of them Swedes, Danes, Norwegians and Americans, to the Finnish army (“W sprawie stosunków radziecko-szwedzkich i radziecko-norweskich” [On Soviet-Swedish and Soviet-Norwegian relations], *Czerwony Sztandar* 95, January 15, 1940; “Jak reakcyoniści szwedzcy werbują ochotników na pomoc Białofinom” [How Swedish reactionaries recruit

volunteers to help the White Finns], *Czerwony Sztandar* 96, January 16, 1940; “Wzrost reakcji w Szwecji” [Increase of reaction in Sweden], *Czerwony Sztandar* 98, January 18, 1940; Żmudzki 1998, pp. 16–20). The Soviet press indignantly reported that the British government had called on the neutral states to form an alliance against Germany, and for Norway and Sweden to send armed aid to Finland (“Anglia grozi państwom neutralnym” [England threatens neutral states], *Czerwony Sztandar* 102, January 25, 1940; “Wystąpienie Churchilla w Izbie Gmin” [Churchill’s speech in the House of Commons], *Czerwony Sztandar* 132, February 29, 1940; “Wystąpienie Chamberlaina” [Chamberlain’s speech], *Czerwony Sztandar* 151, March 22, 1940; see Kissinger 1996, pp. 381–2). Their neutrality hindered the military assistance of the British-French-Polish expeditionary corps (“Prasa niemiecka demaskuje plany angielskich podżegaczy wobec państw neutralnych” [The German press exposes the English instigators’ plans for the neutral countries], *Czerwony Sztandar* 103, January 26, 1940; “Referat o polityce zagranicznej Rządu” [Speech on the Government’s foreign policy], *Czerwony Sztandar* 160, April 1, 1940).

Finland’s war with the Soviet Union ended in March 1940 with the loss of territory on the Gulf of Finland, in the vicinity of Leningrad and in the north, although it remained independent (“Traktat pokojowy między ZSRR a Republiką Fińską” [Peace treaty between the USSR and the Republic of Finland], *Pravda* March 13, 1940; Zawarcie traktatu pokojowego między ZSRR a Finlandią” [Conclusion of the treaty peace between the USSR and Finland], *Czerwony Sztandar* 143, March 14, 1940, Żmudzki 1998, pp. 23–4). In March, at the “request” of the “working people” of the Karelian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union annexed Finnish territories and proclaimed the creation of the Karelian-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic. This heralded the continuation of Soviet expansion in the Finnish direction. A member of the Politburo, Andrei Zhdanov, announced that, in accordance with the principle of self-determination, a new nation had been created thanks to the liberating Red Army. He stressed that in the epoch of imperialism, the Soviet Union “was helping to develop the laws and interests of small states

and nations” (“O przekształceniu Karelskiej Autonomicznej Socjalistycznej Republiki Rad w Związkową Karelsko-Fińską Socjalistyczną Republikę Rad” [On the transformation of the Karelian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic into the Karelo-Finnish Union Soviet Socialist Republic], *Czerwony Sztandar* 160, April 1, 1940).

Apart from territorial matters, Finland’s most important obligation was to avoid joining any state ties with its Scandinavian neighbours. Any voices of public opinion from the Nordic states about the need to form an alliance were countered by Molotov; during his speech to the Supreme Soviet on March 29, 1940, he threatened to break the peace treaty with Finland and start a war with Sweden and Norway (“Referat o polityce zagranicznej rządu” [Speech on the government’s foreign policy], *Czerwony Sztandar* 160, April 1, 1940; Żmudzki 1998, p. 53).

After the outbreak of the German-Soviet war, in the years 1941–4 Finland fought with the Soviet Union to recover its territory, the so-called continuation war. In the truce concluded in September 1944, Finland was prohibited from joining the Scandinavian states (“Umowa rozejmowa między Związkiem Sowieckich Socjalistycznych Republik oraz Zjednoczonym Królestwem Wielkiej Brytanii i Irlandii Północnej z jednej, a z Finlandią z drugiej strony” [Armistice agreement between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the one hand, and with Finland on the other], *Czerwony Sztandar* 30, September 22, 1944; see Vehviläinen 2002, pp. 147–9).

In 1940 Great Britain and France tried to stir up conflict between Germany and the Soviet Union, accused the latter of wanting to conquer Scandinavia and encircle Germany. The German press replied that the Soviet Union had protected Northern Europe from the influence of London and Paris (“Prasa niemiecka o zakusach anglo-francuskich” [The German press on Anglo-French schemings], *Czerwony Sztandar* 96, January 16, 1940). At the same time, it welcomed the Soviet-Finnish peace, emphasising Germany’s neutrality. It reported that the Soviet Union had achieved its demands, although after the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact all Finland found itself in the Soviet sphere of influence (“Prasa niemiecka

o radziecko-fińskim traktacie pokoju” [The German press on the Soviet-Finnish peace treaty], *Czerwony Sztandar* 147, March 18, 1940). Germany occupied Denmark and Norway in April 1940, in order to secure Scandinavia from the invasion of Western allies, while also remaining uncertain of possible Soviet plans towards Finland’s neighbours (“Referat o polityce zagranicznej rządu” [Speech on the Government’s foreign policy], *Czerwony Sztandar* 160, April 1, 1940; see Meltyukhov 2000, pp. 492–4; Żmudzki 1998, p. 37). Soviet propaganda defined the German aggression against the Scandinavian states as a defence against British-French imperialism (“Memorandum rządu niemieckiego” [Memorandum of the German government], *Czerwony Sztandar* 168, April 10, 1940).

In an appeal to the working class of the world on May 1, 1940, the Comintern proclaimed that, triggered by the policies of Great Britain and France in September 1939, the “imperialist war” was spreading to successive “small states” that had been incited to oppose Germany and the Soviet Union. The latter was the sole defender of the working class and the peace-loving peoples of the world. The appeal opposed any “imperialist powers” projects for federation in Europe (“Prasa francuska i włoska o angielsko-francuskich planach podziału Europy” [The French and Italian press on Anglo-French plans for the partition of Europe], *Czerwony Sztandar* 166, April 8, 1940) because:

“under the banner of a federated Europe and a new world organisation, the imperialists are preparing for the partition of the great powers and the annexation of small countries, for the intensification of colonial oppression and for the subjugation of the European nations,”

which would mean

“they will introduce national oppression to an extent that the great empires of the past centuries, which grew on the bones and blood of conquered nations, never knew.” (“1 majowa odezwa Międzynarodówki Komunistycznej” [1st of May appeal from the Communist International], *Czerwony Sztandar* 185, May 1, 1940).

During the May Day holiday, Zhdanov said:

“In the era of imperialist slavery, national and colonial oppression, in an era when the rights of small nations are brutally trampled on, the creation of the 12th republic of the union, the Karelian-Finnish SSR, emphasises with particular force the decisive advantage of the Soviet system, which provides small nations the full possibility of free national development.” (“Dzień międzynarodowej solidarności proletariackiej” [The day of international proletarian solidarity], *Czerwony Sztandar* 185, May 1, 1940).

In mid-June 1940, the Soviet Union annexed the Baltic states (“Wejście wojsk radzieckich do Estonii, Łotwy i Litwy” [The entry of Soviet troops into Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania], *Czerwony Sztandar* 223, June 17, 1940; “Wkroczenie wojsk radzieckich na Litwę, Łotwę i Estonię” [The entry of Soviet troops into Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia], *Czerwony Sztandar* 225, June 20, 1940; compare with Łossowski 2005, pp. 46–7, 51–9), taking advantage of the German attack on Belgium, the Netherlands and France. The “liberators” of the Red Army—according to the Soviet press—were greeted enthusiastically by the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian working masses, whom it had freed from the rule of capitalists and landowners. The press of neutral and anti-Nazi states saw the Soviet actions against the Baltic states as acts of aggression and imperialism, as well as preparations for war with Germany, which caused strong indignation in the Soviet press. (“Antyradzieckie kłamstwa dziennika »Stockholms Tidningen« [Anti-Soviet lies of the *Stockholms Tidningen* newspaper], *Czerwony Sztandar* 226, June 21, 1940; “Komunikat TASS” [TASS communiqué], *Czerwony Sztandar* 228, June 23, 1940). The Soviet pretext for the occupation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia was the alleged murder of Soviet soldiers on their territory, and denial of dissolution of the anti-Soviet Baltic Entente, which had been established in 1934 (“Komunikat TASS o likwidacji konfliktu radziecko-litewskiego” [TASS communiqué on the liquidation of the Soviet-Lithuanian conflict], *Czerwony Sztandar* 222, June 16, 1940; “Komunikat TASS o stosunkach radziecko-łotewskich i radziecko-estońskich” [TASS communiqué on Soviet-

-Latvian and Soviet-Estonian relations], *Czerwony Sztandar* 223, June 17, 1940), after concluding mutual assistance treaties with the Soviet Union in 1939. One of the first decisions of the Communist authorities in the Baltic states, apart from the political ones, involved the dissolution of all agreements concluded within the Baltic Entente (“Estonia rozwiązała traktat porozumienia i współpracy między Estonią, Łotwą i Litwą” [Estonia terminated the treaty of understanding and cooperation between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania], *Czerwony Sztandar* 236, July 3, 1940; “Anulowanie przez Litwę traktatu porozumienia i współpracy między Estonią, Łotwą i Litwą” [Cancellation by Lithuania of the treaty of understanding and cooperation between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania], *Czerwony Sztandar* 237, July 4, 1940). In July 1940, in a popular vote fabricated by the Communists, the newly elected sham parliaments announced the adoption of the Soviet regime in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, and voted unanimous declarations on joining the Soviet Union as union republics (“Deklaracja sejmów łotewskiego o wejściu Łotwy w skład ZSRR” [Declaration by the Latvian Saeima on Latvia’s accession to the USSR] and “Deklaracja sejmów litewskiego o wejściu Litwy w skład ZSRR” [Declaration of the Lithuanian Seimas on Lithuania’s accession to the USSR], *Czerwony Sztandar* 253, July 23, 1940; “Władza radziecka w republikach bałtyckich” [Soviet power in the Baltic republics], *Pravda* July 23, 1940, translated into Polish, and “Deklaracja dumy państwowej Estonii o wejściu Estonii w skład ZSRR” [Declaration of Estonia’s state Duma [*sic*] on Estonia’s entry into the USSR], *Czerwony Sztandar* 254, July 24, 1940).

In June 1940, under the threat of war, the Soviet Union demanded that Romania hand over Bessarabia and the Ukrainian-inhabited North Bukovina as allegedly ancient Russian lands (“Pokojuje załatwienie konfliktu radziecko-rumuńskiego w sprawie Besarabii i północnej części Bukowiny” [Peaceful resolution of the Soviet-Romanian conflict over Bessarabia and the northern part of Bukovina], *Czerwony Sztandar* 233, June 29, 1940; “Niech żyje radziecka Besarabia i radziecka Bukowina” [Long live Soviet Bessarabia and Soviet Bukovina], *Czerwony Sztandar* 234, June 30, 1940; “Besarabia i Północna Bukowina” [Bessarabia and

North Bukovina], *Czerwony Sztandar* 235, July 2, 1940; see Deletant 2006, p. 20; King 2000, pp. 91–5). North Bukovina was incorporated into the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Bessarabia was merged with the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. In line with Leninist-Stalinist national policy, a “united Moldavian nation” was established in the Moldavian Socialist Soviet Republic (“Niech żyje wolny i zjednoczony naród moldawski” [Long live the free and united Moldavian nation], *Czerwony Sztandar* 245, July 13, 1940). The TASS agency labelled the rumours in the British press that the Soviet Union was preparing to create a Communist government in Romania as anti-German provocation (“Komunikat TASS” [TASS communiqué], *Czerwony Sztandar* 238, July 5, 1940).

Czerwony Sztandar accused France and Great Britain of betraying the “small states” in Central Europe since 1938, as they were unable to defend themselves and develop by themselves. On the other hand, the Soviet Union allegedly supported their working classes in 1939–40 and united them with the multinational federal socialist state, giving them—according to Soviet propaganda—freedom, development and security (“Wielki związek 16 republik” [The great union of 16 Republics], *Pravda*, August 8, 1940, translated into Polish in *Czerwony Sztandar* 268, August 9, 1940). Under Stalin, the Soviet Union grew to include 16 republics, because “a just solution to the national question can only come after the overthrow of the power of capital” (“Przyjaźń narodów” [Friendship of nations], *Czerwony Sztandar* 338, October 30, 1940).

On the upcoming anniversary of the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement, on August 1, Molotov said at a session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR that war was spreading through the fault of the capitalist states, and that Soviet-German cooperation “strengthened peace” in Central Europe. Molotov expressed the opinion then that Germany and the Soviet Union were achieving their goals, and so the Soviet side intended to continue their mutual cooperation. He believed that the regaining of the lands taken from the Soviet Union by force in the years 1918–21 could not be called imperialism. From the West and the North, Soviet Union was strengthening the security of its borders. The states and nations “liberated” by the Red Army had voluntarily joined the Soviet Union.

Molotov predicted further Soviet successes in its cooperation with Germany (“Polityka zagraniczna Związku Radzieckiego” [Foreign policy of the Soviet Union], *Czerwony Sztandar* 262, August 2, 1940). The Soviet press praised Stalin’s pro-German policy, because the Soviet Union and Germany had now become the guarantors of the new Central European order (“Polityka zagraniczna Związku Radzieckiego” [Foreign Policy of the great socialist country], *Pravda*, August 3, 1940, translated into Polish in *Czerwony Sztandar* 264, August 4, 1940). The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact “is one of the most important documents in the history of international relations” and “an expression of a profound breakthrough in the development of Soviet-German relations”, a turning point in the history of Europe (“Rocznica paktu radziecko-niemieckiego” [Anniversary of the Soviet-German pact], *Pravda*, August 23, 1940, translation to Polish in *Czerwony Sztandar* 281, August 24, 1940).

The Soviet press announced that the conflict between the great powers marked the end of the “absolute neutrality of small states”. It emphasised that

“small countries that do not have the military power sufficient to defend their neutrality cannot rely on retaining it while profiting from supplies to the belligerent countries.”

According to Soviet propaganda, the actions taken by those powers which, for political, strategic and security reasons, had interfered in the internal affairs of the neighbouring “small states”, including their incorporation into their own territory, were justified (“Walka o skandynawski teren wojny” [The fight for the Scandinavian war zone], *Czerwony Sztandar* 181, April 26, 1940). As of September 1939, Moscow’s policy on the international arena was no different from the imperialism of the capitalist states which it was fighting ideologically. The Soviet state presented its own imperial policy in its propaganda as the liberation of the working masses. It emphasised that “small states” did not enjoy the same rights in international relations as great powers, even in terms of neutrality. In the years 1939–40, the Soviet policy towards countries from Scandinavia to the Balkans pushed them into alliances with Germany (Finland, Slovakia, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria).

In September 1940, Germany, Italy and Japan concluded the Tripartite Pact on the division of their spheres of influence. *Pravda* stated that it was directed against the Anglo-Saxon bloc, emphasising that the Axis states confirmed their continued respect of the agreements concluded with the Soviet Union and its state interests (“Berliński pakt sojuszu trzech państw” [The Berlin pact of the alliance of three states], *Pravda*, September 30, 1940, translated into Polish in *Czerwony Sztandar* 313, October 1, 1940). Germany offered the Soviet Union the participation in the pact. Molotov’s talks in Berlin about the division of spheres of influence failed because the Soviet Union did not agree to the presence of German troops in Finland or their expansion into the Balkans (“Przybycie do Berlina przewodniczącego Rady Komisarzy Ludowych ZSRR i komisarza ludowego spraw zagranicznych towarzysza W.M. Mołotowa” [The chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR and the People’s Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Comrade V.M. Molotov, arrives in Berlin], *Czerwony Sztandar* 348, November 13, 1940; “Wizyta przewodniczącego Rady Komisarzy Ludowych ZSRR W.M. Mołotowa u marszałka Rzeszy Goeringa i zastępcy Hitlera Hessa” [Visit of the chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR, V.M. Molotov, to Reichsmarschall Goering and Hitler’s deputy Hess], *Czerwony Sztandar* 349, November 14, 1940; “Druga rozmowa między Hitlerem a towarzyszem Mołotowem” [Second conversation between Hitler and Comrade Molotov] and “Komunikat o rokowaniach przewodniczącego Rady Komisarzy Ludowych ZSRR i komisarza ludowego spraw zagranicznych towarzysza Mołotowa” [Communiqué on the negotiations conducted by the Chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR and People’s Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Comrade Molotov], *Czerwony Sztandar* 340, November 15, 1940). The Germans wanted to direct the Soviet expansion towards Central Asia and the Persian Gulf, that is, to the territories lying in the British Empire’s sphere of influence. In November 1940, the Soviet Union demanded German consent to establish Soviet bases in Bulgaria and Turkey (in the Hellespont), the withdrawal of German troops from Finland and of support for Japan’s claims to southern Sakhalin, and exclusivity in the area from the Caucasus to the Persian Gulf, which cut off

Germany from the Balkans and the Middle East's oil-bearing areas (Kissinger 1996, pp. 389–93; Gardner 1999, p. 100; Nevezhin 2000, pp. 142–50). After Molotov left Berlin, the Germans decided to go to war with the Soviet Union. They forced Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia (later Croatia) to accede to the Tripartite Pact. The withdrawal of Yugoslavia from the pact caused the German attack in April 1941; the Soviet Union did not help the Yugoslavs, despite their alliance with that country, similarly to the situation with Czechoslovakia in 1938–9. The Soviet Union avoided war with Germans and strictly adhered to its agreements with them until June 1941. In a conversation with Polish General Marian Januszajtis, then a prisoner in Moscow, who anticipated a German attack on the Soviet Union, the Soviet People's Commissar for Internal Affairs Lavrenti Beria argued:

“Why should they attack us? We give them everything they need and ask for. Why should they attack us, if we want to be friends with them, and we have proved to them that we are their friends?” (Żegota-Januszajtis 1993, p. 114).

The Soviet Union wanted to benefit as long as possible from its imperial policy of “peace and neutrality” in its alliance with Germany (Polish Institute and Gen. Sikorski Museum in London [IPMS], Presidium of the Council of Ministers papers, Personal archive of the Prime Minister (1939–45) [PRM], ref. 33, The Hungarian envoy in Madrid on the Soviet policy towards Germany, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dispatch no. 571, Madrid, November 9, 1940, p. 22; PRM 43/8, Note on the conversation between the representative of the Hearst press and the Soviet ambassador Maysky, MID, No. 3333/41/Pr.H., London, June 11, 1941, p. 1).

Following the occupation of Poland, Great Britain had—according to the Soviet propaganda message—been trying to bring the Soviet Union and Germany into conflict, conducting talks under the pretext of a trade agreement (“W sprawie zagadnienia rokowań wstępnych między ZSRS a Anglią o nawiązanie stosunków handlowych” [On the issue of preliminary negotiations between the USSR and England to establish trade relations], *Czerwony Sztandar* 201, May 22, 1940; “TASS communique”, *Czerwony Sztandar* 208,

May 30, 1940; Hułas 1993, p. 82; Kamiński and Tebinka 1999, p. VII; Kastory 2004, p. 192). These were broken off after the Soviet Union's aggression against Finland, but resumed in March 1940 at Britain's initiative. London demanded that Soviet goods should not go to Germany; that the Soviet Union suspend transit to Germany and limit the trade in Soviet raw materials and war supplies ("Komunikat o zawarciu umowy handlowej między ZSRR i Niemcami" [Announcement on the conclusion of a trade agreement between the USSR and Germany], *Czerwony Sztandar* 119, February 14, 1940; "Komunikat o zawarciu umowy gospodarczej między ZSRR i Niemcami" [Communiqué on the conclusion of an economic agreement between the USSR and Germany], *Czerwony Sztandar* 9, January 11, 1941). Moscow rejected these demands as violating Soviet sovereignty. It believed that, as a neutral state, the Soviet Union could trade with any militant party, but in the case of "small states" it saw this as a reason for military intervention. In May 1940, the Soviet Union terminated the talks, but after Churchill stepped into office as a prime minister, ambassador Stanford Cripps resumed them in June 1940. (Hułas 1993, p. 82). Until the outbreak of the German-Soviet war, the talks did not bring any results, because the Soviet Union demanded the recognition of its annexations obtained in alliance with Germany (Gardner 1999, pp. 92–5, 97; Hułas 1993, p. 92). Churchill was willing to accept this Soviet condition, but the Soviet Union refused to break its alliance with Germany ("Komunikat TASS" [TASS communiqué], *Czerwony Sztandar* 138, June 14, 1941; Kastory 2004, p. 221). In a letter to the Polish exile Minister of Foreign Affairs, August Zaleski, of November 27, 1940, the British foreign minister Edward Halifax wrote that his government had proposed ongoing cooperation to Moscow, as well as the creation of a post-war peace order, and the recognition of the Soviet annexations of 1939–1940, because without this condition, Moscow would not want to hold any negotiations (Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich we Wrocławiu [Ossoliński National Institute in Wrocław], hereafter ZNiO, Collection of Kazimierz Sosnkowski's papers, hereafter PKS, ref. 16523/II, Halifax's letter to Zaleski of September 27, 1940, London, pp. 55–6). The Polish prime minister in exile, General Sikorski, opposed the British position (ZNiO, collection

PKS, reference number 16523/II, Halifax's letter to Zaleski, November 27, 1940, London, pp. 55–6; reference number 16509/II, Head of the Civil Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland Lalicki to Sosnkowski, 349/41, May 9, 1941, London, p. 203; reference number 16528/II, Sikorski's conversation with Ambassador Cripps, 1140/15/41, June 18, 1941, London, pp. 77–81; Hulaś 1993, pp. 89–92).

Soviet Propaganda and Policy towards the Central European States after the Outbreak of the German-Soviet War



After the German attack on the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, Molotov said in a radio address that the Soviet government had not breached any agreement it had made with Germany since August 1939, and so “the attack on our country constitutes perfidy unparalleled in the history of civilised nations.” He added that:

“This war was imposed on us not by the German people, not by the German workers, peasants and intelligentsia, whose suffering we well understand, but by the clique of Germany's bloodthirsty fascist rulers who subjugated the French, Czechs, Poles, Serbs, Norwegians, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Greece and other nations.” (“Przemówienie zastępcy przewodniczącego Rady Komisarzy Ludowych ZSRR i komisarza ludowego spraw zagranicznych towarzysza Wiaczesława Michajłowicza Mołotowa wygłoszone przez radio 22 czerwca [1941]” [Speech by Comrade Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov, Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, delivered by radio on June 22, 1941], *Czerwony Sztandar* 147, June 24, 1941).

Occupied Europe welcomed the outbreak of the German-Soviet war with joy (Szarota 1995, p. 172). In the years 1939–41, the Soviet Union had been guided solely by its own state interests in relation to the neighbouring “small states”, and it did not perceive its shared border with Germany as a threat (“Referat o polityce zagranicznej rządu” [Speech on the

government's foreign policy], *Czerwony Sztandar* 160, April 1, 1940; "Nowe zwycięstwa radzieckiej polityki zagranicznej" [New victories for Soviet foreign policy], *Pravda*, January 11, 1941, translated into Polish in *Czerwony Sztandar* 10, January 12, 1941; Marples 2006, p. 162; Heller 2002, p. 731). This is evidenced by the fact that the Soviet leaders from Stalin (after 1941) to Gorbachev denied the existence of a secret protocol to the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement (as they denied their liability for the Katyn massacre). It was only after the German attack that Soviet propaganda argued that that the non-aggression pact was only a postponement of the inevitable war with Germany (Bazyłow and Wiczorkiewicz 2005, p. 445). Throughout the interwar period, the Soviet Union armed itself intensively because it considered every capitalist state as its enemy. This was reflected in Soviet military propaganda ("Mowa towarzysza K.I. Woroszyłowa" [Speech by Comrade K[liment] I. Voroshilov], *Czerwony Sztandar* 42, November 12, 1939; "Armia wyzwolenia Narodów" [The Army of the Liberation of Nations], *Czerwony Sztandar* 124, February 20, 1940; "Ćwiczenia taktyczne w kijowskim specjalnym okręgu wojskowym" [Tactical exercises in the Kiev special military district], *Czerwony Sztandar* 309, September 26, 1940; "Potężna ostoja socjalizmu" [The mighty bulwark of socialism], *Czerwony Sztandar* 45, February 23, 1941; "Rozkaz komisarza ludowego obrony Związku SRR nr 191" [Order No. 191 from the People's Commissar of Defence], *Czerwony Sztandar* 102, May 1, 1941). However, during the alliance with the Third Reich, the Soviet Union strictly fulfilled its obligations, taking great care to maintain its independence when determining its later directions of expansion.

In 1939–41, Soviet propaganda defended the Soviet and German "peace policy", and called Great Britain, France and the United States warmongers. The Soviet Union pursued its strategic goals by exploiting the conflict of the capitalist states in military, economic, propaganda and ideological terms. At a session of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union on October 31, 1939, Molotov defined the goals of Soviet policy which went beyond the agreements with Germany: the basins of the Baltic and Black Seas, Central Europe, the Balkans and Scandinavia ("O polityce zagranicznej Związku Radzieckiego towarzyszy W.M. Mołotow" [Comrade

The front page of *Pravda* issue of January 11, 1941 (no. 11/8419), with the op-ed entitled *Новые победы советской внешней политики* ("New victories for Soviet foreign policy"). Source: N.A. Nekrasov library webpage

V.M. Molotov on the Soviet Union's foreign policy], *Czerwony Sztandar* 37, November 4, 1939). In these areas of Europe, the Soviet Union planned to continue the Stalinist "friendship of nations", in order to defend "the small countries against imperialist plunderers" with its power. It consistently aimed at the introduction of Soviet "peace and good neighbourly relations" in Northern, Central and South-Eastern Europe ("Stalinowska przyjaźń narodów" [The Stalinist friendship of nations], *Czerwony Sztandar* 136, March 5, 1940). In the anti-Nazi coalition, the Soviet Union consistently demanded recognition of the annexations made in 1939–40, even though it considered the agreements with the Third Reich invalid and signed the Atlantic Charter (ZNiO, collection PKS, reference number 16531/II, Sosnkowski's note to President Raczkiewicz on the Soviet plans for annexations in Central Europe, London, February 3, 1943, pp. 95–7; Haynes 2010, pp. 224–9; Halas 1996, pp. 164–6; Raczyński 1988, pp. 51, Grudziński 1980, pp. 81, 90–4). In justifying the right to the Soviet annexations in 1939–1940, the Soviet government invoked the right to self-determination in its talks with the United States and Great Britain after the outbreak of the German-Soviet war, which was allegedly implemented by popular votes under the Soviet occupation.

After the German aggression in June 1941, the Soviet authorities began to promote the "brotherhood of Slavs" in the fight against Germany. After June 1941, Soviet propaganda began to argue that the August 1939 pact had only served to postpone the inevitable war with Germany, and allegedly gave the Soviet Union time to prepare for this conflict. It presented the Red Army's annexation of the neighbouring countries' territories in 1939–40 as a strategic defence against Germany. In fact, in the years 1938–9 the Soviet government failed to defend its Slavic ally Czechoslovakia against Germany, or its Slavic ally Yugoslavia in 1941. In September 1939, it attacked Poland together with Germany, and until 1941 it exterminated Slavic Poles in the same way as Germany was doing. In 1939–41, *Pravda* praised the German socio-economic policy in the General Government, and drew no attention to the German crimes against the Poles and Jews ("General-Gubernatorstwo" [The General Government], *Pravda*, January 25, 1940, translated into Polish in *Czerwony*

Sztandar 22, January 28, 1941). After 1917, the Bolsheviks were not guided by any kind of pan-Slavic foreign policy, nor were they during the alliance with Germany in 1939–41. At that time, Nazism was only a political, not a moral issue for the Soviet press. On the contrary, it condemned the “exploitation of the working class” in the countries fighting against Germany and the Catholic and Orthodox Churches as “bourgeois nationalist” for supporting resistance against the German occupiers (“Prawda o polityce narodowosciowej” [The truth about the nationalities policy], *Czerwony Sztandar* 4, January 5, 1941).

It was not until the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941 that Soviet propaganda began to proclaim that Germany, the “eternal enemy of the Slavdom,” had been deceitfully seizing the Slavic states from 1938, and invaded the Soviet Union in 1941. It called on the peoples of occupied Central Europe and the Balkans to “Slavic unity” alongside the Soviet Union in the fight against Germany and their allies. All the Slavic nations were to join the banners of the fighting Red Army. Polish, Czechoslovak and Yugoslav troops marched alongside Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian soldiers (of the Red Army). Their battle slogan was “the unity of the Slavs and

The op-ed in *Pravda* (issue of January 25, 1941, no. 24/8432) entitled “Генерал-Губернаторство” (“The General Governorate”) praising in terms of Soviet propaganda the German rule in occupied Poland. Source: N.A. Nekrasov library webpage

ГЕНЕРАЛ-ГУБЕРНАТОРСТВО

Ежедневная программа работы «Левый» в начале 1941 года...

Генерал-губернаторство во главе с Гитлером, которое выдвинуло идею, была издана в Германии...

Предоставление свободных экономических зон...

Прогрессивность и его задачи...

Генерал-губернаторство в том смысле, как оно понимается в Германии...

Генерал-губернаторство во главе с Гитлером, которое выдвинуло идею, была издана в Германии...

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Генерал-губернаторство в том смысле, как оно понимается в Германии...

Генерал-губернаторство во главе с Гитлером, которое выдвинуло идею, была издана в Германии...

Генерал-губернаторство во главе с Гитлером, которое выдвинуло идею, была издана в Германии...

Широкий план использования рабочей силы...

Свободные территории и свободная зона...

Генерал-губернаторство во главе с Гитлером, которое выдвинуло идею, была издана в Германии...

the fight against the common enemy—Hitlerism.” Hundreds of Slavic partisans fought against the occupiers, which means that “in this holy war, everything grows and turns into the hard unity of the Slavs, and everything that separates our nations disappears” (see AAN, NSZ, ref. no 207/8, “Down with the traitors of the Slavic nations”, *Partyzant* March 20, 1944, p. 37 [the journal of the Communist Central Partisan Movement in Western Ukraine]). Naturally, Moscow considered the armed units of the countries of occupied Central Europe established on the territory of the Soviet Union, as well as those partisan units which were subordinate to the Communist parties, to be legal.

During his greatest defeats in 1941, Stalin demanded the opening of a second front in Europe and an increase in military supplies from the Western powers. He blamed them for the Red Army’s defeats because they treated the European front as being of secondary importance (“Stalin o »drugim froncie« i o przyczynach sukcesów niemieckich” [Stalin on the ‘second front’ and the reasons for the German successes], *Naród i Wojsko* No. 2, December 1941, p. 11 [the journal of the Polish nationalist underground organisation of the Polish Organisation, the so-called “Szaniec” Group]). In 1942–3, Soviet propaganda demanded that the Western powers open a second front in Europe. It took advantage of the occupied nations’ widespread dissatisfaction at the extended Allied preparations for the invasion of Europe (Szarota 1995, p. 161). The Soviet authorities did not consider the Western allies’ landing in Italy in July 1943 as a second front.

On the occasion of the 24th anniversary of the October Revolution, on November 6, 1941, Stalin mentioned the territories of the Soviet Union which were oppressed by the German occupiers: Ukraine, Moldova, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Belarus (AAN, collection NSZ, reference number 207/8, “24th anniversary of the great Socialist October Revolution”, Moscow, November 6, 1941, p. 13). He emphasised the destruction of the Slavic nations by the Germans: the Russians, Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Bulgarians, Ukrainians, Belarusians, Serbs and Croats. He foretold the defeat of Nazi Germany, because Nazism was bound to lose against the Soviet forces of progress and the ideas of October [1917]. The Red Army would bring freedom to the

The front page of *Pravda* issue of November 29, 1941 (no. 331/8739) entitled *Никогда славяне не будут рабами!* (“The Slavs will never be the slaves!”). Source: N.A. Nekrasov library webpage

occupied nations of Europe. At the same time, he called on them to fight under the leadership of the “anti-fascist forces of progress.” The Comintern activated Communist parties in all the countries of occupied Europe (Szarota 1995, p. 174); these praised the Red Army and called for armed resistance. In fact, the Soviet Union ordered the Communist parties to create partisan units in occupied Europe which fought against both the occupiers and the underground resistance movements led by the exiled governments in London. At the same time, in Moscow, the Soviet authorities established Communist centres of power for those countries that were to be liberated by the Red Army. In neutral and unoccupied countries, especially Great Britain and the United States, Communist parties conducted pro-Soviet propaganda and fought against their political opponents (Gontarczyk 2006; Dziewanowski 1959).

The “Red Army of Liberation” was in fact an instrument of the Soviet Communist Party to bring Bolshevik revolution beyond the borders of the Soviet Union (“Armia Czerwona – Armia Rewolucji Światowej” [The Red Army—The Army of the Global Revolution], *Naród i Wojsko* 6, June 1942, pp. 2–3). In 1939–41, the Red Army attacked neighbouring countries under the slogans of “class struggle” and bringing “proletarian aid” to the oppressed working and peasant masses. From June 1941, Red Army fought against Germany under pan-Slavic, patriotic and national slogans, which Soviet propaganda had previously referred to as “bourgeois nationalism” (IPMS, PRM, ref. 43/9, “Narody słowiańskie nigdy nie będą niewolnikami” [Slavic nations will never be slaves], *Pravda*, November 29, 1941, Ministry of Information and Documentation, L.dz.7345/41/Sow./EW/WW, London, December 2, 1941, p. 22; Eberhardt 2014, p. 71). As it turned out later, after “liberation” it destroyed “bourgeois nationalism”, restoring the Communist regime.

In 1941 in Moscow, the Pan-Slavic Committee was established, which called for “Slavic brotherhood” and the fight against the “common enemy of the Slavdom” (“Marszałek Tito w Komitecie Wszechsłowiańskim w Moskwie” [Marshal Tito in the Pan-Slavic Committee in Moscow], *Wolna Polska* 15, April 19, 1945 [the journal of the Union of Polish Patriots in the USSR]). At the Committee’s annual meetings,



representatives of individual national sections spoke praising Stalin, the Red Army and the unification of the Slavs under the Soviet leadership. All the Slavic nations were called upon to join the armed struggle and form national committees led by Communists (see AAN, collection NSZ, reference number 207/8, “Za jedność Słowian” [For the unity of the Slavs], *Partyzant*, March 20, 1944 [article on the rally of Slavic military formations in Moscow on February 23, 1944, on the occasion of the 26th anniversary of the establishment of the Red Army], p. 38; the collection *Wszechsłowiański Komitet w Wielkiej Brytanii* [the Pan-Slavic Committee in Great Britain] [hereafter WKWB], reference number 220/21, the Pan-Slavic Congress in Moscow, August 11–12, 1941, pp. 1–10; the 2nd Pan-Slavic Congress in Moscow, April 4, 1942, pp. 11–19; the collection *Komenda Główna Armia Krajowa* [hereafter AK], Division VI, Information and Propaganda office, sign. 203/VII-62, the 3rd Congress of Slavic Nations in Moscow, May 9, 1943, p. 128; the Government Delegation of the Republic of Poland for the homeland [hereafter DRRPK], Department of Information and Press [hereafter DIP], ref. 202/III-31, “Metody i cele sowieckiej okupacji w Polsce, Idea Wszechsłowiańska idea pomocniczą” [The methods and goals of the Soviet occupation in Poland, the Pan-Slavic Idea as an auxiliary idea], *Dokumenty Chwili* 3, 1945, pp. 145–6; reference number 202/III-73, Rally of the Czechoslovak section of the Pan-Slavic Committee, Radio Moscow, service 362/42, March 15, 1944, p. 6; Fertacz 1991, pp. 65–74). The Communists in occupied Poland promoted the slogans of the Soviet Pan-Slavic Committee (“Kongres Narodów Słowiańskich” [The Congress of Slavic Nations], *Głos Warszawy*, May 11, 1943 [the journal of the Polish Workers’ Party]). Pan-Slavic committees were established in 1942 in the United States and Great Britain among pro-Communist emigrants of Slavic origin (AAN, collection WKWB, ref. no. 220/21, Pan-Slavic Committees in the United States and Great Britain, p. 21; Łukasiewicz 2010, pp. 70–71). *Československo* journal published in London, wrote that the pro-Soviet Polish Slavic Committee in London was the Polish emigrants’ most democratic institution (Centalne Archiwum Wojskowe, the Central Military Archives in Warsaw [hereafter CAW], collection Sztab Naczelnego Wodza, Division VI, reference no. II.52.398, Polish affairs. Voices of the Czechoslovak press.

Československo, issues of February 26 and March 11, 1944, p. 1). The Slavic idea served the Soviet Union as a counter to the federal projects of the governments of the occupied states residing in London, in order to eliminate the influence of Western powers from Central, Northern Europe and the Balkans.

Victory over Germany, according to Soviet propaganda, could only lead to “the political and military unity of the Slavs” headed by “the most powerful Slavic state”, that was the Soviet Union. During the war, it had united the “quarrelling Slavic states”, which allegedly brought about the organised anti-German resistance in occupied Europe, and later, freedom to the Slavic states and nations (AAN, collection DRRPK, DIP, reference number 202/III-73, Andrzej Witos’s radio programme, Radio Moscow service 362/42, March 15, 1944, p. 5; “Kwestia słowiańska i jej znaczenie” [The Slavic question and its meaning], *Życie Słowiańskie* 3, 1946, pp. 97–101 [the journal of the Slavic Committee [*Komitet Słowiański*] in Poland]). The “unity of the Slavs”, headed by the Soviet Union, was to be preserved after the end of World War II in order to maintain a lasting peace and security for them, and for Europe. The Polish government’s plans to form federations in cooperation with the émigré governments in London and the Western powers, which Soviet propaganda fiercely opposed, were based on similar geopolitical assumptions, but were mainly aimed at avoiding Soviet imperialism and the domination of the Soviet Union in post-war Europe.

The Polish Government’s Plan for the State Union of Poland and Czechoslovakia



Contrary to Soviet and German propaganda, both the Poles fighting in their occupied homeland (the Polish Underground State, *Polskie Państwo Podziemne*) (Korboński 2008) and those in exile were fighting for independence and for a Central Europe free from the influence of both totalitarian powers. From September 1939, the Polish government resided in France, and then in Great Britain, with the task of organising the armed forces and rebuilding the independent Polish state. Polish foreign policy was based on an alliance with Great

Britain, close cooperation with the United States, and after June 22, 1941, as well as in an agreement with the Soviet Union (ZNiO, collection PKS, reference number 16536/II, November 10, 1940, London, Sosnkowski's letter to Sikorski), pp. 39–40; reference number 16522/II/vol. 1, “Foreign policy theses adopted by the Political Committee of Ministers [RP] on July 30, 1940”, pp. 59–61; reference number 16523/II, Minutes of the Cabinet Council meeting [RP] of August 17, 1940, pp. 21–30; reference number 16531/II, Report on Sikorski's travels to the Middle East and Russia, January 13, 1942, No. 23/3/42, pp. 45–55; see Dymarski 1999, pp. 70–1; Duraczyński 1993). Occupied Poland received the German-Soviet war with hope, counting on their mutual destruction (Szarota 1995, pp. 170–1).

In order to strengthen Central Europe in the face of Germany and the Soviet Union, the government of General Władysław Sikorski came up with a plan for federalisation based on a Polish-Czechoslovak union, which would in the first place also be open to Lithuania, Hungary and Romania (AAN, collection DRRPK, Presidential Bureau [BP], ref. No. 202/I-33, “The Problem of Central Europe and the Question of Peace”, the Publishing House of the Society for the Research of Central Europe [*Wydawnictwo Towarzystwa Badań Zagadnień Środkowej Europy*], pp. 312–14; Stroński 1951, p. 7; Wandycz 1956, p. 75; Raczyński 1960, p. 60; Kisielewski 1991; Pułaski 1997, pp. 153–69; Duraczyński 1997, p. 141). This plan for the reorganisation of Central Europe was to be Poland's contribution to the peace order in Europe, devised in close cooperation with the Western powers. The Polish government strongly opposed the hegemony of great powers in Europe and its division into spheres of influence (Ponczek 1999, p. 127). The small Central European states did not want to be the clients of superpowers (Łaptos 2012, pp. 24–6). Gen. Sikorski did not limit his ideas to the Polish-Czechoslovak union; such regional federations were to be one of the pillars of the post-war security system in Europe, in order to counterbalance the strength of the superpowers on the international stage (Kolendo 2015, p. 288; Grygajtis 2007, pp. 61–2). In addition to the Central European federation, the Polish government assumed the creation of Scandinavian, Balkan and Latin federations. The Polish government held

regular talks in London with the governments in exile of Czechoslovakia, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Norway, Greece, Yugoslavia and the Committee of the Free French (Lane and Wolański 2009, p. 59; Zgórniak 1995, pp. 112–22; Raczyński 1960, pp. 130, 154) between 1940 and 1944. Their governments established the Committee on Foreign Affairs, which met at the residence of the Polish Prime Minister. A Technical Committee developed plans for the post-war organisation of Europe (Witkowski 2000, pp. 71–74; Pomian 1990, pp. 122, 130–2). Poland sought to establish a “Committee of Continental Allies”. Britain was in favour of their cooperation at the conference level, albeit without creating any permanent structures. The solidarity-based cooperation of the occupied countries’ governments in exile was intended to strengthen their position towards the Allied powers in the creation of a post-war order. However, all of these Polish plans were consistently opposed by Soviet diplomacy in London (Łaptos 2012, pp. 49–50; Kamiński 2005, pp. 151–8). In January 1943, General Sikorski heard from the British Foreign Minister, Anthony Eden, that after each meeting of the occupied countries, he received Soviet protest notes (ZNiO, collection PKS, 16531/II, Note from a conversation between Sikorski and Raczyński with Minister Eden and Undersecretary of State Strang, London, January 22, 1943, p. 92). As the initiator and host of these Allied meetings, Sikorski saw himself as a spokesman for the occupied states represented in London towards the superpowers, a view which, however, they did not share.

The governments in exile of Czechoslovakia and Poland announced a declaration of their post-war union on November 11, 1940 in London (ZNiO, collection PKS, reference number 16536/II, Minutes of the meeting of the Council of Ministers, October 31, 1940, pp. 19–20; IPMS, PRM ref. 19, Polish-Czechoslovak declaration of November 11, 1940, pp. 166–7). This declaration was intended to serve as a geopolitical alternative for the German allies in Central Europe (Kamiński 2005, pp. 59–61; Sielezin 2004, p. 137; Duraczyński 1997, p. 130). After the Soviet Union joined the war in June 1941, the negotiations became increasingly difficult, even though the Polish government signed the Sikorski-Maysky pact in London on July 30, 1941 (Duraczyński 1990,

pp. 173–4). Sikorski wanted equal relations with the Soviet Union without then interfering in Poland's internal affairs, and agreed to maintain the two countries' common border of August 1939 (ZNiO, collection PKS, reference number 16531/II, Report on General Sikorski's journey to the Middle East and Russia, January 13, 1942, no. 23/3/42, pp. 45–55). In the pact with Poland, the Soviet Union did not recognise the Riga border because its intent was to preserve the Soviet borders from 1939–1940. At the same time, Soviet diplomacy in London influenced the Czechoslovak government-in-exile to avoid becoming associated with Poland (Kamiński 2005, pp. 45–6, 109–14; Duraczyński 1997, pp. 130–3). In the period of preparations for the Polish-Soviet talks in Great Britain, the Soviet ambassador Ivan Maysky informed Eden about the USSR's organisation of the Slavic nations against Germany. Sikorski said to the British minister that the Soviet Union was recreating the “red” pan-Slavism, to which the Central European federation would be in competition. This would be a real barrier to imperialism in Germany and the Soviet Union. On the other hand, the Slavic bloc would be a “bulwark or extension of Russia” (ZNiO, collection PKS, 16528/II, Conversation between General Sikorski and Minister Eden in the presence of J. Retinger, London, July 4, 1941, p. 100; Duraczyński 1997, pp. 132–3). In December 1941, General Sikorski said on Moscow radio that Hitler's tyranny had united the peoples of Europe. In a democratic Europe free from dictatorships and imperialisms, political, border, economic and national problems would be more effectively resolved by cooperating regional federations. The new Europe would be based on solidarity and a federation of nations, not on nationalism (IPMS, PRM 43/1, Sikorski's speech in Moscow on December 4, 1941, 3124/III/41, p. 58). In view of the Polish vision of a just European order after Moscow's victorious battle against Germany in December 1941, the Soviet authorities put forward the concept of the unity of the Slavic states against Germany. In a conversation with Minister Eden in Moscow in December 1941, Stalin stated that the issues of any possible regional federations (Scandinavian, Central European and Balkan) would be considered from the point of view of the security of the Soviet Union. This meant that the Soviet authorities intended to decide on the geopolitical shape of Europe on its western borders (Duraczyński 1997,

pp. 134–5). The Czechoslovak president in exile, Edvard Beneš, identified with this Soviet position (Kubelková 2017; Kamiński 2009). However the Polish prime ministers, General Sikorski and later Stanisław Mikołajczyk, did not agree with this.

In January 1942, Poland and Czechoslovakia signed a post-war confederation treaty (Przybysz 1992, pp. 85–87). The pro-Russian character and opportunism of President Beneš induced the Polish government to finalise the agreement during the war (Sielezin 2004, pp. 147–9; Němeček 2004, pp. 348–9; Kamiński 2005, pp. 74–6, 95–6, 142–7). In order to persuade the Czechoslovak side to join it, Poland agreed to a confederation of both states, instead of a federation, and to the approval of the two states' union by post-war parliaments and by popular vote. The treaty generally defined the obligations of both governments in matters of common foreign, military and economic policy, which Poland was seeking to institutionalise. Czechoslovakia agreed to economic integration (Łaptos 2012, p. 41; Duraczyński 1997, p. 135). In February 1942, a representative of the Soviet government expressed negative opinions about the Polish-Czechoslovak confederation towards the Czechoslovak ambassador to Moscow Zdenek Fierlinger (ZNiO, collection PKS, reference number 16531/II, Conversation between Sikorski & Eden, London, June 8, 1942, pp. 71–4; Kamiński 2005, pp. 148–51; Skodlarski 1988, pp. 28; Bartoszewicz 1995, pp. 139–2). After a conversation in December 1941 with the Soviet ambassador to Washington, Maxim Litvinov, the head of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Edward Raczyński wrote that “our policy of federating Central Europe has encountered and will continue to face Soviet resistance” (Raczyński 1988, p. 52). In an interview for the English Sunday Times published in January, Raczyński had announced that with the Western powers's help, Poland, enlarged at the expense of Germany as far as the border with Riga in the East, would integrate the area between the Baltic, Black and Adriatic Seas in order to preserve the independence of the local states. In connection with Czechoslovakia, and enlarged by Lithuania, Romania and Hungary, this pact would be a guarantor of security, including for the Soviet Union. The Balkan area was intended to integrate Yugoslavia and Greece. The protest by Aleksandr Bogomolov, the Soviet ambassador to the governments of the occupied countries in London, was

considered by the Polish government to be interference in its internal affairs (Raczyński 1989, pp. 87–8).

In January 1942, an agreement on close political and military cooperation between Yugoslavia and Greece was signed in London; this was intended to constitute the foundation of the post-war Balkan federation (with the participation of Bulgaria and Albania). Turkey was also favourably inclined towards this idea (Cetnarowicz 2004, pp. 259–71). On the other hand, the Soviet periodical *War and the Working Class* criticised the plans to federalise the Balkan “bourgeois governments in exile” because they had not consulted the Soviet side, which had a strong interest in the security of its south-eastern borders (“Russia and the Balkan federation”, *Dziennik Polski* [the unofficial journal of the Polish government-in-exile in London] 983, September 22, 1943; Żurek 2018, p. 224). In fact, as in the case of the Polish-Czechoslovak confederation (cf. AAN, collection DRRPK, DIP, ref. 202/III-69, “The USSR in view of the concept of a federation of the Polish government”, Broadcasts from Radio Station Kościuszko from the Soviet Union to Poland, December 6–8, 1942, KB/r. No. 18, December 24, 1942, p. 2; the collection Związek Patriotów Polskich [ZPP], reference no. 216/4, Alfred Lampe, “Polska polityka zagraniczna” [Polish foreign policy], November 1943, pp. 14–17; Alfred Lampe, “Powojenne państwo polskie nie może być wrogiem ZSRR” [The post-war Polish state cannot be hostile to the Soviet Union], September 12, 1943, pp. 61–3; “My a Czesi” [The Czechs and us], *Rada Narodowa* 11, July 4, 1944, pp. 4–5 [the journal of the Polish Communist quasi-parliamentary body *Krajowa Rada Narodowa*], and the Yugoslav-Greek state union (see AAN, collection DRRPK, BP, reference number 202/I-27/vol. 2, “USSR’s consent to the Balkan federation for Josip-Broz Tito”; DRXXI/129, dispatch from “Orkan” to the Delegation, 1944, p. 214; DRRPK, the Department of Foreign Affairs [DSZ], reference number 202/XIV-6, “The situation in Yugoslavia”, DI/29b, 1943, pp. 10–12; “The political and military situation of Yugoslavia”, DI, 1943, pp. 26–31; “The situation in Yugoslavia”, DI/17b, 1943, p. 34; “The formation of the new government of Yugoslavia”, DI/62b, December 9, 1943, p. 37; “The situation in Yugoslavia”, 362/5-Z, December 14, 1943, p. 44; “Yugoslavia at the moment”, DI/52, November 27, 1943, pp. 57–58), the Soviet Union was concerned with which governments would

exercise power in those states, and with which superpower they would be associated after the war (“The anti-federation voice of *Izvestia*”, *Völkischer Beobachter*, November 20, 1943 [the German Nazi party’s journal], translated into Polish in AAN, collection DRRPK, DSZ, reference number 202/XIV-4, pp. 83–4). Both of the state unions were to cooperate with each other closely, and in the long run, unite the area between Germany, Italy and the Soviet Union (Żurek 2018, p. 223).

During the International Labour Organisation conference in New York in January 1942, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Greece signed a joint declaration establishing the Central and East European Planning Board, which would prepare a plan for the post-war reconstruction of the region and socio-economic reforms, and define the forms of mutual cooperation (Łukasiewicz 2010, pp. 53–60). In 1943, the Board convened the Institute on Educational Reconstruction in Central and Eastern Europe, together with American research centres. The Council promoted the reconstruction of Central Europe in the spirit of federalism and democracy. Polish and European federalists in the United States hoped that the American government would support plans to rebuild Europe modelled on American federalism (Lane and Wolański 2009, pp. 22–9). The Soviet embassy in Washington was instructed to oppose all concepts of a Central European federation devised on US territory (AAN, collection DRRPK, DSZ, reference number 202/XIV-5, “Report No. 2 on Czech relations in exile”, DI/31b, September 10, 1943, p. 43; Żurek 2018, pp. 224; Łukasiewicz 2010, pp. 66–72).

During the war, the journal *Mladé Československo* (published in London by Czechoslovak Communists and financed by the Soviet Union) denied the Czechoslovak government-in-exile the right to enter into permanent international obligations. Soviet propaganda used this argument in the case of any agreements concluded by “small states” on post-war state unions in the anti-Nazi coalition. *Mladé Československo* stated that the settlement of peace, freedom and security could not be limited to selected countries or regions. The magazine described these regional federations as “the infamous props of Versailles” (Hitler had spoken of “the lumber room of small countries”). According to such argumentation, only Great Britain and the Soviet Union could decide about a lasting

peace order in Europe. One could get the impression that the Czechoslovak periodical had somehow foreshadowed the British-Soviet agreement concluded in May 1942. It argued that the proposed confederation was a means for ensuring Poland's domination in the area between Germany and the Soviet Union, and would draw Czechoslovakia into the war against the Soviet Union. It was ironic stating that "(...) we felt dizzy, seeing what European lands the white eagle of the Polish lords was supposed to rule". Allegedly only the establishment of a European system of collective security in agreement with the Soviet Union guaranteed a lasting peace. Its foundations were to be the agreements concluded between the Soviet Union and Great Britain, Czechoslovakia and Poland after the outbreak of the German-Soviet war in 1941. *Mladé Československo* stated that the Sikorski-Stalin declaration of December 1941 ruled out any particular regional concepts in Europe in which the Soviet Union did not participate. It was not in the interest of Czechoslovakia or Europe to create particular blocs of states such as the Yugoslav-Greek pact of January 1942. The Czechoslovak Communist periodical assumed that the first condition of a European security system would be the Soviet Union's participation in it; the second would be the dominance in these countries of political systems similar to that of the Soviets; and the third, that the émigré governments would not have the decisive vote in the matter (AAN, collection Klub Federalny Środkowo-Europejski [Central European Federal Club] [hereafter KFŚE], 220/Vol. 1, "Confederation with the Polish government or the security of nations", *Mladé Československo* 1942, No. 3, pp. 5–7). The London journal of German Communists from Czechoslovakia, *Young Czechoslovakia*, stated that "(...) the freedom of nations in our country can best be secured by a close link to the Soviet line." Confederation with Poland would be then a source of post-war conflicts in Europe (AAN, collection KFŚE, 220/vol. 1, "The Polish-Czechoslovak Confederation", *Young Czechoslovakia* 1942, No. 3, p. 7). The use of foreign organs of Communist parties was a constant practice of Soviet propaganda in international politics.

The Allied treaty of May 1942 with Great Britain was recognised by the Soviet authorities as a record of a division of their influence spheres in Europe. They did not agree to the

provision on the creation of regional federations in Europe after the war. It was only because of American pressure that the British government did not recognize in this treaty the Soviet partitions of 1939–40 (“Prasa sowiecka o traktacie z Anglią 26 V i porozumieniu z USA z 11 VI” [The Soviet press on the treaty with England on May 26 and the agreement with the USA of June 11], report on the *Izvestia* of June 12 and *Pravda* of June 13, *Dziennik Polski* 596, June 19, 1942; Grygajtis 2007, pp. 93–4; Kastory 2004, pp. 243–5; Gardner 1999, pp. 147–8, 155–60).

In January 1943 the left-wing *Tribune*, associated with the British Labour Party, wrote about the Polish plan for a Central European federation with the Baltic, Danube and Balkan states that it was—according to the Polish émigré press—a Poland’s “extremely narrow, nationalist approach” to the issue of post-war security and called for its rejection by the three great powers because “it conceals the idea that a Central European bloc made up of all kinds of small countries, supported by England and America, will cut the Soviet Union off from Europe.” According to *Tribune*, this would mean “a divided and suspicious Europe” and “the seed of a different, larger and even more grim war in the next 10–15 years.” *Tribune* pointed out that cooperation between London and Moscow guaranteed peace and security for Europe (“Sprawy polskie” [Polish matters], *Dziennik Polski* 780, January 25, 1943).

The Polish-language Soviet radio station Kościuszko stated in its broadcasts that without the participation of the Soviet Union, the Central European bloc would be too militarily weak to face Germany; this would undermine the security of the Soviet western borders. The radio station referred to the opinion of President Beneš that a regional union of Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union was necessary for the security of Europe (AAN, collection Armia Krajowe, hereafter AK, Division VI, Information and Propaganda office, reference number 203/VII-62, Soviet radio station Kościuszko from Moscow to Poland, report for December 1942–January 1943, pp. 95–6).

In the second half of 1942, the Czechoslovak authorities offered Poland a twenty-year alliance against Germany, but its conclusion would depend on the resolution of Polish-Soviet disputes (Kamiński 2009, pp. 12–14; Žáček 2001, p. 62; Němeček 2000, pp. 119–34; Kisielewski 1991, p. 204). After the

Пролетарии всех стран, соединяйтесь!

Восковая Коммунистическая Партия (больш.)

ПРАВДА

Орган Центрального Комитета и ЦК ВКП(б).

№ 181 (835) Суббота, 13 июня 1942 г. ЦЕНА 15 КОП.

КРЕПНУШАЯ МОЩЬ АНТИГИТЛЕРОВСКОЙ КОАЛИЦИИ

Война разгромившая гитлеровский режим и победившая фашизм, разгромила и разгромит германского империалиста и фашистского агрессора. В борьбе против фашизма и гитлеровского режима в Европе и Азии, в борьбе против фашистского агрессора и гитлеровского империалиста участвуют все народы Европы и Азии, все народы Америки и Австралии. Это участие всех стран и народов в борьбе против фашизма и гитлеровского империалиста является основой и основой победы над фашизмом и гитлеровским империализмом. В борьбе против фашизма и гитлеровского империализма участвуют все народы Европы и Азии, все народы Америки и Австралии. Это участие всех стран и народов в борьбе против фашизма и гитлеровского империализма является основой и основой победы над фашизмом и гитлеровским империализмом.

ПОСЛАНИЕ Г. Ф. Д. РУЗВЕЛЬТА И В. МОЛОТОВА

Вчера, 11 июня, в 1942 году, в Вашингтоне, округ Колумбия, Соединенные Штаты Америки, и в Москве, Советский Союз, мы, Г. Франклин Делано Рузвельт, Президент Соединенных Штатов Америки, и В. Молотов, Народный комиссар иностранных дел Советского Союза, выступили с совместным посланием к народам Европы и Азии, к народам Америки и Австралии, к народам всех стран, участвующим в борьбе против фашизма и гитлеровского империализма.

ОТВЕТ И. В. СТАЛИНА Г. Ф. Д. РУЗВЕЛЬТУ

Совместное послание Г. Франклина Делано Рузвельта, Президента Соединенных Штатов Америки, и В. Молотова, Народного комиссара иностранных дел Советского Союза, от 11 июня 1942 года, получено в Москве 12 июня 1942 года. В ответ на это послание я, Иосиф Виссарионович Сталин, выступил с ответным посланием к народам Европы и Азии, к народам Америки и Австралии, к народам всех стран, участвующим в борьбе против фашизма и гитлеровского империализма.



Иосиф Виссарионович Сталин и Франклин Делано Рузвельт во время их встречи в Москве 12 июня 1942 года.

ПОДПИСАНИЕ СОГЛАШЕНИЯ МЕЖДУ СОВЕТСКИМ СОЮЗОМ И СОЕДИНЕННЫМИ ШТАТАМИ АМЕРИКИ О ПРИНЦИПАХ, ПРИМЕНИМЫХ К ВЗАИМНОЙ ПОМОЩИ В ВЕДЕНИИ ВОЙНЫ ПРОТИВ АГРЕССИИ

11-го июня 1942 года в Вашингтоне состоялось подписание Соглашения между Правительством Союза Советских Социалистических Республик и Соединенных Штатов Америки о принципах, применимых к взаимной помощи в ведении войны против агрессии. В этом Соглашении участвовали: В. Молотов, Народный комиссар иностранных дел Советского Союза, и Г. Рузвельт, Президент Соединенных Штатов Америки.

СОГЛАШЕНИЕ МЕЖДУ ПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВАМИ СОЮЗА СОВЕТСКИХ СОЦИАЛИСТИЧЕСКИХ РЕСПУБЛИК И СОЕДИНЕННЫХ ШТАТОВ АМЕРИКИ О ПРИНЦИПАХ, ПРИМЕНИМЫХ К ВЗАИМНОЙ ПОМОЩИ В ВЕДЕНИИ ВОЙНЫ ПРОТИВ АГРЕССИИ

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Телеграммы Народного Комиссара Иностранных Дел В. М. Молотова Г. У. Черчиллю и г. А. Идену

Вашингтон, 11 июня 1942 года. Народный комиссар иностранных дел Советского Союза В. Молотов направил телеграммы Президенту Соединенных Штатов Америки Г. Франклину Делано Рузвельту, Президенту Великобритании У. Черчиллю и г. А. Идену. В телеграммах В. Молотов выразил уверенность в том, что соглашение между СССР и США о принципах взаимной помощи в ведении войны против агрессии является важным шагом на пути к окончательной победе над фашизмом и гитлеровским империализмом.

Телеграммы Народного Комиссара Иностранных Дел В. М. Молотова г. Ф. Д. Рузвельту и г. К. Хэллу

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Иосиф Виссарионович Сталин и Франклин Делано Рузвельт во время их встречи в Москве 12 июня 1942 года.

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Soviet declaration of January 1943 recognising the inhabitants of the eastern territories of Poland occupied in September 1939 as Soviet citizens, the Czechoslovak government decided at a meeting on February 2, to end talks with Poland about the confederation (Kamiński 2009, pp. 14–23, 272). After the Soviet Union's diplomatic relations with Poland were severed in April 1943, Czechoslovakia announced that it would not resume the talks until the Polish-Soviet disputes had been resolved. In December 1943, Beneš concluded a treaty of friendship and mutual assistance with the Soviet Union (Kamiński 2009, p. 78; Smetana 2007, p. 131). Poland was invited to accede to this agreement. The British Communist *Daily Worker* newspaper, which had campaigned for the Curzon Line from 1941 and fought against the Polish federal concept, published an article by the Czechoslovak Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hubert Ripka, about the pact with the Soviet Union, in which he emphasised that it complemented the British-Soviet pact. It assumed

“an end to paper structures that create various federations and middle zones, which today's friends or enemies can change with a stroke of a pen at the conference or club table into some kind of *cordon sanitaire* in the future” (“Układ czechosłowacko-sowiecki” [The Czechoslovak-Soviet pact], *Dziennik Polski* 1054, December 14, 1943).

Despite these disrespectful words, the Polish government continued to work on a Central European federation without Czechoslovakia. Until the death of General Sikorski, Poland continued to conduct intensive talks on this matter with the Yugoslav government in exile (Żurek 2018, pp. 226–8). After the tragic death of Prime Minister General Sikorski in July 1943, at the mourning session of the National Council, Deputy Prime Minister Mikołajczyk recalled that Gen. Sikorski had been the first in the anti-Nazi coalition to speak of regional federations as the basis of peace, security and cooperation in Europe (“Spełnimy testament generała” [We will fulfil the General's last will and testament], *Dziennik Polski* 918, July 8, 1943). As prime minister, he had stressed the need to maintain the unity of the United Nations, Poland's alliances with Great Britain and France, and its close relations with the United

The front page of *Pravda* issue of June 13, 1942 (no. 164/8935) covering the Soviet-American alliance treaty of June 11, 1942. Source: N.A. Nekrasov library webpage

States; and continue work on the implementation of the Central European Union as a development of bilateral agreements between Poland and Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Greece, and its good-neighbourly relations with the Soviet Union (IPMS, PRM ref. 115, “Prime Minister Mikołajczyk’s speech at a press conference on July 16, 1943”, p. 33). In a policy statement on July 27, 1943 at the National Council of the Republic of Poland, Mikołajczyk spoke of the groundlessness accusation that Poland was trying to create a so-called *cordon sanitaire* on the western border of the Soviet Union. He declared, like General Sikorski (Kolendo 2015, p. 290), that Poland wanted good-neighbourly relations with the Soviet Union, but without any interference in its internal affairs, and the maintenance of the Roga Treaty border of 1921. He recalled that Poland had suffered huge losses during the war, and so he considered the Soviet demands as unfair and immoral (“Exposé premiera S. Mikołajczyka w Radzie Narodowej 27 VII 1943” [Policy speech by Prime Minister S. Mikołajczyk at the National Council on July 27, 1943], *Dziennik Polski* 935, August 9, 1943). In his speech of January 6, 1944 (two days after the Red Army had entered Poland), Mikołajczyk emphasised that he saw the Soviet Union as an ally of a sovereign Poland remaining within its borders of August 1939. He believed that the December 1943 Czechoslovak-Soviet agreement on mutual aid could be accepted by Poland, but with the Polish-British alliance and the creation of a “wider European organisation to maintain peace” (the regional federations were to be part of a united Europe). He noted that the Czechoslovak-Soviet pact from Moscow had been concluded in opposition to the British government, with which the plans for the federation of Central European states had been agreed in 1942. This pact made the Soviet Union the sole guarantor of peace in Central Europe, which was unacceptable to Poland (“Oczekujemy uszanowania praw Rzeczypospolitej i jej obywateli. Oświadczenie Rządu RP” [We expect the rights of the Republic and its citizens to be respected. Statement by the Government of the Republic of Poland], *Dziennik Polski i Dziennik Żołnierza* 1, January 6, 1944). Ultimately, the Polish government did not accede to the Beneš-Stalin pact, which was modelled on the Soviet agreements of 1939–40 with neighbouring countries, and which allegedly guaranteed the parties independence and sovereignty.

The front page of *Dziennik Polski i Dziennik Żołnierza* issue of January 6, 1944 (no. 1) with the text of the Polish government-in-exile declaration “Oczekujemy uszanowania praw Rzeczypospolitej i jej obywateli” (“We expect the rights of the Republic and its citizens to be respected”). Source: Polona.pl

Wiennik polski i Dziennik Żołnierski

CENA 1 PENNY

Rok I, Numer 4, Londyn, czwartek, 6 stycznia, 1944 r.

Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper.

Benesz o wspólnej granicy z Rosją

Dr. Benesz odwiedził w Kairze po wojnie Rosję i Czechosłowację...
Przewiduje Benesz odwiedzenie również, że zarwie Stalin, jak i sam sam zgodzi co do tego, że wojny Nijemcy muszą być uniesioną z Szetler.

Gdy armia czerwona wkrocza na ziemie polskie

Oczekujemy uszanowania praw Rzplitej i jej obywateli

Oświadczenie Rządu R.P.

WAŻNA NARADA U PREZYDENTA R.P.

PAT. 4 stycznia wieczorem Prezydent R.P. odbył naradę z prezesem Rady Ministrów...
W naradzie wzięli również udział: Minister Obrony Narodowej Gen. Dym. M. Kukiel i Minister Spraw Zagranicznych T. Izmer.

W zwycięskiej walce z niemiecką najazdową wojska sowieckie...
Narząd polski pierwszy stawiał czoła nawałi niemieckiej i od czterech przeszło lat, pomimo bezprzydatnych ofiar i cierpień, zmagają się broniąc i przetrwać.

nie wydarzają z pośród siebie...
Polskie siły zbrojne dwukrotnie odświadczały powa Królem, bez przerwy walczą w powietrzu.

na morzu i lądzie u boku naszych...
Ma zatem Narząd polski prawo oczekiwać pełnej sprawiedliwości i zadośćuczynienia w chwili wyzwolenia z pod okupacji wroga.

Ambasador Polski u p. Hull'a

Amerykański Sekretarz Stanu, p. Cordell Hull odbył we wtorek, 4 stycznia rozmowę z ambasadorem R.P. Cichanowskim...
Na konferencji prasowej p. Hull oświadczył, że nie może powiedzieć stwierdził to, co już uprzednio powiedział, siedi on zagadnienie stosunków polsko-amerykańskich z wielką uwagą.

PRASA BRITYJSKA STWIERDZA

Wznowienie stosunków polsko-rosyjskich

jest kwestią najbardziej pilną

Dzienniki brytyjskie poświęcają dużo miejsca zagadnieniom...
Korespondent dyplomatyczny "Daily Telegraph" stwierdza, że "Prawda" kładzie największą pilną, aby kwestia została przy-

W oświadczeniu rządu polskiego w dziale...
Londyński korespondent: "Manchester Guardian" podkreśla, że tożsamość w interesach polsko-rosyjskich jest rzadkością w Londynie.

W oświadczeniu rządu polskiego w dziale...
Londyński korespondent: "Manchester Guardian" podkreśla, że tożsamość w interesach polsko-rosyjskich jest rzadkością w Londynie.

"Prawda" moskiewska oskarża Willkie'go o "dwałicowizm"

P. Wendell Willkie został gwałtownie zaatakowany...
"Prawda" oskarża dalej Willkie'go, że usiłuje jako tytu w swojej wodzie i oświadcza, że nie powinien on wtrącać się do sprawy polskiej.

"Prawda" oskarża dalej Willkie'go...
Wobec tego, że Willkie'go oskarża, że usiłuje jako tytu w swojej wodzie i oświadcza, że nie powinien on wtrącać się do sprawy polskiej.

W obronie praw Polski

Nu, dolekich plaskach podniebnych...
Wobec tego, że Willkie'go oskarża, że usiłuje jako tytu w swojej wodzie i oświadcza, że nie powinien on wtrącać się do sprawy polskiej.

wyjątkową nieuczynność historii i zagadnień politycznych...
Wobec tego, że Willkie'go oskarża, że usiłuje jako tytu w swojej wodzie i oświadcza, że nie powinien on wtrącać się do sprawy polskiej.

VIRTUTI MILITARI Z RAK NAZCELNEGO WODZA...
Wobec tego, że Willkie'go oskarża, że usiłuje jako tytu w swojej wodzie i oświadcza, że nie powinien on wtrącać się do sprawy polskiej.

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PO UTRAĆE BIAŁEJ CERKWI

Niemcy opuścili "połowę" Berdyczowa

Berlin: "Sytuacja na wschodzie krytyczna"

Największym sukcesem, świeżo odniesionym przez Rosjan na odcinku kijowskim jest całkowita likwidacja jednego "jądra" niemieckiego — Białej Cerkwi i częściowo — drugiego: Berdyczowa.

Sukcesy te powinny wpłynąć na przyspieszenie ofensywy Watutina w kierunku południowym, zagrożającej oskrzydleniem całej grupy armii Mansteina.

Ostatnie komunikaty rosyjskie nie wspominają o walkach w pobliżu granicy Polski.

Nastroje w Berlinie — w związku z sukcesami sowieckimi — przypominają nastroje po Stalingradzie.

O zdobyciu przez Rosjan Białej Cerkwi doniósł we wtorek wieczorem specjalny rozkaz Białego. W rękach niemieckich pozostała tylko część Białej Cerkwi.

Wobec tego, że Willkie'go oskarża, że usiłuje jako tytu w swojej wodzie i oświadcza, że nie powinien on wtrącać się do sprawy polskiej.

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The Soviet Order in Central Europe

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Poland's independence (November 11, 1943), the Polish section of the Pan-Slavic Committee (who were mainly activists of the Union of Polish Patriots in Moscow) wrote in a dispatch to the 1st Corps of the Polish Armed Forces in the Soviet Union, which was subordinate to the Red Army, that "the friendship with the fraternal nations of the Soviet Union and the ties of brotherhood with Czechoslovakia had become even stronger in your struggle" (AAN, collection DRRPK, DIP, reference number 202/III-41, dispatch from the 6th plenum of the Pan-Slavic Committee to the 1st Corps of the Polish Armed Forces in the USSR, "RAK"'s report to "L", CIN/XX-720, December 10, 1943, p. 14). The idea of "Slavic unity" was to replace the "imperial" Jagiellonian idea in "democratic" Poland, an idea which would have extended the Polish borders to the Ukrainian, Belarusian, Russian and Lithuanian territories ("Skończmy z wrogami narodu polskiego" [Let's finish the enemies of the Polish nation], *Czerwony Sztandar* 26, February 6, 1945). By implementing the "Jagiellonian idea" in 1919–20, Poland had allegedly lost its "ancient lands" on the Oder and the Baltic Sea. Consequently, in the interwar period, it had created a weak multinational state at the expense of the lands of the Eastern Slavs, the Belarusians and Ukrainians. The historiosophical thesis of Soviet propaganda was: Poland could exist and develop only within the camp of the Slavic states, led by the Soviet Union, but it had to return their lands to the eastern nations, and take the "Piast lands"—which had once been Polish—away from Germany.

The "Slavic troops" fighting the fascist invaders behind the Soviet propaganda were Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian soldiers of the Red Army together with units from Poland (under command of Gen. Zygmunt Berling), Czechoslovakia (under command of Col. Ludvik Svoboda) and Yugoslavia (under command of Col. Marko Mesić), formed in the Soviet Union and subordinated to the command of the Red Army (AAN, collection NSZ, reference number 207/8, "Za jedność Słowian" [For Slavic unity], *Partyzant*, March 20, 1944, p. 38). In 1944, Soviet propaganda proclaimed that the great Slavic

Red Army had held back the Germans who had deceitfully attacked the Slavic nations, and enabled the formation of Slavic formations and organised guerrillas in the occupied countries. After the Germans were forced out of the Soviet borders, the Red Army and its Slavic allies had brought liberation to the Slavic peoples of Central Europe and the Balkans. The Soviet periodical *Partyzant* called on Poles, Czechs, Slovaks and the Ukrainians [Ruthenians] of Transcarpathia to launch armed uprisings, and for the Serbs, Slovenes and Croats standing alongside the Germans and the “reactionary” government of King Peter (in exile in Cairo) to join the Communist Yugoslav liberation army of Josip Broz Tito. The Bulgarian people, too, could only wash away their shameful betrayal of the Slavs by fighting Germany under the leadership of the Bulgarian Communist Party.

“Bourgeois nationalists”, “reactionaries” and “fascists” were excluded by the Soviet Union from the family of Slavic nations. For it, the “traitors to the Slavic cause” included the troops of General Dragoliub Mihailović, subordinate to the reactionary royal authorities of Yugoslavia in exile; the Czech and Slovak “traitors” headed by presidents Emil Hácha (of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia) and Jozef Tiso (of the First Slovak Republic); Bulgaria, for its alliance with Germany; the supporters of the Polish government-in-exile in London; and the Ukrainian nationalists (supporters of Stepan Bandera, Andriy Melnyk and Taras Borovets’ ‘Bulba’), who had murdered Poles, Jews, Ukrainian Communists and Soviet partisans on the orders of the Germans. These helpers of Hitler were to be destroyed by the Red Army and its Slavic allies (AAN, collection NSZ, reference number 207/8, “Precz ze zdrajcami słowiańskich narodów” [Down with the traitors of the Slavic nations], *Partyzant*, March 20, 1944, p. 37; Appeal to the citizens of the Lviv District, Military Council of the Patriotic Movement Organisation, March 9, 1944, p. 40; “Ukraińsko-niemieccy nacjonaliści w służbie faszystowskich Niemiec” [Ukrainian-German nationalists in the service of fascist Germany], *Czerwony Sztandar* 9, January 13, 1945).

The Polish government in exile could not return to Poland after the war because, according to Soviet propaganda, it represented a continuation of the pre-war anti-Soviet policies of Col. Józef Beck and Marshal Edward Śmigły-Rydz.

In addition, the “pro-Hitlerite generals” Kazimierz Sosnkowski (Supreme Commander 1943–4) and Władysław Anders (commander of the 2nd Polish Corps in Italy) allegedly did not want to fight the Germans (“Pięta kolumna wśród Polaków za granicą” [The fifth column among Poles abroad], *Czerwony Sztandar* 23, September 12, 1944; “Pięta kolumna” [The fifth column], *Czerwony Sztandar* 25, September 15, 1944; “Pięta kolumna wśród Polaków za granicą” [The fifth column among Poles abroad], *Czerwony Sztandar* 32, September 24, 1944). The Soviet press disseminated the rumours that the military underground organisations in occupied Poland, under the Polish government, the Home Army and the National Armed Forces, had collaborated with the Germans, and that the Polish Underground State was a collection of “reactionary-fascist groups” (“Pięta kolumna” [The fifth column], *Czerwony Sztandar* 20, September 6, 1944; “Pięta kolumna” [The fifth column], *Czerwony Sztandar* 21, September 9, 1944; “Walka i budownictwo w Polsce” [Struggle and construction in Poland], *Czerwony Sztandar* 96, December 24, 1944; “Armia Krajowa współdziała z Niemcami” [The Home Army collaborates with the Germans], *Czerwony Sztandar* 11, January 16, 1945; “Polscy nacjonaliści – wrogowie demokracji” [Polish nationalists, enemies of democracy], *Czerwony Sztandar* 26, February 6, 1945; “Polska na drodze odrodzenia” [Poland on the path of rebirth], *Izvestia*, February 11, 1945, translated into Polish in *Czerwony Sztandar* 34, February 17, 1945; “Konferencja prasowa w ambasadzie polskiej w Moskwie” [Press conference at the Polish embassy in Moscow], *Czerwony Sztandar*, April 29, 1945; “Zbrodnie faszystów z NSZ” [The crimes of the NSZ fascists], *Wolna Polska* 22, June 14, 1945). Soviet propaganda falsely proclaimed that only Communist organisations had fought against Germany in occupied Poland: the Polish Workers’ Party and the People’s Army [*Armia Ludowa*] (formerly the People’s Guard). With their help, the Red Army and General Berling’s army supposedly liberated Poland (AAN, collection NSZ, reference number 207/8, “Za jedność Słowian” [For Slavic unity], *Partyzant*, March 20, 1944, p. 38).

As the Red Army approached the Soviet-German border of 1941, its advances raised serious concerns in the countries of Northern, Central and South-Eastern Europe, as (apart

Stefan Jędrzychowski’s op-ed entitled “Pięta kolumna wśród Polaków zagranicą” published in *Czerwony Sztandar* issue of September 12, 1944 (no. 23). Source: Ossoliński National Institute webpage, digitized resources of Vasyl Stefanyk National Scientific Library of Ukraine in Lviv

Hitlera - bandy ukraińsko-nacjonalistów

Wojna z Niemcami

Wojny z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju. W wojnie z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju. W wojnie z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju.

Starzyca, w rejonie Jaworowskim, który obecnie liczy ponad 50 hektarów ziemi, czy zgodzi się on dobrowolnie oddać tę ziemię bezsilnym chłopom?

Lub OUN-ski przywódca Fed Kowal — to bracia wiejski, proś, naci — który lubi lekkie chleby. Za Niemców służył on w polskiej armii i pomagał im mordować i grabić chłopów. Obecnie zorganizował bandę i walczy przeciwko władzy radzieckiej. Rozumie, że przyszedł na niego koniec i oto carokępie niemieckich, zmusza ich do walki o Jedzaczowko-Kowalewe im. Szwajcarscy zabiorcy niemieckich, jak wynika z oświadczenia u. czerwiec jego bandy. Wzięty za w. Włochowie — Kowal bezpodzielnie po przyłączeniu Czerwonej Armii przyszedł do bandy i oficerem niemieckim i powiedział: „to kamu być”. Myśleli, że podlegali w walce o „szczęśliwą Ukrainę”.

Wojna z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju. W wojnie z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju. W wojnie z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju.

Tacy są wszyscy ci przywódcy, którzy, to oni chcą przy pomocy Niemców wrócić swoje bogactwo, chcą znów złożyć jarzmo na szyję chłopów bezrolnego i małego.

Wojna z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju. W wojnie z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju. W wojnie z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju.

Obecnie organizują swoje bandy, nie zapominają się jak zaciury w jamy. Ich zwano „schrony”, formują swoją politykę, która nazywa się „slużba bezpieczeństwa”, zmieniają swe nazwiska, Dłaczego czynią to wszystko?

Wojna z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju. W wojnie z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju. W wojnie z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju.

Czynią to dlatego, gdyż chcą zbliznąć się swoją szubą. Przed tą szubą nie ukryli ich żadne schrony, nie obroni ich służba bezpieczeństwa, ludność, która została osz. Właśnie przez nich, szarych usunął się z band, oświadczył swoją gotowość do służby w Czerwonej Armii, aby pod jej sztandarami bojowymi zdobył swą.

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Mówią o tym wyraźnie byli członkowie bandy Fedka Kowala z rejonu Dóbreckiego, którzy w lesie 665 osób porzucili bandę i zgłosili się do wojska, prosząc o odwołanie ich na front, lub dając im możliwość porachowania się z „SB”, tymi „kwalifikacyjnymi” katanami narodu ukraińskiego.

Wojna z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju. W wojnie z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju. W wojnie z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju.

Na odrazę Prasydium Rady Najwyższej USSR, Rady Komisarzy Ludowych USSR i CK KP(b)U zareagował wszyscy pracujący naszego obwodu i przystępując aktywnie do sprawy ogólno-narodowej — sprawy wzmocnienia praw radzieckich, zwiększenia pomocy dla drogiej Ojczyzny.

Wojna z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju. W wojnie z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju. W wojnie z Niemcami. To prawie wszyscy, nie w całym kraju, ale w całym kraju.

Wielu z nich zostało już nagrodzonych za odwagę, niektóre medałami i orderami Związku Radzieckiego, wśród nich bracia Lotoczy z rejonu Pomocznickiego, Michał Demczuk ze wsi Lany, Józef Kupcański i wielu innych.

Armia Krajowa współdziała z Niemcami

LUBLIN, 10 stycznia (TASS). Gazeta „Głos Ludu” w korespondencji zasyntetyzowanej „Gestapowiec w bandzie „Armii Krajowej” pisze o zupełnie jawnej współpracy członków „Armii Krajowej” z niemieckimi gestapowcami.

„Nie zdążył jeszcze przebrzmieć na posiedzeniach Krajowej Rady Narodowej surowo sformułowane naręczenia państwa, wyrażających do niej, jedynącej do zbiorami „Armii Krajowej” — pisze gazeta, — a już dostała nas świeży wieść, dowodząca, do jakiego stopnia szluzę i sprawiedliwa były te słowa. W czasie święt w mi Oryszyc, Krasnystawskiego powiatu napadli bandyci z „Armii Krajowej” na gestapowców, którzy zaszli do siebie w walce z członkami milicji obywatelskiej podporucznika Władysława Niziela i kaprala Sobona. Kapral Sobon został zabity, Nizielowi udało się uciec, po zabiciu jednego z bandytów. Przybyli na miejsce bandyckiego napadu komendant Krasnystawskiej milicji porucznik Radeck pozał w zabitym członku „Armii Krajowej”, znanego mu z czasów okupacji niemieckiej współpracownika gestapo, i badania, przeprowadzone wśród ludności miejscowej oraz przeszukanie schwytych członków tej bandy potwierdziły, że zabity w rzeczywistości był Niemcem, który od chwili wyzwolenia rejonu Krasnystawskiego znalazł dla siebie schronienie w szajce „Armii Krajowej”. Kat gestapowiecki znalazł przytułek w oficera propagandy „Armii Krajowej”, niejako Ludwika Suroki, u którego enieszał i razem z szajką bandytów z „Armii Krajowej” brał udział w napadzie na polskich i radzieckich żołnierzy”. Komentarz ten potwierza fakt łączenia się polskiej szajki z cjeńcami narodu polskiego — Niemcami, gazeta „Głos Ludu” pisze: „W sprawie zasługują na uwagę dwie rzeczy: pierwszym faktem jest okoliczność, że hitlerowski kat gestapowiec znalazł sobie schronienie u członka „Armii Krajowej”, na czole której stoi pan Arzienski, który okropnie dużo mówi o swojej walce z Hitlerem. Drugim faktem jest pełna świadomość członków „Armii Krajowej”, komu udzielał schronienia.”

Wiedział on, że w ich bandzie znajduje się niemiecki kat, którego ręce czerwone są od polskiej krwi, który pali polskie wieś, mordował polskie dzieci, gwolił polskie więźniaki.

„Stalo się to dlatego, — pisze w dalszym ciągu gazeta — ponieważ między Trzecią Rzeszą, Rzeszą Hitlera i Himmlera, a bandyjską kliką Raczkiewiczów, Sosnowskiego i Arciszewskiego istniała współpraca wcielona. Jednocześnie ich zwiastująca niemięśd do antyhitlerowskiej koalicji”. „Po tamtej stronie Wisły, — pisze gazeta — na okupowanej części województwa bandy z „Armii Krajowej” i „Narodowe Siły Zbrojne”, wzdrywający na siebie czołowi mundury razem z gestapo przefladują i mordują polskich patriotów. Tutaj nie wylotli oni czarnych powłók obawiając się szubicy, na której zawisłi esesowcy z Majdanka. Ica gestapowieckie katy znajdują u członków „Armii Krajowej” gościnnie przyjeżdżające schronienie i pomocników w zabiłaniu polskich żołnierzy. I tu i tam, — pisze gazeta — reakcja nosi duchową liberję hitlerowskiej Trzeciej Rzeszy, i tu i tam podwładni Arciszewskiego są sprzymierzeńcami okupantów, sprzedawczykami i wrogów narodu”. Gazeta wyraża polską naród do oczyszczenia kraju od bandytów „Armii Krajowej”, „Narodowych Sił Zbrojnych”, oraz ich pomocników.

The op-ed in Czerwony Sztandar issue of January 16, 1945 (no. 11) entitled "Armia Krajowa współdziała z Niemcami" ("The Home Army collaborates with the Germans"). Source: Ossoliński National Institute webpage, digitized resources of Vasył Stefanyk National Scientific Library of Ukraine in Lviv

from Czechoslovakia) they saw Soviet liberation as posing a threat of further occupation. In February 1943 *Pravda* accused the press of the allied and neutral countries—which had written about the imperialism of the Soviet Union, due to Soviet demands to restore the border in June 1941—of succumbing to German propaganda. The newspaper claimed that the population of the areas occupied in 1939–40 by the Red Army had voted to join the Soviet Union (“Odpowiedź Moskwy na akcje straszenia Europy bolszewizmem” [Moscow’s response to the actions scaring Europe with Bolshevism], *Dziennik Polski* 796, February 12, 1943). The Red Army had once again “brought freedom” to the Soviet republics—Karelia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova—and to the Polish population (ZNiO, collection PKS, reference number 16522/II/vol. 2, communiqué from *Strażnica* 5, 1943, p. 271).

In the message of Soviet propaganda, the USSR intended to make the liberated and united Slavic nations one of the pillars of peace in Europe, next to its alliance with Great Britain and the United States (AAN, collection DRRPK, Department of Internal Affairs, reference number 202/II-16, “Wiece żołnierzy słowiańskich w Moskwie” [A rally of Slavic soldiers in Moscow], *Новини Дня* 9, March 16, 1944, p. 65 [a journal of the Soviet partisan movement in the western oblasts of Ukraine]). Poland would take “a dignified place in the free family of the Slavic nations” (“Ogniwa jednego łańcucha” [Links of one chain], *Czerwony Sztandar* 4, January 6, 1945). By rejecting “eastern imperialism” (specifically of the Second Polish Republic, deprived of half of its pre-war territory, occupied by the Soviet Union in 1939), the new Poland would be “democratic” and friendly to Slavic nations, and would create an “anti-German dam” with Moscow and Prague (“W rocznicę grunwaldzką” [On the Grunwald {battle} anniversary], *Wolna Polska* 26, July 16, 1944).

The US government saw the post-war peace in terms of the domination of the Allied powers (Gardner 1999, pp. 185–7, 205; Kissinger 1996, pp. 431–2). The Soviet Union was to be one of the pillars of post-war world security. Roosevelt did not see a greater role for the regional federations in this respect (Grzeloński 2013, pp. 266–9; Łaptos 2012, pp. 52–5; Łukasiewicz 2010, pp. 60–6). After the outbreak of World

War II, the British and American press were sympathetic to the plans for integration among the small states in Europe. The Western political elites believed that their collapses and mutual disputes had facilitated the outbreak of the war (Łaptos 2012, pp. 18–21; Grudziński 1980, p. 53). The Polish federal idea served Roosevelt and Churchill as a tool to paralyse German influence (Grudziński 1980, pp. 126–30). In 1939–43, the State Department analysed the federal projects from the political, economic and military perspectives. In July 1943, work on them was interrupted by Secretary of State Cordell Hull, under the influence of Soviet opposition to federations in Europe, and the victories of the Red Army at Stalingrad and Kursk in 1943. Roosevelt decided to base the post-war order on an international organisation dominated by the superpowers (Grzeloński 2013, pp. 266–9, 296; Łukasiewicz 2010, pp. 30–1, 42–5; Smetana 2007, pp. 128–9; Grudziński 1980, pp. 132–135). In October 1943, at a conference of the Big Three foreign ministers in Moscow, the Soviet government opposed the creation of post-war regional federations in Europe. At the Big Three conference in Tehran at the turn of December 1943, it was decided to base the post-war order on the allied powers. After the Tehran conference, the British government ceased to support the regional federations planned by the émigré governments in London (Kastory 2004, pp. 258, 296–8; Grygajtis 2007, pp. 63–6).

During the conferences in Moscow (October 19–30) and Tehran (November 30 and December 1, 1943), some of the pro-Polish press in Britain and America recalled the concept of a federation of smaller states in Europe as a potential pillar of the post-war order. Moscow's declaration of Austria's independence was interpreted by the British *Economist* and *New Statesman* as expressing Soviet consent to the Danube federation, although their assumptions were quickly denied by *Izvestia*; the Russian newspaper emphasised that the Soviet Union perceived the regional federations in Central and Southern Europe designed on its western borders as “*cordons sanitaires*” of the Western powers, which resembled their “barbed wire” plans from 1919–20. *Izvestia* argued that the governments in exile, and even those that had been established immediately after the war, could not decide about regional

federations. First, the states which had been under German occupation had to regain independence, rebuild themselves from the devastation of war, and then stabilise politically. Only after a longer period of internal political and economic stabilisation could these nations decide on the serious problem of state unions. *Izvestia* also stated that satellites of Germany could not participate immediately in these post-war federations on equal terms. Thus, it outlined a political plan for how the Soviet Union would act in the countries it had liberated (“Izwiadnia o federacjach. Polemika z pismami angielskimi” [*Izvestia* on federations. A polemic against the English journals], *Dziennik Polski* 1034, November 20, 1943). The Soviet argument was built in antithesis to the Polish concept of federations, which wanted to break with the previous division of the Central European states by the great powers.

At the same time, the Soviet authorities launched anti-federalist propaganda in allied and neutral countries during both conferences. The American leftist *New Republic* wrote that the Soviet Union did not agree to any federations in Europe, especially of the anti-Soviet and bourgeois governments of Central Europe (IPMS, PRM, reference number 104/3, “Review of the American and European press on the Polish-Soviet dispute”, October 18, 1943, pp. 14–15). The British Communist *Daily Worker* wrote in its October 14, issue that after losing the war with Germany in 1939, Poland had put forward a reactionary plan for a federation of states neighbouring the Soviet Union as a buffer or cordon in alliance with the Western powers. The Polish government was allegedly seeking to create an anti-Soviet ‘Great Poland’, at the expense of the Soviet Union and Germany, in order to protect Europe from the alleged threat of Bolshevism. These ‘fascist plans’ were stopped by the Soviet Union at a conference in Moscow (IPMS, PRM, reference number 104/3, “Review of the European and American press on Polish-Soviet relations”, November 25, 1943, p. 21). The Swedish Communist *Ny Dag* stated that the Soviet Union was bleeding out in the war with Germany, and the reactionary Polish government was planning an anti-Soviet federation by preparing a new war (IPMS, PRM reference number 104/3, “Review of the European and American press on Polish-Soviet relations”, November 25, 1943, p. 31).

Responding to *Izvestia*, the British *Observer* reminded the Soviet Union that Great Britain and France did not support unions in Central Europe after World War I because of the hostility of Soviet Russia. The experiences of the interwar period, and especially of 1938–41, showed that the “Balkanisation of Central Europe” throw off the balance in Europe. The *Observer* believed that the stabilisation and security of Central Europe would be achieved by linking historically and economically related areas. Uniting Europe into regional federations would save Great Britain and the continent from a decline in their importance on the international stage. According to the British periodical, London and Washington should convince the Soviet Union that this geopolitical solution would not lead to its isolation in Europe (“Federacje są potrzebne” [Federations are needed], *Dziennik Polski* 1035, November 22, 1943). The American *New Leader* saw Soviet opposition to regional federations as a desire to get rid of an obstacle to its post-war conquest of Europe. It noted that such federations were supported by socialist, popular and Christian-Democratic parties among the political emigrants from Central Europe, and not by the reactionaries or nationalists (“Dlaczego nie chcą federacji?” [Why don’t they want federations?], *Dziennik Polski* 1044, December 2, 1943). The American Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles, who favoured the federal policy of General Sikorski and his cooperation with the Soviet Union (Łukasiewicz 2010, pp. 42–43, 67; Grudziński 1980, p. 92), but who was dismissed from his post in September 1943, wrote in the *Daily Herald* that the course of war and peace should be decided by the great powers, but that the post-war order in Europe could also be jointly decided by the occupied countries. He was in favour of the appointment by the allied powers during the war of a United Nations Council, in which the allied states would express their views on the post-war order based on a world organisation of peace and security (“Krytyka Sumner Welles’a” [Criticism of Sumner Welles], *Dziennik Polski* 1044, December 2, 1943). However, for the American government, the unity of the great powers was more important in the fight against the Axis states, and in the post-war peace and security system (IPMS, PRM ref. 112/2, Speech by Secretary Hull at a joint session of Congress on November 18, 1943, London,

November 24, 1943, pp. 306–312; see Grzeloński 2013, pp. 242, 266–9; Haynes 2010, pp. 230–3). American public opinion was in favour of the present balance of power and the great powers' spheres of influence (“Głos pism amerykańskich” [The voice of American press], *Dziennik Polski* 1020, November 4, 1943; “4 opinie o pokoju” [4 opinions on peace], *Dziennik Polski* 1033, November 19, 1943; “Prasa nowojorska o granicach Polski” [The New York press about the borders of Poland], *Dziennik Polski* 1043, December 1, 1943; “Myśli o plebiscycie?” [Thoughts about a plebiscite?], *Dziennik Polski* 1044, December 2, 1943; see Grudziński 1980, pp. 88–92).

The *cordon sanitaire* was a Soviet propaganda slogan that the Western press repeated indiscriminately. Poland had been unable to isolate the Soviet Union in the interwar period or during World War II. Such a plan had been counteracted by the development of Communist parties and Soviet agents in Europe and around the world, as well as the international range of Soviet propaganda. In the anti-Nazi coalition, Poland had fought with the Soviet Union over its sovereignty, Polish citizens in the Soviet Union, and its own territorial integrity. Polish efforts to influence British and American diplomatic, economic, information, propaganda and scientific circles did not bring a positive result (“Legenda o cordon sanitaire” [The legend of the ‘cordon sanitaire’], *Dziennik Polski i Dziennik Żołnierza* 12, January 15, 1944; Raczyński 1960, pp. 242, 245; see Andrew, Mitrokhin 2001; Golitsyn 1984). The Western left-wing and Communist press used the rhetoric of Soviet anti-Polish propaganda, calling Poland a reactionary, feudal state which had been ruled by landlords. This showed a lack of knowledge of the social situation in the country. For this section of the press, Stalin was a hero, despite the fact that he terrorised his own citizens and attacked neighbouring countries in alliance with Hitler (“Bezmyślne frazesy” [Mindless clichés], *Dziennik Polski i Dziennik Żołnierza* 20, January 25, 1944).

The Polish Prime Minister Mikołajczyk was not aware of the Western ‘allies’ consent at the Tehran Conference (1943) to the so-called Curzon line as the eastern border of post-war Poland. In his speech to the House of Commons on February 22, 1944, Churchill stated that he had agreed to territorial changes for the benefit of the Soviet Union at

Dziennik Polski i Dziennik Żołnierza

Legenda o "cordon sanitaire"

Wczorajszym artykule "Times'a" na temat stosunków polsko-rosyjskich znajduje się następujące zdanie: "Szaleństwo w tym celu francusko-polskiego z roku 1920, który usiłował okrzyć Niemcy i zatępnąć cordon sanitaire stworzył spowrotem porozumiewania". Nie będziemy wadzić się z autorem tego skądinąd udokumentowanego artykułu o to, jak jest możliwe, by Polska, która w granicach z Rosją wynosi niewiele więcej jedną czwartą ogólnej długości granic zachodnich (Z.S.R.R. tworzyła cordon "dokonajmy się sama istotą legendy o cordon sanitaire).

Bo nie innego to nie jest jak legenda i to taką, z którą najwyższy czas skończyć. Śmieszne by było przecież, że w okresie już po Wersalu zachowanie się Europejczyków wobec Rosji było tak odrażające jak przed wojną. Działył silne prądy dalekiej niechęci. Ale nie była to jakaś wrogosć osobliwie antyrosyjska, skierowana przeciw stanowisku, należnemu Rosji w rodzinie państw europejskich. Owe podjęte przez ówczesne nastawienie polityki partii komunistycznej. Była przeto aktem propagandy, przeciw agenturkom rozsądzającym od wewnątrz państwa polskiego a nie aktem wyłączenia i pozostawiania jej poza orbitem wpływu na układ stosunków międzynarodowych w Europie.

"Rząd bolszewicki," pisze o owych czasach Ramsay Muir w swej British History, "który przagnął wywołać rewolucję roku 1919 wznicił zamieszki w Finlandii a w 1920 zaatakował Polskę. . . Usiłował też podnieść do rozruchów w różnych częściach Azji, a zwłaszcza w Chinach." Wówczas nawet — gdy osłabli widoki na rozszerzenie się ich metod, Bolszewicy zaprzestali działalności dzienniej we wszystkich krajach, twarząc się "poczucia niepewności i niepokoju, które utrudniały Europie normalizowanie swych stosunków."

Widomo, że państwa, które zawierały w owych czasach traktaty handlowe z Z.S.R.R., umiesz-

czyły w nich klauzulę, zastrzegającą się przeciw uprawianiu przez jednego partnera propagandy na terenie drugiego.

Trzeba z tego wyciągnąć dwa wnioski. Po pierwsze Polska nie stała nigdy na zawadzie politycznej penetracji Rosji do Europy, lecz była jedynie pierwszym z europejskich państw, które walczyło przeciw ustrojowi socjalistycznemu. Tego swojego rodzaju wśród państw europejskich, które walczyły przeciw ustrojowi socjalistycznemu, Polska była pierwszą i miała wszelkie przyrodzone prawo tak jak wszystkie inne państwa, aby wewnątrz swego państwa przysięganiu propagandy komunistycznej, działała po tej samej linii, po której poruszała się polityka wszystkich innych państw świata — z tego bynajmniej nie wynika, iżby jej kiedykolwiek powierzano, lub by Polska kiedykolwiek podejmowała się roli podległości komunistycznej. Nona sens takiego przypuszczenia. Wymiar zresztą jasno ze zwyczajnego porównania masy państwowej Polski i Rosji.

Drugie Polska nie tylko nie tworzyła bariery zagradzającej Rosji, jako państwo dostępnego do współpracy europejskiej, ale jej stosunki polityczne z Rosją, nie były zakłócone przez cały okres międzywojenny. Jedynie ułatwiać Rosji porozumienie z resztą Europy, było interesem dla obu państw. Dobyli dem dojrzałości do zgodnego współdziałania międzynarodowego.

Zdawało by się, że wobec tych oczywistych faktów legenda o Polsce kładącej się w poprzek stosunków Rosji z zachodem Europą powinna była dawno umrzeć śmiercią naturalną. Niestety, legendy mają twardy żywot — zwłaszcza zaś gdy pomagają szpanie pojęcia "cordon sanitaire" wana jako pomost, po którym wojska sąsiada mogą dokonywać swobodnych przemarszów.

Kordonem odgradzającym Rosję od Europy Polska nigdy nie była, nie chciała być i prosi, by jej podobnych pomysłów nie podsuwano. Natomiast pragnie być panią na swoim terytorium — tych samych zasad moralnych i tych samych prawach na jakich rządzi się i siebie wszystkie inne nrody milujące

Bezmyślne frazesy

Sa rzeczy, do których trzeba powracać, choć spędzilibyśmy czas znacznie pożyteczniej, mając się czems innym. Niektóre bowiem nonsensy, im więcej się ma, tym bardziej żywym i wrzucaniem ramionami. W ostatnich czasach jedna z bajek tej kategorii kursuje na szkole polskiej po łamach niektórych organów prasy — powtarzana już to za suferem, już też z ignorancją. Mamy na myśli plecienia o niakiej "reakcyjności," wypel-

Legendy o polskim "feudalizmie" polskich "landlordach" i leżącym w polskim zacofaniu sposobu, kiedy w oczach wyspiarzy europejskich, patrzących na Europę, zaczynała się tuż za Odry, spowijająca dość jedynym naszym kontynentem. Wtedy można było fantazjować na temat feudalizmu w Polsce, choć go nie było przez cały przebieg historii. Wtedy można było, na polskiem, mówić o obszarnictwie, choć statystyka pourowych było w Polsce 27%, w r. 1931 od którego to czasu sporelbowano przeszło półmilionu 50 ha było 17,3%. Wtedy obrażać sobie Polskę jako kraj, w którym lud nie sięgnął jeszcze po swe prawa i tradycyjnje z czapką w rękę stoi przed "panami."

Ale powtarzanie tego rodzaju poglądów dziś jeszcze — zadziwne w ostatnich czasach było dość podobnie naprostować. To prawda, że było w Polsce zawile nierówności społecznych. Prawda też, że niedza i inne ciężary gniotły pracowniczych. Ale nie trzeba wytykać nas palcem, jakdybyś-

my my jedni nie spełnili swych obowiązków społecznych. Rozpięta różnic społecznych, widoczna gołym okiem w krajach, które uchodzą za filary cywilizacji współczesnej, bywa znacznie większą, niż była w Polsce. W zestawieniu z fantastycznymi fortunami autentycznych landlordów nasze nieliczne obszarnictwa to mierne figurki. Gdy są uprzytomnić sobie, że bieda, nieraz haniebna, istniała i istnieje także w krajach, które miały o tyle większe możliwości, wczesniej mogły zacząć z nią walkę — niema powodu mówić o polskiej plamie.

Najważniejsze jednak, że powtarzanie Polaków o reakcyjności na to zasługiła najmniej. Czynniki z naszych szerokich warstw ludowych jakąś nierozbudowaną jessz — i politycznie bezkształtną masę, która władza klika wsteczników. Trzeba tych, co bezmyślnie powtarzają bezsensowne frazesy, poprosić by przyrzekli się rzeczywistości polskiej. Niech się poinformują, jak lud polski korzystał w przeszłości z konstytucji, którą sobie nadało wskrzeszone Państwo. Niech się zapytają, czy w przyszłości nie składali się na jej przedstawicieli na sejm polski. Niech się choćby dowiedzą, jakie formy przybręła w ostatnich czasach przed r. 1939 akcja zorganizowanych klas pracowniczych.

Przed wszystkim zaś niech się zastanowią z jaką siłą, z jaką zawziętością i z jakim poświęceniem "reakcyjności" polscy walczą przeciw mordującym wolańskim hitleryzmowi w czasie, kiedy jeszcze wojnę z Hitlerem zażyli komunistyciele i komunistyczny rząd polski uważający za sukcesy. Niech się dowiedzą, pod jakim naciskiem niemieckim i pod sugestywnym ciśnieniem paktu rosyjsko-niemieckiego z sierpnia 1939 — nie mogli zdecydować się, kto jest gorszym wrogiem postępu: Hitler czy Churchill.

The op-ed entitled "Legenda o cordon sanitaire" ("The legend of the 'cordon sanitaire'"), published in Dziennik Polski i Dziennik Żołnierza issue of January 15, 1944 (no. 12). Source: Polona.pl

The op-ed entitled "Bezmyślne frazesy" ("Mindless clichés") published in Dziennik Polski i Dziennik Żołnierza issue of January 25, 1944 (no. 20). Source: Polona.pl

the expense of the eastern lands of Poland (“Przemówienie premiera Churchilla” [Speech by Prime Minister Churchill], *Rzeczpospolita Polska* 3, March 6, 1944 [periodical of the underground Government Delegation in occupied Poland]). The Soviet demands of February 11, 1944 regarding good-neighbourly Polish-Soviet relations would mean the consent of the Polish government to the annexation of the eastern territories (half of the territory of the pre-war Second Republic), personal changes among the Polish government, and Poland’s accession to Moscow’s Beneš-Stalin agreement (1943). Churchill described the Polish government’s disagreement with the Soviet conditions as its “inability to cooperate in a friendly manner” with the Soviet Union (“Odpowiadając na deklarację Rządu RP Moskwa zajmuje stanowisko w sprawie granic” [In response to the declaration of the Polish Government, Moscow takes a position on the border], *Dziennik Polski i Dziennik Żołnierza* 9, January 12, 1944). In international relations, strength won out, in the name of preserving the unity of the allied powers during and after the war, at the expense of the regional federations of “small states” or the provisions of the Atlantic Charter (1941) as elements of a just post-war order.

After the Red Army seized Central and Southern Europe in 1945, Slavic Committees were established in Bulgaria (1944), Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Poland (“Utworzenie Komitetu Słowiańskiego” [Establishment of the Slavic Committee], *Życie Słowiańskie* 1946, pp. 31–2). According to the Polish Communist party (*Polska Partia Robotnicza*, PPR), geopolitically Poland was fated to post-war Slavic unity and freedom from reactionary governments. Slavic integration, led by the Soviet Union, was to be a barrier against German expansion. The Slavic character of the Soviet Union was exposed after the war by the Sorbian case. The Polish Slavic Committee argued for the rights of the Sorbs living in the Soviet zone of Germany to self-determination (“Łużycom” [To the Sorbs’ Land], *Życie Słowiańskie* 1, 1946, pp. 16–7; “Łużycom” [To the Sorbs’ Land], *Życie Słowiańskie* 3, 1946, pp. 77–9). The Soviet Union did not see this problem in the context of the “liberation of the Slavs” or the security of the Slavic states and nations. After the war, the Slavic states liberated by the Red Army as dependent on the Soviet Union

became part of the Soviet Eastern Bloc. The Soviet authorities intended to use their economic and military potential to conquer the countries of Western Europe (Cenckiewicz 2014; Weiser 2014; Szaniawski 2003).

Soviet propaganda proclaimed that the victories over Germany proved the superiority of the socialist federal state over the capitalist and fascist ones, based on the “voluntary” union of the Soviet nations, which resulted from their equal rights, lack of economic exploitation, nationalism or racism, and the close connection between power and the working class (“Źródła siły i potęgi państwa radzieckiego” [The sources of the force and power of the Soviet state], *Czerwony Sztandar* 76, November 26, 1944; “Zwycięstwo ideologii przyjaźni narodów nad faszystowską ideologią zwierzęcego nacjonalizmu” [The victory of the ideology of friendship of nations over the fascist ideology of brute nationalism], *Czerwony Sztandar* 91, December 18, 1944). The Soviet “ideas of friendship of nations” and the “liberation of oppressed peoples” had proved superior to the “brute” nationalism of the fascist states. In early 1944, the Soviet authorities made changes to the constitution, extending the powers of the Soviet republics (“Stalinowska konstytucja – sztandar naszego zwycięstwa” [Stalin’s constitution—the banner of our victory], *Czerwony Sztandar* 82, December 5, 1944). They presented them to international public opinion as the evolution of the Soviet Union towards a decentralised federal state. This propaganda measure, like the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943, was intended to “reassure” the countries “liberated” by the Red Army that the Soviet Union did not intend to enslave them. It was also supposed to give each Soviet republic a vote in the planned UN, which would make them equal to the independent and sovereign states of the world, and the Soviet Union would give them a privileged position in the international organisation of peace and security. The Soviet authorities only achieved this for Soviet Belarus and Ukraine, alongside the vote of the Soviet Union as a whole.

Post-war Soviet propaganda constantly proclaimed that the Red Army had saved Europe from fascist slavery (“Naród radziecki uratował cywilizację Europy od pogromców faszystowskich” [The Soviet people saved the civilisation of

Europe from the fascist conquerors], *Czerwony Sztandar* 29, February 10, 1945). It argued that the post-war order could only be peacefully sustained with the cooperation of the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the United States (“Jedność anglo-radziecko-amerykańskiego przymierza gwarancją długiego pokoju” [The unity of the Anglo-Soviet-American alliance guarantees a long peace], *Czerwony Sztandar* 53, March 24, 1945). It argued that the development and security of the world’s smaller countries were guaranteed by the concerted cooperation of the great powers, and not by regional unions of states (“28 rocznica Wielkiej Październikowej Rewolucji Socjalistycznej” [The 28th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution], *Czerwony Sztandar* 221, November 7, 1945). Therefore, both during the war and after its end, the Soviet Union preferred to conclude bilateral agreements with the states which later found themselves in the Soviet bloc. Even within this framework, it did not agree to any unions of states or even closer cooperation between them, focusing on their integration and uniformisation with the Soviet Union (Koryn 1998, pp. 93–107; Duraczyński 1997, p. 152).

The Soviet biweekly *Война и рабочий класс* (in “Новое положение в Польше и старые заблуждения” [The new situation in Poland and the old errors], No. 6, March 15, 1945) wrote bluntly that since the Red Army had liberated Poland, the decisions taken at the Yalta conference in February 1945 concerning its affairs had been adapted to “the new geopolitical situation” which “stands firmly on the ground of solid reality”. Anyone who did not accept this was a fascist in the Soviet eyes. Therefore, President Władysław Raczkiewicz and Prime Minister Tomasz Arciszewski had no right to return to Poland (“Pismo sowieckie o Polsce” [The Soviet press on Poland], *Wolna Polska* 10, March 24, 1945). In its understanding, the Soviet Union saw a strong, “democratic” and secure Poland only in connection with the dependent “Slavic states” of Central and South-Eastern Europe, with “Piasts’ [i.e. the medieval Polish dynasty] territories” seized by the Red Army from Germany, and not one burdened with national minorities in the East (“Związek Radziecki a demokratyczna Polska” [The Soviet Union and democratic Poland], *Pravda*, January 7, 1945, Polish translation in *Czerwony Sztandar* 6, January 9, 1945; “Linia Curzona”

W odpowiedzi na listy... Wobec Deklaracji... W deklaracji w sprawie...

granicy Polski... W roku 1919... W roku 1919 i na poręgu...

Repatrianci

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The article entitled "Linia Curzona" ("The Curzon Line") published in Czerwony Sztandar issue of February 24, 1945 (no. 39). Source: Ossoliński National Institute webpage, digitized resources of Vasyli Stefanyk National Scientific Library of Ukraine in Lviv

[The Curzon Line], *Czerwony Sztandar* 39, February 24, 1945; “Niemcy – odwieczni wrogowie narodu polskiego” [Germany—the eternal enemy of the Polish nation], *Czerwony Sztandar* 46, April 6, 1945). Stalin declared that the agreement of April 21, 1945 on cooperation, friendship and mutual assistance, concluded with the Communist government he had installed in Poland, and which allegedly guaranteed Poland its sovereignty and non-interference in its internal affairs, had ended the two states’ mutual hostility and opened a period of peace and friendship for Poland and the Soviet Union (“Przemówienie towarzysza J.W. Stalina” [Speech by Comrade Y.V. Stalin], *Czerwony Sztandar* 81, April 24, 1945). Soviet propaganda considered the Polish-Soviet agreement of April to be a significant contribution to the peace and security of Europe. Poland ceased to be the gateway for Germany to the Russia and Soviet Union, as it had been during the two world wars (“Ważny wkład w dzieło pokoju i bezpieczeństwa” [An important contribution to the work of peace and security], *Izvestia*, April 23, 1945, translated into Polish in *Rzeczpospolita* 109, April 25, 1945 [the journal of the Polish Committee of National Liberation]). The Polish-Soviet agreement was a supplement to the bilateral agreements on cooperation and mutual assistance that the Soviet Union had concluded with Czechoslovakia in December 1943 and the Communist Yugoslavia of Josip Broz Tito on 11 April 1945, which also guaranteed their sovereignty and did not interfere with their internal affairs. The joint struggle with Germany had created a system of Slavic states headed by the Soviet Union (“Przyjaźń narodów słowiańskich” [The friendship of the Slavic nations], *Pravda*, May 31, 1945, translated into Polish in *Rzeczpospolita* 144, June 1, 1945). In fact, the Soviet friendship towards Poland and other Central European states that should have made up the planned Central European federation consisted in depriving them of their sovereignty and independence for 45 years within the Soviet bloc. The Soviet Union took Central Europe by force without the opposition of Churchill or Roosevelt, and not because of the conflicts of its states and nations (AAN, collection DRRPK, DIP, 202/III-76, “Security zone of the USSR”, *Tygodniowy Przegląd Radiowy* 16, 1945, p. 35; Grygajtis 2007, p. 62).

Conclusion



The idea for a federation presented by the Polish government during World War II was not a form of Polish imperialism, a road towards Poland's domination over other countries, or a barrier isolating the Soviet Union from Europe. Its aim was to ensure freedom, peace and security as well as cooperation between the Central European states, as well as their subjectivity in international relations. Poland demanded a just peace for all states. The regional federations of smaller states in Europe were intended to prevent the establishment of a post-war order based on domination and the great powers' spheres of influence. Poland believed that the smaller states' contribution to the war gave them the equal right to take decisions in matters of peace and security.

During World War II, the implementation of the Polish government's geopolitical plans was hindered by the Polish-Czechoslovak rivalry in the region. The Czechoslovak government-in-exile was working on a rival Danubian federation which could have influenced the foreign policy of Austria (as a state independent of Germany) and Hungary (to counteract Hungarian revisionism of the Trianon Treaty of 1920). Another problem for Poland was the alliance of Bulgaria, Slovakia, Romania and Hungary with the Third Reich. In addition, during the war, border disputes between Hungary and Bulgaria with their neighbours and ethnic disputes within the borders of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia had revived. Ultimately though, it was the opposition of the Soviet Union which played a fundamental role in the fate of Central and South-Eastern Europe, as it—together with Great Britain and the United States—decided the post-war order.

The Soviet Union treated the regional federations as a strategic game by Great Britain for influence in Central Europe. Poland's geopolitical plans and its association with Great Britain as a guarantor of peace in Europe would have inhibited Soviet expansionism to the South (Balkans), west (Germany) and North (Scandinavia). Only the weakening of Poland through its territorial losses and isolation within the anti-Nazi coalition shattered its vision of a post-war order based on freedom, cooperation and the independence of

European states organised into regional federations as part of a united and democratic Europe. The Soviet Union did not agree to unions of states in Europe without its participation, for political, strategic and ideological reasons. It considered them to be “*cordons sanitaires*”, refuges of bourgeois nationalism and capitalist oppression of the working masses, which would antagonise the national minorities. All these problems, which had caused the imperialist wars, had allegedly been resolved within the union of the Soviet republics.

During World War II, in order to implement its geopolitical plans, the Soviet Union used the political doctrines of tsarist Russia to spread Communism. It justified its annexations in terms of collecting the “lands of Rus”, defending the Orthodox Church and the Slavdom, liberating the working masses, and its own need to have strategic borders. In the internal dimension, it proclaimed the necessity of the Soviet nations to make sacrifices in order to defend the empire; and in the external dimension, with the slogans of the freedom, sovereignty and security of nations, liberating the working masses from the oppressions of reaction, fascism and capitalism, and defending democracy and European civilisation.

Poland opposed the Soviet demands for strategic borders at the expense of the lands of its European neighbours. These would only have made sense in terms of defending the weaker states against the stronger. Military technology eliminated their importance as the main basis for the defence of a modern state. Poland recalled that the Soviet Union had allowed the outbreak of World War II and had acted as an aggressor against the Central European states. After 1941, it conducted the war with the military and economic help of the Allied countries. The Soviet Union had a right to contribute to the post-war order, but not to the annexations, to the enslavement of its neighbours, or to the creation of the spheres of influence.

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