

Prof. Jan Szumski

Institute of National Remembrance
L. & A. Birkenmajer Institute for the History of Science,
Polish Academy of Sciences
ORCID 0000-0001-6591-5795

Prof. Bogdan Musiał

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STALIN AND THE PAMPHLET “FALSIFIERS OF HISTORY”: “INTERPRETATIONS”, GUIDELINES AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION

Abstract

The article focuses on the background of the pamphlet ‘Falsifiers of History. An Historical Note’ issued by the Soviet Information Bureau in 1948. The book was personally edited and largely hand-written by Joseph Stalin. His involvement was not fully known until now. In this paper, the authors deciphered, translated and compared the text of the published pamphlet. It shows Stalin’s guidelines in the official interpretation of the causes of World War II and the reasons for the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Throughout the post-war period the official Soviet narrative regarding the origins of the of World War II were largely based on a set of guidelines contained in a pamphlet ‘Falsifiers of History’. Currently, the neo-Stalinist historical narrative concerning the origins of World War II is promoted by the Russian officials. Nevertheless, not all Russian historians share these views, and many assess the Hitler-Stalin Pact in a much more critical way.

Keywords: Hitler-Stalin Pact, Nazi–Soviet Relations, Soviet historiography, Russia’s Politics of History

The origins of the Hitler-Stalin Pact and together with it of World War II are the ones of the most important and at the same time most controversially discussed topics in 20th century history. Particularly astonishing is the fact that Stalin himself was not just one of the signatories of the Pact, but also solely responsible for the interpretation thereof after 1945 in the Eastern Bloc and partially responsible for its interpretation in the West.

In January 1948, the US State Department published a collection of documents about the German-Soviet cooperation from 1939 to 1941, which contained reports from German diplomats during that period (*Nazi-Soviet Relations* 1948; on the background of this document compare with Lipinsky 2004, pp. 368–377). Thus, not only the “Treaty of Non-Aggression”, but also the vital secret protocol were made available for the general public. The secret protocol had divided Central and Eastern Europe into spheres of influence between Germany and the Soviet Union, which led to the annexation of numerous sovereign states in that area by Germany and the Soviet Union, thereby transforming the “Non-Aggression Treaty” both *de facto* and *de jure* into a “Pact of Aggression”.

Stalin swiftly reacted to this publication and ordered the current deputy foreign minister Andrey Vyshinskiy to craft a quick response in the form of a historical analysis to counter these revelations. The task was delegated to a group of historians and international relations specialists (One of the authors was historian Vladimir Khvostov, compare with ChernaeV 2008, diary entry from March 17, 1972; Vladimir Chvostov (1905–1972) was a specialist for German history and foreign policy. Two other authors were supposedly the historians Grigoriy Deborin (1907–1987) and Boris Shteyn (1892–1961), see Lipinsky (2004), p. 375). On February 3, 1948, Vyshinskiy presented the first three chapters of the manuscript titled “Reply to the Slanderers” (*Ответ клеветникам*), with the fourth and last chapter being

delivered—as his letter to Stalin suggests—on the very same day (Vyshinskiy to Stalin, March 3, 1948, in: Russian State Archive for Socio-Political History, further referred to as RGASPI, f. 558, op. 11, d. 244, p. 1).

Although Stalin's involvement was not fully known at the time, it was suspected that Stalin himself had been personally involved in editing the published text (Lipinsky 2004, p. 375). In 2002, Geoffrey Roberts published the paper, in which he hinted at the importance of the booklet “Falsifiers of History (Historical Reports)” for historiography (Roberts 2002). In the RGASPI in Moscow Roberts came across a file that implicated Stalin had a direct influence in the creation of “Falsifiers of History”. Roberts writes:

“Subsequent files testify to Stalin's continuing interest in the drafting, publication, and distribution of *Falsifiers*. The details of Stalin's changes to the original typescript require further study”.

However, Roberts did not do so,

“because of time constrains and the difficulty of reading Stalin's scribbling [I] was unable to compare the texts of the marked-up typescript and the published pamphlet.” (Roberts 2002, p. 98, footnote 24).

In this paper, “Stalin's scribbling” was deciphered, translated and compared to the text of the published booklet.

Stalin on the Origin of the Hitler-Stalin Pact

Judging from these notes it is clear that Stalin indeed carefully read the document and edited it significantly. His first change was the title—Stalin changed the title “Reply to the Slanderers” to “Falsifiers of History (Historical survey)” [*Фальсификаторы истории (Историческая справка)*]. Furthermore, he not only corrected grammatical and stylistic errors, but also changed, removed and re-wrote single sentences, paragraphs and even whole sections. For



his corrections he used numerous pencils in different colours, mostly dark blue and red.

Regarding the origins of the supposed German-Soviet “Treaty of Non-Aggression” of August 1939, Stalin wrote:

“It would be a gross slander to assert that the conclusion of a pact with the Hitlerites was part of the plan of the foreign policy of the USSR. On the contrary, the USSR strove at all times to have an agreement with the Western non-aggressive states against the German and Italian aggressors for the achievement of collective security on the basis of equality. But there must be two parties to an agreement.” (see *Falsificators of History* 1948, p. 41 and Doc. No. 1, chapter III).

Much to his supposed dismay, however, Great Britain and France declined such offers and conducted a policy of isolation against the USSR. According to Stalin, his emerging enemy, the USA, had been a supporter of this policy (compare with attachment—Doc. No. 1).

Therefore, Stalin claimed:

“Naturally, with this state of affairs in Europe, there only remained one way out for the Soviet Union: to accept the German proposal for a pact. This was, after all, the best of all the possible ways out. (see *Falsificators of History* 1948, pp. 41–42 and Doc. No. 1, chapter III).

The Soviet Union was thus able to make

“... good use of the Soviet-German pact to strengthen its defences; that it succeeded in moving its frontiers far to the West and in barring the way of the unhampered eastward advance of German aggression.” (see *Falsificators of History* 1948, p. 42 and Doc. No. 1, chapter III).

Falsificators of History
(An Historical Note).
Text of a Communique
Issued by the Soviet
Information Bureau, Moscow,
February, 1948 (Washington
D.C., 1948) – the front cover
of the booklet

Thus – according to the pamphlet – the German forces had to begin their offensive to the East not from the line Narva-Minsk-Kyiv, but from a line several hundred kilometres to the West. This meant that the Soviet Union did not bleed to death in the Great Patriotic War, but instead emerged as victor. (compare with attachment – Doc. No. 1). This statement



**FALSIFICATORS
OF HISTORY**

(an historical note)

text of a communiqué
issued by the
Soviet Information Bureau, Moscow

February, 1948



became a permanent part of the canons of Soviet propaganda. The obvious inconsistencies, such as the fact, that e.g. the distance from Kyiv to the pre-war Polish-Soviet frontier was over 200 kilometres, were omitted.

Stalin ridiculed criticism of the pact and called its critics slanderers:

“The claptrap of slanderers of all hues to the effect that the USSR should in no case have allowed itself to conclude a pact with the Germans can only be regarded as ridiculous. Why could Poland, who had Britain and France as allies, conclude a non-aggression pact with Germany in 1934, and the Soviet Union, enjoying less favorable conditions, could not conclude a similar pact in 1939? Why could Britain and France, who were the dominant force in Europe, issue jointly with the Germans a declaration on non-aggression in 1938, and the Soviet Union, isolated because of the hostile policy of Britain and France, could not conclude a pact with the Germans? Is it not a fact that of all the non-aggressive great Powers in Europe the Soviet Union was the last to make a pact with the Germans?” (see *Falsificators of History* 1948, p. 42 and Doc. No. 1, chapter III).

Stalin went even further:

“Beyond any doubt, the German-Polish pact constituted the first serious break in the edifice of collective security.” (see *Falsificators of History* 1948, p. 11).

This is not quite true. In fact, it was the Soviet Union that had been the first to ratify an earlier negotiated Treaty of Friendship with Hitler aimed against Poland. The treaty in question was an extension of the Treaty of Berlin that had been signed on April 24, 1926 and intended to run for five years. On June 24, 1931 both sides extended the treaty by another three years. However, its ratification was seriously delayed and it was not until after Hitler’s rise to power that the German government finally ratified it on May 5, 1933 (Brechtken 2004, p. 122).

Even more questionably, Stalin equated the genuine Polish-German Declaration of Non-Aggression of 1934 with the

German-Soviet “Treaty of Non-Aggression” of 1939. In reality—unlike the Hitler-Stalin Pact—the Polish-German Declaration of Non-Aggression was not warmongering in nature and was not directed against any other states, least of all the Soviet Union. Stalin was well aware of this fact even in the 1930s (*Geneza* 2012, pp. 57–67). The same is true for the British-German and French-German declarations of non-aggression. On July 25, 1932 in Moscow the Polish-Soviet Non-Aggression Treaty was signed, prolonged by parties on May 5, 1934. The treaty was to remain valid until December 31, 1945. The prolongation of the Polish-Soviet treaty occurred already after the signing of the Polish-German Declaration of Non-Aggression of January 26, 1934.

The original authors of the manuscript had written at great length about the Soviet policy of collective security in the 1930s. Naturally, Stalin made numerous changes here as well, claiming for example that the Soviet Union had been intent on promoting “collective security” until the bitter end. He criticised the notion that

“... Litvinov was dismissed and replaced by Molotov in the post of the People’s Commissar of Foreign Affairs because he had been pursuing a policy of consolidating collective security. One could hardly imagine anything more stupid than this fantastic assertion.” (see *Falsifiers of History* 1948, p. 14 and Doc. No. 1).

However, this “fantastical claim” seems to not be as fantastical as Stalin claimed it was. In his diary entry on May 28, 1938, fellow Politburo member Georgi Dimitrov had this to say:

“The English have suggested that the Soviet Union should protect Poland, Romania and other states from aggression without demanding those states to do the same in regard to the Soviet Union. Litvinov proposed to accept. We declined.”

This was the reason why Litvinov was relieved of his post as People’s Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Molotov becoming his successor. After this, Litvinov tried to apologise, but Stalin thought his statement unsatisfactory and made

“the ironic remark that Litvinov as a ‘specialist’ for international issues thought the Politburo [that means Stalin] to be not competent enough in those matters!” (Dimitrov 2000, pp. 259–260, entry from May 28, 1939).

Stalin concluded the section on collective security with following remark:

“The vicious displeasure of these gentlemen can only be regarded as a demonstration of the indubitable fact that the policy of the Soviet Union has been and remains a correct policy.” (see *Falsificators of History* 1948, p. 42 and Doc. No. 1).

Below this heavily edited and partially newly-written chapter, Stalin humbly did not put his name, but signed with “Soviet Bureau for Information” and added “to be continued.”

Over the following days, Stalin edited the fourth and final chapter. His influence was much stronger in this section, which he mostly wrote by himself and entitled it “Creation of the ‘Eastern Front’—German assault on the USSR. The anti-Hitler coalition and the question of inter-allied responsibilities.” There, he stated that the annexation of the Eastern Polish territories in September 1939 was aimed at establishing an “Eastern Front” against Hitlerite aggression. After the occupation of those regions:

“[Soviet troops] proceeded to build defenses there along the western line of the Ukrainian and Byelorussian territories. [...]. A few days later the Soviet Government signed pacts of mutual assistance with the Baltic States, providing for the stationing of Soviet Army garrisons on the territory of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. the organization of Soviet air fields and the building of naval bases there. Thus the foundation was laid for the »Eastern« front.” (see *Falsificators of History* 1948, p. 43, and Doc. No. 2).

The war with Finland was justified in a similar way. According to Stalin, an invasion was necessary to protect Leningrad from Finnish aggression:

“The Soviet Government was well aware of the fact that the fascist elements among the ruling circles of Finland, who were closely connected with the Hitlerites and who wielded strong influence in the Finnish Army, were striving to capture Leningrad.” (see *Falsificators of History* 1948, p. 44, and Doc. No. 2).

Furthermore, Stalin wrote that the Finnish government—by refusing to sign a mutual assistance pact similar to the Baltic states—had rejected a cordial solution to this problem. Stalin added that

By these and similar hostile actions and provocations on the Soviet-Finnish border, Finland unleashed the war against the Soviet Union. The results of the Soviet-Finnish War are known. The frontiers of the USSR in the northwest and particularly in the Leningrad area were shifted further away and the security of the USSR was strengthened. (see *Falsificators of History* 1948, p. 45, and attachment – Doc. No. 2).

Nevertheless, the “Eastern Front” had not been fully secured yet as the annexation of the Baltic States and Bessarabia were still to follow. In Stalin’s own words:

“But this did not yet mean that the formation of an »Eastern« front from the Baltic to the Black Sea had been completed. Pacts had been concluded with the Baltic States, but there were as yet no Soviet troops there capable of holding the defenses. Moldavia and Bukovina had formally been reunited with the USSR, but there too, there were still no troops capable of holding the defenses. In the middle of June, 1940, Soviet troops entered Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. On June 27, 1940, Soviet troops entered Bukovina and Moldavia. The latter had been severed by Romania from the USSR after the October Revolution. Thus the formation of an »Eastern« front against Hitlerite aggression from the Baltic to the Black Sea was completed.” (see *Falsificators of History* 1948, pp. 48–49).

According to Stalin, the newly-created “Eastern Front” meant a “radical turn in the development of the war—a turn against Hitlerite tyranny, a turn in favor of a victory for democracy.” (see *Falsificators of History* 1948, p. 49).



Publication and Distribution of “Falsifiers”

The first chapter of the pamphlet “Falsifiers” was published by *Pravda* on February 10, 1948. A day earlier, on February 9 at 22:30, a press conference had been held at the press department of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs for all accredited foreign journalists in Moscow. During the press conference, called by Andrey Vyshinskiy, the 33 assembled journalists were handed the first chapter of the pamphlet in order to report about it to their respective home countries (Note from February 9, 1948 on the course of the press conference on “Falsifiers of History” in RGASPI, f. 558, op. 11, d. 244, pp. 1–2; the pamphlets in English: *Falsifiers of history* 1948; *Falsificators of History* 1948).

Two days later, on the February 12, *Pravda* published the second part of the pamphlet along with the report from TASS entitled “Consternation of the English official circles”, concerning the reaction by the British Foreign Ministry. Three days later, on the February 15, *Pravda* published the third part of the pamphlet. The same day, Stalin sent the fourth part of the pamphlet—which he himself had rewritten entirely—to his closest associates, namely Molotov, Mikoyan, Beria, Zhdanov, Malenkov, Voznesenskiy and Vyshinskiy (cover letter by Pospelov, dated February 15, 1948, RGASPI, 558, op. 11, d. 243, p. 60). On the February 17, *Pravda* published the fourth and last chapter of “Falsifiers”.

This was only the start of a grand propaganda campaign that was personally monitored by Stalin himself, as indicated by Andrey Vyshinskiy’s frequent visits to Stalin’s cabinet. Meetings always took place on the day, or the day before the publication of a new chapter (Vyshinskiy visited Stalin on February 1, 3, 8, 9, 12 and 15, 1948. Also compare with the reception book of the Stalin’s Kremlin cabinet, entries for February 1948: *Na prieme u Stalina* 2008, pp. 498–499).

On April 22, 1948, Vyshinskiy reported on the enormous success of the campaign abroad. Translated into numerous languages, “Falsifiers” had been published in many different countries in either complete or abridged versions. In France, the pamphlet had been reprinted in parts over 700,000 copies by various left-wing newspapers and about 30,000 copies of

“Falsifiers of History (The Historical Note)”. First part of the text, published in “Pravda” issue of February 10, 1948, following the press conference on February 9, 1948. N.A. Nekrasov library webpage

the complete version were distributed. The Spanish “Munda Obrero” printed 55,000 and the Catalan “Luita” 25,000 copies. In the USA, the New York Times reprinted the first part of the pamphlet, while the rest was distributed by other newspapers. In the USA, the Soviet Information Bureau printed a further 50,000 copies.

In the Soviet Occupation Zone in Germany, the complete version of “Falsifiers” was printed in 1.6 million copies, an abridged version was printed by 20 regional newspapers. Furthermore, “Falsifiers” appeared as a pamphlet with a circulation of 250,000. In Czechoslovakia, openly communist newspapers printed it in 1,000,000 copies, while other “progressive” papers printed the “Falsifiers” in about 700,000 copies. The Soviet embassy in Prague brought 7000 additional pamphlets into circulation (Report on April 22, 1948, Vyshynskiy to Stalin, in RGASPI, coll. 558, description 11, file 244, pp. 9–14).

In Poland a version with minor changes was published in 500,000 copies by all national and all major local papers. The “Falsifiers” were also published in Finland, Hungary, Romania, Albania, Yugoslavia, Italy, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Canada, Turkey, Switzerland, Venezuela, Colombia, India, Sweden, Argentina, Uruguay, Egypt, Republic of China and other countries. Additionally, the Soviet publishing company for foreign languages pushed for the printing of 150,000 pamphlets in German, 75,000 in French, 50,000 in English, 100,000 in Chinese and Korean, 15,000 in Hungarian and Romanian, 5000 in Arabic, Persian and Japanese, respectively (see above).

Stalin’s Theses in Historiography

It is perhaps not very surprising that Stalin’s hand-written theses became the foundation of the official Soviet narrative regarding the origins of the World War II. What is more curious, however, is the impact they had on Western, non-communist historical narratives. This is especially true for the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939, where official Soviet historiography followed Stalin’s version until the end of the Soviet Union. Aleksander Yakovlev, a member of the Central Committee of the CPSU stated in a memorandum on July 31, 1989:



ФАЛЬСИФИКАТОРЫ ИСТОРИИ

(Продолжение. Начало см. в "Правде" от 10 и 12 февраля)

ИСТОРИЧЕСКАЯ СПРАВКА

III. Изоляция Советского Союза. Советско-немецкий пакт ненападения

Вопрос о пакте Молотова-Риббентропа является одним из главных вопросов истории Второй мировой войны и в частности истории взаимоотношений в Германии с советскими странами. Встретившись на территории своего восточного соседа, Германия и Советский Союз встали перед тем, какой путь им следует избрать в отношении друг друга.

Каково же было тогда отношение Советского Союза к нацистской Германии, а Германия к Советскому Союзу, а пакт Молотова-Риббентропа в Германии и в Советском Союзе? Ответить на эти вопросы на основании документов, опубликованных в последние годы в СССР, мы попытаемся сделать в этой исторической справке.

Сначала отметим, что Англия и Франция при поддержке Франции США и в течение первой половины 1939 года вели борьбу против нацистской Германии, стремившись к созданию коалиции против агрессии нацистской Германии на территории Европы. В течение второй половины 1939 года, когда Англия и Франция отказались от поддержки Советского Союза, нацистская Германия вела борьбу против Советского Союза, стремившись к созданию коалиции против агрессии Советского Союза.

«Дать возможность нацистскому режиму в Европе господствовать над всеми странами Европы — это было бы самым страшным делом в истории Европы».

Вспомогательная роль Советского Союза в борьбе против агрессии нацистской Германии и в борьбе против агрессии Советского Союза была огромной. Советский Союз был единственным государством, которое оказало помощь Советскому Союзу в борьбе против агрессии нацистской Германии.

Пакт Молотова-Риббентропа был заключен в Москве 23 августа 1939 года. Этот пакт был заключен в нарушение интересов Советского Союза и в нарушение интересов Европы.

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Итак, в заключение этого раздела, отметим, что пакт Молотова-Риббентропа был заключен в нарушение интересов Советского Союза и в нарушение интересов Европы.

«Гитлеровский режим» — говорил К. М. Валентин — не достиг своей цели. Советский Союз был вынужден отказаться от пакта Молотова-Риббентропа.

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Итак, в заключение этого раздела, отметим, что пакт Молотова-Риббентропа был заключен в нарушение интересов Советского Союза и в нарушение интересов Европы.

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Советская информационная биржа.

“Our stance on the Hitler-Stalin pact is mainly based on the historical overview »Falsifiers of History«, which was published in 1948 soon after information on the existence of the Secret Protocol in the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact was released in the West” (Yakovlev 2008, p. 344; see also Yakovlev’s Theses of July 31, 1989).

Yakovlev did not appear to have known that the main theses of the pamphlet were written by Stalin himself.

An academic debate about the Stalin’s theses in the pamphlet “Falsifiers” did not take place in the Soviet Union and the subjugated states of the Eastern Bloc, because they were part of the official communist dogma (Lipinsky 2004, pp. 370–390). However, only few knew that those theses were actually Stalin’s.

It was only in the late 1980s that the Soviet Union saw the emergence of a genuine debate on the Hitler-Stalin Pact and

“Falsifiers of History. More about the confusion in English official circles”. Commentary published in *Pravda* issue of February 15, 1948. N.A. Nekrasov library webpage



its consequences. Contemporary documents, compilations, reports and studies began to be published, which resulted in a change of perception in Russia and other post-Soviet countries. However, this does not mean that Stalin's theses completely lost their credibility in the post-Soviet Russia. Although the existence of the protocol is not disputed anymore, its consequences are, especially the creation of a *de-facto* German-Soviet alliance and the impact this had on the outbreak of World War II. Post-Soviet party historians naturally downplay the Treaty and defend it as a defensive measure (Lipinsky 2004, pp. 291–428, 439–442).

In 2009, on the 70th anniversary of the Hitler-Stalin Pact, Russian state institutions published several pamphlets, in which Stalin's theses from "Falsifiers" were disseminated—sometimes even word for word. Of particular note here is the "Commission to Counteract the Falsification of History in the Detriment of Russia under the President of Russian Federation" that was founded in 2009 and disbanded in May 2012, which was quite active in repeating Stalin's statements from 1948. Oddly enough, not only the content and the name, but also the composition of the Commission itself were reminiscent of the original "Falsifiers": see the collection of essays entitled *Памятка Второй мировой. Кто и когда начал войну?* [*Score of the Second World War. Who Started the War and When?*], with a preface by the Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, published by the Commission to Counteract the Falsification of History (Narochnitskaya and Falin 2009), and the essay by Natalia Narochnitskaya *«Концерт великих держав» накануне решающих событий* [*"The Concert of Powers" on the Eve of the Turning Point Events*], that repeats Stalin's theses (Narochnitskaya 2009). Another example is the collection of documents *Секреты польской политики. 1935–1945 гг. Раскритиченные документы Службы внешней разведки Российской Федерации* [*The Secrets of Polish Policy. (1935–1945). The Collection of Declassified Documents from the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) of Russia*] published by Lev F. Sochkov and commissioned by the Archive of the Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation (Sekrety 2009), especially pages 7–10. This circumstance did not evade Russian journalists (see Samarina 2009).

On the eve of the eightieth anniversary of the Pact, Russian authorities over several months conducted a campaign of rehabilitation of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact and Soviet expansive foreign policy—in two dimensions: internal and external. The campaign followed the interpretation model formed by Stalin in his ‘Falsifiers of history’. In the internal dimension the Stalinist interpretation of the origins of World War II acted as an axis of the synthesis, on which the political message mobilising society was based. On the other hand, the external dimension of the campaign, except for the already traditional criticism of the Western states’ attitudes in the eve of the World War II, a significant focus was laid on Poland, accused of complicity in unleashing World War II (see Putin 2020).

The active and thought-tough measures aiming at the internationalisation and promotion of the Russian historical narrative could be seen on the international level, with significant instance of the problem of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact estimations. The simplified way to adapt the Stalinist theses in the historiography could be observed so far. It should be noted, that the recognised Russian academics, who were researching the Soviet and foreign sources over the several dozen years, are not taking part in this campaign.

Nevertheless, not all Russian historians share these views, and many assess the Hitler-Stalin Pact in a much more critical way (compare with Slutsch 2000, pp. 219–254). In 2008 for example, Natalia Lebedeva, a historian from Moscow, stated in an interview that

“while it is accepted that Stalin’s regime was criminal, an exception is made for foreign affairs. If a regime is criminal, it acts criminally in all areas, including foreign affairs”. (Natalia Lebedeva’s interview in *The Soviet Story* documentary, 51:26–51:56 minutes).

Likewise, the authors of the two volumes of “History of Russia” (2009) claimed “Hitler would not have dared [...] without the agreement with Stalin to attack Poland.” (*Istoriya Rossii* 2009, p. 12). An open question remains whether Russian academic historical science would be able to defend

its right to the freedom of research and to the unlimited presentation of diverse points of view and estimations of historical facts.

The opening of the post-Soviet archives has allowed historians to shed new light on this issue. Today, previously inaccessible documents have clearly disproven the notion that a supposedly defensively-minded Soviet Union had pursued collective security while negotiating the Hitler-Stalin Pact. Key in this were Stalin's classified guidelines and orders to his closest confidantes and staff (see in detail *Geneza* 2012; Musiał 2008).

The Soviet arms
from the back cover
of the booklet
Falsificators of History
(An Historical Note)



Attachment: Documents:

The fragments of the pamphlet *Falsificators of History* 1948 were compared with a blueprint revised personally by J.V. Stalin.

The fragments of the text deleted by Stalin are marked in reduced font and with ^{a-} marks. The additions were marked with ^{b-} and in bold characters. The translation of the parts that were published in the pamphlet *Falsificators of History* is widely used and only sometimes corrections have been made. The crossed out parts and introduction were translated by Oliver Musial.

The editor's notes are added in square brackets. Editor's commentaries are marked with numbers in square brackets, for example: [1], and placed after the documents' texts.

Document No. 1.

February 1948, Moscow—manuscript of “Falsificators of History (Historical Survey)”, introduction and chapters I. to III., with Stalin’s handwritten corrections and additions

^aReply to Slanderers^a

^b*Falsificators of History (Historical Survey)*^b

At the end of January, the State Department of the United States of America, in collaboration with the British and French Foreign Offices, published a collection of reports and various records from the diaries of Hitlerite diplomatic officials, under the ^ashrill^a mysterious title: “Nazi[1]-Soviet Relations, 1939–1941.”

As evident from the preface to this collection, as far back as the summer of 1946 the Governments of the United States of America, Great Britain and France had already agreed to publish archive materials of the German Foreign Office for 1918–1945, seized in Germany by American and British military authorities. Noteworthy in this connection is the fact that the published collection contains only material relating to the period of 1939–1941, while material relating to the preceding years, and in particular to the Munich period, has not been included by the Department of State in the collection and thus has been concealed from world public opinion. This action is certainly not accidental, but pursues aims which have nothing to do with an objective and honest treatment of historical truth. [...].

[omitted were the paragraphs dealing with the reasons for the Soviet refusal of the British-American proposal for a common publication. Falsificators of History 1948, pp. 3–4].

Simultaneously with the publication of the above-mentioned collection, a fresh campaign of unrestrained baiting and slander, as if at the wave of a magic wand, swept the United States and countries dependent on it, in connection with the non-aggression pact concluded between the USSR

and Germany in 1939, and allegedly directed against the Western Powers.

Thus the true purpose for which the collection of documents on relations between the USSR and Germany in the period of 1939–1941 was published in the United States of America evokes no doubt whatever. This was ^adone in order to slander the Soviet Union, to accuse it of aggressive motives^a **not done for the purpose of giving an objective exposition of historical developments, but in order to present a distorted picture of events, to heap lies on the Soviet Union, to slander it, and to undermine the international influence of the Soviet Union as a truly democratic and staunch fighter against aggressive and anti-democratic forces.**^b

Thus, the true purpose for which the collection of documents on relations between the USSR and Germany in the period of 1939–1941 was published in the United States of America evokes no doubt whatever. This was not done for the purpose of giving an objective exposition of historical developments, but in order to present a distorted picture of events, to heap lies on the Soviet Union, to slander it, and to undermine the international influence of the Soviet Union as a truly democratic and staunch fighter against aggressive and anti-democratic forces.

This treacherous attitude in conformity with the views on the character of inter-allied relations which are typical of the ruling circles of the ^acapitalist^a **Anglo-American**^b countries, and the substance of which is that, instead of honest and sincere relations between allies, instead of mutual confidence and support, there is being pursued a policy of using every means, ^bincluding even slander^b, for the purpose of weakening one's ally, and strengthening one's own position at the expense of that ally. ^aThis especially targets the USSR. The publication of the compilation of documents by the American State Department aims at diminishing the international influence of the Soviet Union as a truly democratic state and fighter against aggressive and anti-democratic forces.^a

One should not, moreover, lose sight of the efforts being made by the ruling circles of the United States of America to undermine, by means of their campaign of slander against the USSR, the influence of progressive elements in their own country, ^asuch as “Progressive Citizens of America[2], the National Council of Soviet-American Friendship[3], the Welles-Group[4] and many more^a who advocate ^adeepening of the friendly^a **better**^b relations with the USSR. The attack on progressive elements in the United States of America is undoubtedly aimed at undermining their influence in view of the Presidential elections to be held in the autumn of 1948.

The collection is full of documents concocted by Hitlerite diplomatic officials in the depths of the German diplomatic offices. This fact alone should have served as a warning against unilateral use and publication of documents which are ^b**one-sided**^b and tendentious, giving an account from the standpoint of the Hitler Government, and which are intended to present these events in a light which would be favorable to the Hitlerites. ^b**Precisely for this reason**,^b the Soviet Government was opposed to ^b**unilateral**^b publication of the captured German documents without preliminary thorough and joint verification ^aand selection^a of them. ^aFalsification begins at the start.^a

^aSignificantly,^a ^b**Even the French Government news agency, France Presse, found itself compelled to admit that the procedure of publication of the materials to be published by the three Governments without the knowledge of the Soviet Union, “is not quite in accord with the normal diplomatic procedure”.** Nonetheless,^b the British Government did not agree with this.

The American, British, and French Governments have unilaterally published the German documents without hesitating to falsify history in their efforts to ^b**slander**^b ^ablacken^a the Soviet Union^a's name,^a which bore the brunt of the struggle against the Hitlerite aggression. ^aand acquired eternal glory through the destruction of Germany and the saving of the world from subjugation by fascism. We will firmly oppose any attempts that try to shift the blame for the Second World War on others.^a

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

In view of this, the Soviet Government on its part feels itself entitled to make public the secret documents concerning the secret relations between Hitler Germany and the Governments of Great Britain, the United States of America and France which fell into the hands of the Soviet Government, and which the above-mentioned three Governments concealed from public opinion.

They concealed these documents; they do not want to make them public. But we believe that after all which has taken place, these documents must be made public, so that historical truths can be re-established.

The Soviet Government possesses important documents which were captured by Soviet troops during the smashup of Hitler Germany; publication of these documents will help to present a true picture of ^bhow Hitler's aggression^b and the Second World War were in reality prepared and developed, ^awhich the Governments of the imperialist states will try to twist and falsificate.^a

The same note is also served by ^a“Reply to Slanderers”^a ^bthe historical note, “Falsifiers of History”^b, now being published by the Soviet Bureau^a of the Ministry for Internal Affairs^a under the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

Secret documents pertaining to this subject will be published shortly[5].

1. How Preparations for German Aggression Were Commenced.

^aThe slanderers from the department of [George C.] Marshall^a ^bAmerican fakers^b and their British and French associates are trying to create the impression that the preparations for the German aggression which developed into the Second World War were begun in the autumn of 1939. Yet who can swallow this bait nowadays but absolutely naïve people prepared to believe any sensational fabrication?

Who does not know that Germany began preparing for war immediately after Hitler had come to power? Who does not know, moreover, that the Hitler regime was established by German monopoly circles with the full approval of the ruling camp of England, France and the United States?

In order to prepare for war and to provide herself with the most modern armament, Germany had to restore and develop her heavy industry, and first of all her metallurgical and war industries in the Ruhr. Having sustained defeat in the first imperialist war Germany, then under the yoke of the Versailles treaty, could not do so with her forces in a short period. German imperialism was rendered powerful support in this matter by ^aimperialist circles from other countries and especially from ^athe United States of America.

[...] [*Omitted were the parts of the text which dealt with the help of American banks and corporations to the reconstruction of the German heavy and armament industries; cf. Falsificators of History 1948, pp. 7–10. Stalin did not amend this part*].

It was this golden rain of American dollars that fertilized the heavy industry of Hitler Germany and in particular her war industry. It was billions of American dollars invested by overseas monopolies in the war economy of Hitler Germany that re-established Germany's war potential and placed in the hands of the Hitler regime the weapons it needed for aggression. Relying on the financial support which came mainly from American monopolies, Germany within a short period of time re-established a powerful war industry that was capable of producing enormous amounts of first-rate armaments, thousands upon thousands of tanks, planes, and guns as well as naval ships of the latest designs and armament of other kinds. ^aAt the same time, Hitler built a gigantic army which was able to achieve all the aggressive plans of German fascism. ^aFakers of history would like to forget all this, as they are trying to evade responsibility for their policy which ^b**supplied Hitler aggression with arms**^b, unleashed the Second World War and led to war disaster without parallel in history, which cost humankind million upon millions of victims.

Thus it must not be forgotten that the first and foremost prerequisite of Hitler aggression was provided by the resurgence and modernization of Germany's ^a-war machinery-^b **heavy industry and war industry**^b, and that this became possible as a result of the direct and extensive ^b**financial**^b support rendered by the ruling circles of ^a-some Great Powers, especially^a the United States of America. And yet this ^a-only one aspect-^a ^b**is not all**^b.

Another factor of decisive importance which helped to unleash Hitler aggression was the policy of the ruling circles of England and France ^a-of constantly giving in to Hitler German demands-^a which is known as “appeasing” Hitler Germany, ^b-**a policy of renouncing collective security**^b. At present it should be clear to everyone that it was this policy of British and French ruling circles as expressed in their renunciation of collective security, in their refusal to resist German aggression, in their ^a-acceptance of^a ^b**connivance**^b with ^b**Hitler Germany's**^b aggressive demands, that led to the Second World War.

We shall now turn to further facts. In 1933, soon after Hitler came to power, a “Pact of Accord and Cooperation” was signed in Rome by the four Powers—Great Britain, Germany, France and Italy—through the efforts of the British and French Governments. This pact signified that the British and French Governments came to terms with German and Italian fascism, which even at that time did not try to conceal its aggressive intentions. At the same time, this pact with the fascist states signified the renunciation of the policy of strengthening the unified of the peace-loving powers against the aggressive states. By coming to terms with Germany and Italy behind the backs of the other powers who were taking part in the disarmament conference which was being held at the time and was discussing a Soviet proposal on the conclusion of a non-aggression pact and a pact on the definition of an aggressor, Great Britain and France dealt a blow to the cause of peace and the security of nations. Soon after, ^b**in 1934, England and France helped Hitler to take advantage of the inimical attitude of their ally Poland—ruled by her gentry—toward the USSR, and this resulted**

in the conclusion of a non-aggression^b pact [*on the margin a question is written by Stalin: "How is this Pact called?"*]^a in 1939^a between Germany and Poland which formed one of the ^{a-main} ^a **important^b** stages in the preparation of German aggression. ^{a-}This pact was a maneuver of Hitlerite foreign policy in order to use Poland as a weapon in their aggressive plans. It is known, that Hitler cultivated his preposterous plans of German world power during that time. "In the East, we want to expand our state up to the Caucasus or Iran", he explained. "In the West, we need the French coast, Flanders and the Netherlands. Furthermore, we need Sweden. When must become a colonial power ... either will we rule over Europe or we ... transform into a collection of minor states."^a

^b**Hitler needed this pact for the purpose of disorganizing the ranks of the adherents of collective security and to show by this example that what Europe needed was not collective security but bilateral agreements. This allowed the German aggressor to decide for himself with whom to conclude them, whom to attack and when to do so. Beyond any doubt, the German-Polish pact constituted the first serious break in the edifice of collective security.**^b Hitler grew bold and openly took a series of steps to re-establish Germany's armed forces without encountering any opposition on the part of the rulers of England and France. On the contrary, soon after that, in 1935, a naval agreement between Britain and Germany was concluded in London where Ribbentrop had arrived for this purpose. Under this agreement, Great Britain consented to re-establishment of German naval forces in a strength which nearly equaled that of the French Navy. Besides, Hitler obtained the right to build submarines with an aggregate displacement amounting to 45 per cent of that of the British submarine fleet. During the same period, Hitler Germany also took unilateral aimed at abolishing all other ^{b-}**restrictions on the growth^b** of Germany's armed forces that had been imposed by the Treaty of Versailles. ^{b-}**These actions encountered no opposition on the part of England, France, or the United States^b.** The appetite of the fascist aggressors grew every day with the manifest connivance of the United States, Great Britain and France.

It was certainly not accidental that at that time both Germany and Italy easily got away with their armed interventions in Ethiopia and Spain.

The Soviet Union alone consistently and firmly pursued its policy of peace, championing the principles of the equality and independence of Ethiopia, who was moreover a member of the League of Nations, and the right of the lawful Republican Government in Spain to receive the support of the democratic countries against German and Italian intervention.

“The Soviet Union,” said V.M. Molotov at the session of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR on January 10, 1936 in connection with Italy’s attack on Ethiopia, “has demonstrated in the League of Nations its fidelity to this principle—the principle of the political independence and national equality of all states, in the case of one of the small countries, Abyssinia. The Soviet Union has also taken advantage of its membership in the League of Nations to put practice its policy toward an imperialist aggressor.” [6] Molotov said also said at that time that the “Italo-Abyssinian war shows that the threat of a world war is growing and is steadily spreading over Europe.” [*underlining and exclamation marks by Stalin*].

And what were the Governments of the United States, Great Britain and France doing at that time, under whose eyes the fascist bastards were dealing ever more insolently with their victims? They did not as much lift a finger to curb the German and Italian aggressors, to defend the rights of nations which were being trampled upon, to preserve peace and to stop the Second World War which was approaching. The Soviet Union alone was doing everything possible in order to block the fascist aggressors’ way. The Soviet Union came forward as the initiator and champion of collective security. As early as February 6, 1933, ^b**M.M. Litvinov, the Representative of** ^c^b the Soviet Union in the General Commission on Disarmament, proposed that the Commission adopt a declaration on the definition of aggression and aggressor.

In proposing an definition of **“aggressor”** [*underlined by Stalin*], the Soviet Union held that it was necessary in

the interest of the general security and in order to facilitate agreement on the maximum reduction of armaments to define the term “aggression” with the utmost possible precision in order to “forestall every pretext for its justification.” This proposal was, however, declined by the Conference, which was acting under the direction of England and France ^bfor the benefit of German aggression. [7]

Everybody knows what a persistent and prolonged struggle was waged by the Soviet Union and by its delegation to the League of Nations, headed by Litvinov, to maintain and consolidate collective security. Throughout the whole prewar period, the Soviet delegation upheld the principle of collective security in the League of Nations, raising its voice in defense of this principle at practically every session of the League of Nations, in practically every commission of the League of Nations. It is known, however, that the voice of the Soviet delegation remained a voice in the wilderness. [8]

The whole world is familiar with the proposals made by the Soviet delegation concerning measures for strengthening collective security, proposals which, on the instruction of Soviet Government, were addressed to Mr. [Joseph] Avenol [9], Secretary-General of the League of Nations, on August 30, 1936, with a request that they should be discussed by the League of Nations.

It is also known, however, that these proposals were buried in the archives of the League of Nations and that no action was taken on them. It was clear that England and France, who controlled the League of Nations at that time, rejected collective resistance to German aggression. They rejected collective security because it stood in the way of their newly adopted policy of “appeasing” German aggression. Naturally, this policy could not but result in the intensification of German aggression, but the ruling of the Anglo-French circles believed that this was not dangerous because, having satisfied Hitler aggression by concessions in the West, they could then direct this aggression to the East and utilize it as a weapon against the USSR. ^b

In his report to the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in March, 1939, J.V. Stalin, analyzing the reasons for the ^a-systematic concessions of the Western powers^a **growth of Hitlerite aggression^b**, said: “The chief reason is that the majority of the non-aggressive countries, particularly England and France, have rejected the policy of collective security, the policy of collective resistance to the aggressors, and have taken up a policy of non-intervention, a position of neutrality.”

^a-It is absolutely clear that the position of the Soviet delegation at General Commission for Disarmament regarding collective security was not a personal opinion of one or another diplomat, but rather an expression of the general line of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. Therefore, the attempt of numerous slanderers and falsifiers to imply that Litvinov was relieved of his post because he championed the principle of collective security is completely absurd. It is not true, because Litvinov did not act on his own, but on behalf of the Soviet Government. Furthermore, one should remember that Litvinov issued his statements regarding collective security in 1935 and that he was relieved of his post as People’s Commissar for Foreign Affairs in 1939.^a

^b**In order to confuse the reader and at the same time to slander the Soviet Government, Neal Stanford, an American journalist, asserts that the Soviet Government was opposed to collective security, that Litvinov was dismissed and replaced by Molotov in the post of the People’s Commissar of Foreign Affairs because he had been pursuing a policy of consolidating collective security. One could hardly imagine anything more stupid than this fantastic assertion. It is clear that Litvinov did not pursue any policy of his own, but the policy of the Soviet Government. On the other hand, everybody knows what a struggle for collective security was waged by the Soviet Government and its representatives, including Litvinov, throughout the prewar period.**^b

As regards the appointment of ^aGen.^a M.V. Molotov to the post of the People’s Commissar of Foreign Affairs, it is ^alinked to^a perfectly clear that in the complex situation, when fascist aggressors were preparing the Second World War,

when Great Britain and France, backed by the United States of America were plainly abetting the aggressors and spurring them to start a war against the USSR, it was necessary to have in such a responsible post as that of People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs ^a-an implacable and resilient leader who was able to guarantee a successful struggle to achieve the goals of the Leninist and Stalinist foreign policies^a ^b**a political leader with greater experience and greater popularity in the country than Litvinov^b**. The rejection of the collective security pact by the Western Powers was not fortuitous.

It was in that period that the struggle between two lines in world affairs had developed. One was that of the struggle for peace, for the organization of collective security and for resistance to aggression by the joint efforts of the peace-loving nations. This was the line the Soviet Union was pursuing, consistently and staunchly defending the interests of all peace-loving nations, great or small. The other line was that of rejecting the organization of collective security, of refusing to oppose aggression, and this inevitably encouraged the fascist countries to intensify their aggressive activity and thereby helped to unleash a new war.

Historical truth, as can be seen from all this, consists of the facts that Hitlerite aggression became possible, firstly because ^aindividual Great Powers, especially^a the United States of America helped the Germans to establish within a short time a war economic base for ^aGerman imperialism^a ^b**German aggression and thus provided this aggression with arms^b**; and secondly, because the **policy of^b rejection^b** of collective security by the ruling Anglo-French circles ^a-not only failed to support the creation of an United Front of the peace-loving states, which in itself would have been a guarantee against the unleashing of the Second World War, but also threw the ranks of the peace-loving states into disarray and gave fascist Germany confidence and power, while weakening the camp of the peace-loving states. This ultimately led to unrestrained aggression of Hitler Germany^a ^b**disorganized the ranks of the peace-loving countries, disrupted the unite front of these countries against aggression, paved the road for German aggression and helped Hitler to unleash the Second World War.^b**

^aSuch are the facts, which disprove the slander against the Soviet Union and reveal the true culprits that caused the Second World War. ^aWhat would have happened if the United States had not financed Hitler's heavy industry, and England and France ^awith knowledge and help from the United States had not supported the German preparations for aggression towards the East and accepted the plans for collective security the Soviet Union had proposed? This would have decreased the probability of a World War to a minimum^a **had not rejected collective security, but on the contrary had organized jointly with the Soviet Union collective resistance against German aggression? The result would have been that Hitlerite aggression would lack armament, Hitler's expansionist policy would have been caught in the vise of a system of collective security, the Hitlerite's chance of success in unleashing the Second World War would have been reduced to the minimum.**

And if in spite of unfavourable conditions, the Hitlerites had still ventured to unleash the Second World War, they would have been defeated in the very first year of war. Unfortunately, this did not happen because of the ruinous policy which was pursued by the United States of America, England and France during the course of the whole prewar period.

It is they who are guilty of allowing Hitler to unleash with some measure of success the Second World War, which lasted nearly six years and took millions of human lives.^b

II. Not a Struggle against German Aggression but a Policy of ^aChanneling German Aggression against the Soviet Union^a **Isolating the USSR.**^b

[...] [10]

^b**It was thus that the political conditions for "uniting Europe without Russia" were created. What they were after was the complete isolation of the Soviet Union.**^b

III. ^aRejection of an Alliance with the Soviet Union against German Aggression and the Self-Defensive Measures

Undertaken by the USSR^a ^bThe Isolation of the Soviet Union. The Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact.^b

[...] [11]

^bIt would be a gross slander to assert that the conclusion of a pact with the Hitlerites was part of the plan of the foreign policy of the USSR. On the contrary, the USSR strove at all times to have an agreement with Western non-aggressive states against the German and Italian aggressors for the achievement of collective security on the basis of equality. But there must be two parties to an agreement.

Whereas the USSR insisted on an agreement for combating aggression, Britain and France systematically rejected it, preferring to pursue a policy of isolating the USSR, a policy of concessions to the aggressors, a policy of directing aggression to the East, against the USSR.

The United States of America, far from counteracting that ruinous policy, backed it in every way. As for the American billionaires, they went on investing their capital in German heavy industries, helping the Germans to expand their war industries, and thus supplying German aggression with arms. They might as well be saying: “Go on, Messrs. Europeans, wage war to your hearts’ content; wage war with god’s help; while we, modest American billionaires, will accumulate wealth out of your war, making hundreds of millions of dollars in super-profits” only.

Naturally, with this state of affairs in Europe, there only remained one way out for the Soviet Union: to accept the German proposal for a pact. This was, after all, the best of all the possible ways out.

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

The claptrap of slanderers of all hues to the effect that the USSR should be in no case allowed itself to conclude a pact with the Germans can only be regarded as ridiculous. Why could Poland, who had Britain and France as allies, conclude a non-aggression pact with Germany in 1934, and the Soviet Union not conclude a similar pact in 1939?

It is not a fact that of all the non-aggressive great Powers in Europe the Soviet Union was the last to make a pact with the Germans?

Of course, the falsifiers of history and other reactionaries are displeased with the fact that the Soviet Union succeeded in making good use of the Soviet-German pact to strengthen its defenses; that it succeeded in moving its frontiers far to the West and in barring the way to the unhampered eastward advance of German aggression; that Hitler's troops had to begin their offensive to the East not from the Narva-Minsk-Kiev line, but from a line hundreds of kilometers farther west; that the USSR was not bled to death in the Great Patriotic War, but emerged victorious from that war. This displeasure, however, should be regarded as a manifestation of the impotent rage of bankrupt politicians.

The vicious displeasure of these gentlemen can only be regarded as a demonstration of the indubitable fact that the policy of the Soviet Union had been and remains a correct policy.

To be continued

Soviet Information Bureau^b

Reference: RGASPI, f. 558, op. 11, d. 243, pp. 2–56.

[1] Please note that Soviet and Communist propaganda refused and still refuses to use the terms “National Socialist” and “National Socialism” in order not to associate National Socialism with socialism. On January 26, 1934, Stalin explained this in a speech at the Party Congress:

“I do not only talk about fascism in general, but about the fascism of the German kind, that incorrectly calls itself national socialism, because even with the most thorough examination it is impossible to recognize even a trace of socialism.” (Stalin’s report to the XVII Party Congress on the work of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on January 26, 1934, published in Stalin 1955, pp. 164-211, here p. 169).

[2] The Progressive Citizens of America, active between 1946 and 1948, was founded by followers of the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt. They were promoting cooperation between the USA and the Soviet Union.

[3] The National Council of American-Soviet Friendship was founded in 1943 by the Communist Party of the USA and distributed pro-Soviet propaganda in the USA.

[4] Sumner Welles (1882–1961), a US diplomat and publisher, was an Under Secretary of State in the Roosevelt administration from 1937 to 1943 and was pro-Soviet.

[5] In February 1948, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR published the compilation of documents *Документы и материалы кануна Второй мировой войны. Т. I. Ноябрь 1937–1938 гг.* (*Dokumenty vol. 1* 1948); in March 1948, the second volume was published under the title *Документы и материалы кануна Второй мировой войны. Т. II. 1938–1939 гг.: Архив Дирксена* (*Dokumenty vol. 2* 1948). See also *Sovetsko-amerikanskie otnosheniya* 2004, p. 530.

[6] Stalin hoped that the conflict regarding Ethiopia would cause a quarrel between the European powers, which was to be further stirred up, see Stalin to Kaganovich and Molotov, September 2, 1935, see *Stalin i Kaganovich* 2001, p. 545.

[7] Soviet Union was not interested in disarmament (especially of the Soviet Union), because it began a massive armament program in the late 1920s. Since early 1930, the expansion of the armament industry took on gigantic dimensions, especially in regards to tanks, air force and chemical weapons. In detail see Musiał 2008, pp. 190–211, 302–360.

[8] Note the frequent use of biblical sayings by Stalin.

[9] Joseph Louis Anne Avenol (1879–1951), French politician and diplomat, General Secretary of the League of Nations between 1933 and 1940.

[10] Chapter II was mostly left untouched by Stalin (with the exception of the last two sentences). Cf. *Falsificators of History* 1948, pp. 16–27.

[11] The first pages of Chapter III, where the course of the British-French-Soviet negotiations (April to August 1939) is detailed, were not majorly revised. Cf. *Falsificators of History* 1948, pp. 27–42. However, the last two pages of Chapter III were written by Stalin by himself.

Document No. 2

February 1948, Moscow – “Falsifiers of History (Historical Survey)”, chapter IV with Stalin’s handwritten corrections and additions.

^b4. The Creation of An “Eastern” Front, Germany’s Attack Upon The USSR; The Anti-Hitler Coalition and The Question of Inter-Allied Obligations.

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

That was why the first task of the Soviet Government was to create an “Eastern” front against Hitler’s aggression, to build up a defense line along the western frontiers of the Byelorussian and Ukrainian Republics and thus set up a barrier to prevent an unhindered advance of German troops eastward. To do this it was necessary to reunite Western Byelorussia and Western Ukraine which the Poland of gentry had seized in 1920 with Soviet Byelorussia and the Soviet Ukraine, and to move Soviet troops there. This matter booked no delay as the poorly equipped Polish troops proved to be unstable, the Polish command and the Polish Government were already in full flight, and Hitler’s troops, meeting no serious obstacles, could occupy the Byelorussian and Ukrainian territories before the Soviet troops got there.

On September 17, 1939, the Soviet troops, at the order of the Soviet Government, crossed the prewar Soviet-Polish border, occupied Western Byelorussia and Western Ukraine and proceeded to build defenses there along the western line of the Ukrainian and Byelorussian territories. In the main, it was the line which is known in history as the “Curzon Line” established at the Versailles Conference of the Allies.

A few days later the Soviet Government signed pacts of mutual assistance with the Baltic States, providing for the stationing of Soviet Army garrisons on the territory of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the organization of Soviet air fields and the building of naval bases.

To be continued

Soviet Information Bureau^b

Reference: RGASPI, collection 558, description 11, file 243, pp. 2–56.

Document No. 3

February 1948, Moscow – Second part of the Stalin's additions to the Chapter IV of "Falsifiers of History".

^bIt was not hard to see that the creation of an "Eastern" front was an important contribution not only to the organization of the security of the USSR but to the common cause of the peace-loving states that were fighting Hitler's aggression. Nevertheless, the answer of the Anglo-Franco-American circles, in their overwhelming majority, to this step of the Soviet Government was to start a malicious anti-Soviet campaign, describing the Soviet action as aggression.

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

"That the Russian armies should stand on this line was clearly necessary for the safety of Russia against the Nazi menace. At any rate, the line is there and an Eastern front has been created which Nazi Germany does not dare to assail. When Herr von Ribbentrop was summoned to Moscow last week, it was to learn the fact and to accept the fact that the Nazi designs upon the Baltic States and upon the Ukraine must come to a dead stop." [1]

While the situation with regard to the security of the USSR was more or less satisfactory on the western frontiers, and a considerable distance from Moscow, Minsk and Kiev, the same could not be said on the northern frontier of the USSR. Here, at a distance of 32 kilometers from Leningrad stood Finnish troops, the majority of whose commanding officers oriented themselves toward Hitler Germany. The Soviet Government was well aware of the fact that the fascist elements among the ruling circles of Finland, who were closely connected with the Hitlerites and who wielded strong influence in the Finnish army, were striving to capture Leningrad. The fact that Halder, the Chief of General Staff of Hitler's Army, arrived in the

summer of 1939 in Finland to instruct the highest leaders of the Finnish Army, could not be regarded as a mere accident. There could hardly be any doubt that the leading circles of Finland were in league with the Hitlerites, that they wanted to turn Finland into a springboard for Hitler Germany's attack upon the USSR.

It is therefore not surprising that all the attempts of the USSR to find a common language with the Finnish Government with a view to improving the relations between the two countries remained futile.

The Government of Finland declined, one after another, all the friendly proposals of the Soviet Government, the purchase of which was to guarantee the security of the USSR, particularly of Leningrad—and this in spite of the fact that the Soviet Union was willing to meet Finland half-way and to satisfy her legitimate interests.

The Finnish Government declined the proposal of the USSR to move the Finnish border on the Karelian Isthmus a few dozen kilometers, although the Soviet Government was willing to compensate Finland with an area twice as large in Soviet Karelia.

The Finnish Government also declined the proposal of the USSR to conclude a pact of mutual assistance, thereby demonstrating that the security of the USSR from the direction of Finland remained unguaranteed.

By these and similar hostile actions and provocations on the Soviet-Finnish border, Finland unleashed war against the Soviet Union.

The results of the Soviet-Finnish War are known. The frontiers of the USSR in the northwest and particularly the Leningrad area were further shifted away and the security of the USSR was strengthened. This played an important part in the defense of the Soviet Union against Hitler's aggression, inasmuch as Hitler Germany and her Finnish accomplices had to begin their offensive in the northwest of the USSR, not in close proximity to Leningrad, but from a line nearly 150 kilometers to the northwest of it. [...]

[Omitted are the parts dealing with the Anglo-French plans of giving Finland military support in early 1940 and to bomb the Soviet oilfields in Baku in order to cut off German supplies. Stalin did not majorly amend this] [2]

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

Thus the defense of the USSR against Hitlerite aggression was strengthened also in the north, in the Leningrad area, where the defense line was shifted to a distance of 150 kilometers north of Leningrad with Vyborg included.

But this did not mean that the formation of an “Eastern” front from the Baltic to the Black Sea had been completed. Pacts had been concluded with the Baltic States, but there were as yet no Soviet troops there capable of holding the defenses. Moldavia and Bukovina had formally been reunited with the USSR, but there too, there were still no troops capable of holding the defenses. In the middle of June 1940, Soviet troops entered Bukovina and Moldavia. The latter had been severed by Romania from the USSR after the October Revolution.

Thus the formation of an “Eastern” front against Hitlerite aggression from the Baltic to the Black Sea was completed.^b

The British and French ruling circles, which went on abusing the USSR and calling it an aggressor for creating an “Eastern” front, evidently did not realize that the appearance of an “Eastern” front signified a radical turn in the development of the war – a turn against Hitlerite tyranny, a turn in favor of a victory for democracy.

They did not realize that it was not a question of infringing or not infringing upon the national rights of Finland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland, but that the point was to organize victory over the Nazis in order to prevent the conversion of those countries into disenfranchised colonies of Hitler Germany. [...]

[Omitted are heavily edited by Stalin passages on the importance of the newly-created “Eastern Front”, the course of the war in the West, the German-Soviet war after June 22, 1941, and the Great Coalition] [3].

These are the facts.

Naturally, the falsifiers of history and the slanderers are called falsifiers and slanderers because they do not entertain any respect for facts. They prefer to gossip and slander. There is, however, no reason to doubt that these gentlemen will, in the end, have to acknowledge the universally known truth, which is, that gossip and slander perish but the facts remain.

Soviet Information Bureau

Reference: RGASPI, collection 558, description 11, file 243, pp. 60–116.

[1] When Churchill said this, he had no knowledge of the German-Soviet secret deal on the division of Poland of August 23, 1939, and the German-Soviet alliance, hence his conclusion (compare with Churchill 1948, p. 363). A few months later, when it became clear that this was a German-Soviet alliance, the British government was for an attack on the USSR and began to prepare it together with France (for further details see Osborn 2000).

[2] RGASPI, collection 558, description 11, file 273, pp. 90–95; *Falsificators of History* 1948, pp. 45–48.

[3] RGASPI, collection 558, description 11, file 273, pp. 96–116; *Falsificators of History* 1948, pp. 49–61.

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