

VICTORY OF THE SOVIET ARMY IN CENTRAL AND SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE — A DECISIVE FACTOR OF THE ORIGIN OF THE EUROPEAN PART OF THE WORLD SOCIALISTIC SYSTEM

The Second World War, incited by the policy of reigning circles of the imperialist superpowers and unleashed by Fascist Germany and militaristic Japan did not fulfill the hopes of world reaction. Instead of a presupposed ruin or weakening of the Soviet Union, the first socialist state in human history, the imperialist powers were themselves substantially weakened and finally even their sphere of influence was limited.

Entry of the Soviet Union into the war in the summer of 1941 substantially altered its character. Mutual conflict of two imperialist configurations to dominate the world changed into a just struggle of the nations of the anti-Hitler coalition against the Fascist plague which threatened the intrinsic existence of human society. From the very start, the Soviet government did not hide the fact that it considered Soviet participation in the war not only as a fight for the defense of the independence of a socialist state, but also as a struggle against the forces of the most extreme forms of world reaction which threatened the very physical existence of other European and Asiatic nations, deprived by Fascism and militarism of their national independence. Simply, as stated by J. V. Stalin as early as July 3rd, 1941 »the aim of this national patriotic war against Fascist oppressors is not only the liquidation of the danger threatening our country, but also help to all nations of Europe which fell under the yoke of German Fascism.«¹

And so, during the Second World War the hopes of the nations were fixed primarily toward the Soviet Union which was gradually taking upon its shoulders the main burden of the war against the Fascist Axis. And no other country of the anti-Hitler coalition sacrificed so much for the great cause of liberation of European nations from Fascism. And all this at the time when further existence

¹ I. Stalin, *O Velikoj Otečestvennoj vojne Sovetskogo Sojuza*, Moskva 1952, 16.

of tens of lands and hundreds of million of people of various countries was concerned.

The development of the situation on the European battlefields, determined primarily by complete liberation of Soviet territories and by fast advancement of Soviet troops toward the West of Soviet borders during the spring and summer 1944, led to a situation when the Soviet Union assumed a leading role in the gradual liberation of a number of nations of Eastern, Middle and South-Eastern Europe. Soviet soldiers who fought on the territories of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Yugoslavia and whose military actions also supported indirectly the successful struggle of Yugoslav and Albanian partisans, were thus creating a situation extremely significant for further post-war development of these countries. And so the Soviet soldiers by their heroism fulfilled not only their duty toward their native land but also an internationalist mission toward other nations of the world, primarily of Europe. »The Soviet army« said G. Dimitrov at one time, »covered its weapons by eternal glory: by destroying Fascist lust for world rule it saved humanity from barbaric Hitlerism and helped to liberate a number of Slav and non-Slav nations from imperialist oppression.«²

It is at the same time necessary to note that »destruction of the striking divisions of world imperialism, German Fascism and Japanese militarism, the fact that the Soviet Union realized its mission of liberation, helped in a decisive manner in the success of people's democratic revolution in a number of European and Asiatic countries.«³ Put in other words — the fact, that the Soviet army, by its direct liberation of some East European states, by the help of its military actions in the overthrow of reactionary Fascist regimes in other countries, created favorable conditions for organic spread of the anti-Fascist resistance movement of these Lands into a national and democratic revolution, when the national liberation struggle joined forces with the class struggle against its own treacherous bourgeoisie and large landowners.

The fact however, that the Soviet army entered the territories of a number of East European countries and thereby created the premise for a successful course of a national and democratic revolution, does not in any way mean that the theses of a part of burgeoise historiography about Soviet soldiers exporting revolution on their bayonettes into these countries and their »sovietization« of lands liberated by them, is true. The Communists always proclaimed that artificial export of revolution was not possible, because for the realization of any kind of socio-economic changes must primarily exist suitable internal conditions. In other words: »Socialist revo-

² G. Dimitrov, *Izbrannyje proizvođenija II*, Moskva 1968, 600.

³ K 100-letiju so dnja rožděnija V. I. Lenina, Tezisy CK KPSS, Moskva 1970, 23.

lution cannot be imported and cannot be provoked from the outside. It is a result of the inner development of each country, of an extreme sharpening of internal social contradictions. Communist parties, following the course of Marxism-Leninism, always rejected export of revolution; at the same time they always decisively fought against imperialist import of revolution.«⁴

After all, the facts themselves contradict the theses concerning the export of revolution. The Soviet army was stationed on the territories of Austria and Iran for quite a long time and still no revolutionary changes took place there. Primarily, because no internal premises for revolution existed in these countries. And on the contrary revolution was victorious in Albania, which the Soviet troops never entered or in Yugoslavia, where they operated only in a very limited manner. But both of these countries possessed such inner forces which, having taken advantage of a suitable international situation, were able to carry out revolutionary changes.

Therefore a revolutionary triumph in this or that country had to be prepared, in the first place, by prior inner development. It had to be the outcome of internal development, of course under favorable external conditions, assisted, in our case, by the decisive role the Soviet Union had in the defeat of the states of the Fascist Axis.

And it was exactly at the end of the war that such favorable internal conditions arose in East European countries. Revolutionary excitement of the nations of these lands was tremendous, great was also their unswerving decision to settle with those classes which they held responsible for the loss of independence or participation in a criminal war side by side with Germany. The defeat of Fascism called forth democratic moods everywhere, especially among the working people, and this alone accelerated further development of social processes in the hitherto capitalist world. The war also showed the impossibility of imperialist attempts to destroy socialist forces by military power and thus to resolve the main contradiction of our times — the clash between capitalism and socialism — in favour of imperialism. This too inspired the working masses in the East European countries. The Red army which entered these countries as an army of liberation had no need whatsoever to kindle this revolutionary excitement.

On the other hand, however, it is necessary to take into account the importance of what external forces and in which way these forces affected the inner processes in a concrete situation. Simply, it depended whether Soviet or Anglo-American forces liberated individual countries, and thus influenced further development. That is why we emphasise the whole complex of internal and external factors. Only then can we be able to determine correctly the role of

⁴ Programmnyje dokumenty borby za mir demokratiju i socializm, Moskva 1961, 76—77.

the Soviet army: by its influence and protection it facilitated the realization of those processes, which were naturally maturing and continuing in individual countries.

The prime importance of the entry of Soviet army upon the territories of the East European countries did not lie in the fact that the army could have interfered in the inner processes which were taking place in these lands, but in the fact that it liberated or helped to liberate the nations of those countries and thus created one of the most important premises for the realization of the free will of the working people.

Even the actors of the opening phase of the struggle between world socialism, which started to spread over the boundaries of one country and became a bloc — a world system, and capitalism, realized all this very well after all. Leading spokesmen of Rumanian bourgeoisie, frightened by the entry of Soviet army on Rumanian territory at the beginning of April 1944, bombarded Allied Command for the Mediterranean region with requests for Anglo-American troops. Similarly later, while negotiating separate armistice, the Rumanian emissars continually demanded joint Soviet-Allied occupation of the land. Similar plans, supported primarily by the British prime minister, appeared in connection with Bulgaria and Hungary. And as late as April 1945 W. Churchill, incited by the spokesmen of Czechoslovak bourgeoisie, especially by H. Ripka, unfolded in connection with the entry of American forces on the Czechoslovak territory plans to occupy the most important parts of Czechoslovakia by American army, for, according to his own words, it could have »changed completely the post-war situation in Czechoslovakia and influenced greatly the situation in the neighboring countries.«⁵

It serves to the credit of the Soviet government and primarily the Soviet Command, that these reactionary plans have not been realized. For thus the nations of Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria or Hungary did not have to share the fate of the Greek nation. The Soviet government realized very well its internationalist duty to lead the Soviet armies as far West as possible and thus to give as many European nations a chance to decide really freely their future fate.

In connection with everything that has been said before, it is also necessary to evaluate the sojourn of Soviet troops on the territories of some East European lands.

Soviet troops entered the territories of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria with the aim to liberate these countries from Fascist occupation or to help the nations of these countries to rid themselves of the treacherous pro-Fascist governments. The arrival of Soviet troops to Czechoslovakia was in harmony with the Czechoslovak-Soviet treaty of alliance and with

⁵ W. S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, VII, Boston 1953, 506.

a special treaty of May 8, 1944, according to which all administrative power after the front passed was to be handed over to the competent Czechoslovak organs. Last Soviet units left the Czechoslovak territory at the end of 1945. The same was true in case of Poland. Soviet troops remained on the territories of Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria, which were allied with Germany until fall 1944, longer. First, on the basis of the armistice treaties of 1944, and later, in case of Rumania and Hungary, on the basis of peace treaties of February 1947.

The presence of Soviet troops on the territories of the before-mentioned countries affected the situation in several directions.

As mentioned before, the prime importance of the entry of Soviet troops on the territories of East European countries did not rest in any possibility of an intervention into the inner processes then taking place in these lands, but in their liberation of these countries from Fascist bondage and their assistance in the struggle of these countries to rid themselves of the dependence on the Fascist Axis. The Soviet army also took a direct or indirect part in the expulsion of the occupants and the destruction of the occupation or local Fascist apparatus, which in many places would have meant great sacrifices for local democratic forces, had they tried to solve their problems themselves. Thus with the help of the Soviet army a consistent purification of public life from traitors, collaborationists and Fascists could have been accomplished in those countries and reactionary forces were deprived of their important positions of power. For at the same time this democratization process of purification undermined everywhere the position of local bourgeoisie which on the most part collaborated with the Nazis and their followers. It is therefore necessary to see the importance of the arrival and longer or shorter so shorter sojourns of the Soviets on the territories of East European countries also in connection with this development.

Besides, it is also necessary to see the moral side of the question. The presence of Soviet troops in liberated Czechoslovakia, Poland and now allied Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary had in itself a great mobilizing significance for all progressive elements of the society of these countries. The Soviet Union as a superpower, which deserved the greatest credit for the victory of the anti-Hitler coalition, gained tremendous authority among the working people. The workes especially welcomed the Soviet soldiers everywhere as their class brothers from whom they could learn, but who could, in case of necessity, also help them.

After years of unbridled anti-Soviet propaganda the general desire was to learn the truth about the Soviet Union. And who else than Soviet soldiers could testify truthfully and without distortion about the first socialist state and thus become real propagators of the new social system.

Best agitation work, however, was achieved by the Soviet soldiers by their concrete actions, their relationship to the inhabitants of the liberated countries, when they clearly demonstrated that they did not enter these territories as occupation forces but as real liberators who were always prepared to offer their assistance in the difficulties of the renewed life in peace.

Soviet soldiers from the first moment of their arrival started to remove in the first place the consequences of the war. Sailors removed mines from the waters of the Danube and the Black Sea and Baltic coast. The Soviet Command also renewed communications, telephone and telegraph connections everywhere and with their own resources, considering the renewal of transportation and communications necessary for the normal course of economic life of individual countries. For instance at the beginning of 1945 the Soviet soldiers in Yugoslavia renovated a destroyed bridge over the Danube in Belgrade, the largest bridge in the country. In Rumania they renovated and put into operation 380 kilometers of railroads, 1000 bridges and 16 tunnels, etc.

At the same time the Soviet command offered the people of the liberated countries great material aid. It for instance furnished foodstuffs directly out of the supplies of the army and removed the danger of hunger especially during the worst period right after the liberation. So for instance the inhabitants of Prague received as early as the beginning of June 1945 8800 tons of grain and 600 tons of salt and the inhabitants of other large Czech cities fared similarly. However, The Czechoslovak organs also received certain important raw materials to make the production in certain industrial sectors possible. The Soviet Command in Czechoslovakia also handed over a part of their war spoils, in the first place machines and transportation mediums. A similar situation existed in Rumania where the Soviet Command decided to help to avert the threatening shortage of basic foodstuffs. Soviet soldiers helped during the fall harvest 1944 and spring sowing 1945: they supplied fuel, their own transportation means and working power. Again in Yugoslavia the Soviet military organs in an effort to help the inhabitants of Belgrade provided transportation to make the supply of Belgrade with fuel in the winter 1944/45 possible. In connection with this it is necessary to point to Soviet help in the sphere of sanitation — for instance during the liquidation of a typhoid epidemic in Rumania. But the cultural sphere must be noted too, for the Soviet military organs saved from destruction in many cases unreplaceable cultural and historical monuments.

However the military organs themselves, having to their disposition only the limited means of their quartermasters, could not possibly supply all the material aid. Their quartermasters had to see to the needs of the fighting troops first. And thus the greatest part of economic aid was provided by the highest Soviet state organs —

through emergency supplies and supplies based on the first trade agreements signed with the governments of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Yugoslavia.

At the request of the Yugoslav organs 50,000 tons of grain were handed over to the starving population over the Danube river already in the fall of 1944. The provisional Polish government of national unity received an advantageous loan of 50 million rubles and 10 million dollars in January 1945 to buy necessary foodstuffs and raw materials. Large supplies of food and raw materials reached also since spring 1945 Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria on the basis of the recently concluded trade agreements. In the summer of the same year, when the Rumanian agriculture was afflicted by enormous drought, the Soviet government helped out, despite its own economic difficulties, by an extraordinary delivery of 300,000 tons of grain.

The sphere of material help to the new governments of East Europe an countries also included supplies of armaments and army equipment.

Immediately after the liberation, parallely with the economic tasks, the young people's democratic powers everywhere were faced by the task of securing armed protection of all the gains they won out in the war. The struggle against the attempts of the imperialists to overthrow the new road of socialist development in individual people's democracies called for a military organization of resistance against such attempts. That is why the armed forces in all the people's democratic countries were reorganized — with substantial assistance from the Soviet Union, which provided not only experienced advisors and instructors, but also armaments and equipment and actively helped to build up and to reconstruct the domestic armament industry. The Czechoslovak government for instance received a large amount of trophy material and equipment for almost ten divisions out of the possession of the Soviet army. The Yugoslav army received from March to September 1945 armaments and equipment for 12 infantry divisions, three artillery and two tank brigades and one flying squad. After a decision of the Highest Defense Council of the USSR of March of the same year the new Bulgarian government received 334 planes, 65 tanks, 563 artillery guns and a great number of infantry weapons and necessary ammunition. Armed voluntary units which was formed during the war in the USSR were included into the Polish army. Two Rumanian voluntary divisions formed in the USSR also joined the Rumanian army, etc.

The before mentioned facts are in sharp contrast with all assertions about the »uncivilized« behavior of Soviet soldiers in the liberated countries, with all the claims that these soldiers disregarded local problems and traditions and rigidly enforced political deisgns of their government and of world communism. On the contrary, the facts show that the Soviet soldiers, no matter which East European

country they were in, tried to help the population to surmount all the difficulties brought about by the war as fast as possible. On the contrary, it would be possible to bring forth a large amount of evidence of how sensitively the Soviet Command tried to guide the Red Army soldiers to respect the legal power organs in individual countries and not to interfere insensitively into their internal affairs.

As an example let me cite the report of the First Ukrainian Army which reads: »All the units received directions of the Military Council and the Political Administration of the Army which demanded of the political organs to explain to all soldiers and officers the aim of the entry of the Red Army on the Czechoslovak territory and to remind the soldiers and officers of the inadmissibility on any interference into the internal affairs of the power organs of the Czechoslovak Republic and not to put up with tactless behavior toward local, national, customary and religious traditions.«⁶ After all, even the British »Times« of November 9, 1944 admitted, that »all information received so far convinced even the most sceptically minded that Russian civilian and military personnel in these countries (i.e. Bulgaria and Rumania — note: M. T.) were interested only in the settlement of armistice conditions and scrupulously refrained from any intervention into internal affairs.« The same was published by the American New York Times of October 20th the same year. The paper admitted that »the Russians have great patience and are decided not to interfere into internal affairs.« And finally a report of the Czechoslovak military deputy in Constantinople of November 27, 1944 stated that »on the occupied territory, Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary, the Russians do not interfere at all into the internal affairs and as soon as the situation allows they are handing over the local administration to the civilian offices. The inhabitants everywhere are surprized by the correct behavior of the Red Army.«⁷

But it is necessary to see a further aspect of the presence of the Soviet troops. It is the fact, that the Soviet army warded off by its presence on the territory of some East European countries a prospective import of imperialist counter revolution from the outside (although this danger had not been so acute during the first post-war years, it however threatened certain parts of Europe, as shown by British intervention in Greece), and that it at the same time held at bay the domestic reaction and secured, on the other hand, a wide range of activity for the domestic forces.

For instance in case of Poland the presence of Soviet troops tied up the forces of domestic reaction, averted a civil war and all possible attempts of Western powers to intervene. Nor would the reali-

⁶ V. Melichar, Některé otázky československo-sovětského spoje, nectví v počátcích lidově demokratického Československa, In: Československo-sovětské vztahy jako faktor mezinárodní politiky, Praha 1975, 218.

⁷ Archiv Federálního ministerstva zahraničních věcí, Praha, f. Londýnský archiv.

zation of the principal democratization measures, primarily the land reform, be possible without the help of the Soviet Union and the Soviet army. The same was true in case of Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria. Soviet representatives who held leading positions in Allied occupation commissions for these states defended not only the legitimate interests of the Soviet Union — i. e. strict fulfillment of obligations arising out of the treaties, but saw to it, also in accordance with the treaties, that democratization of public life was realized, that progressive forces were not suppressed, etc. Besides that, up to May 1945, the Soviet Command was responsible for this territory as the rear territory of the fighting Soviet troops and simply could not afford a situation, which would threaten the security of the fighting rear. Thus the Soviet occupation organs and the military units they controlled objectively held at bay domestic reactionary forces, for instance in Bulgaria or Rumania, which were ready to secure their shaky position of power even at the cost of a civil war.

Thus the actions of the Soviet occupation organs on the territory of Rumania and Bulgaria helped not only to destroy militarily Nazi Germany, but also assisted the interests of the working people of these countries by helping them to create favorable conditions for the decisive phases of their struggle for political power in the land. For instance still during the combats in Southern Hungary in the fall and winter of 1944, when gangs of Rumanian nationalists started to terrorize the Hungarian population in liberated Northern Transylvania, the Soviet military organs had to take over temporarily the administration of this territory (it was returned into Rumanian hands after the democratic Groza government came to power at the beginning of March 1945). In a similar way the Soviet occupation organs had to stand up with great determination against an attempt of the reactionary Rumanian prime minister Rădescu to unleash in fact a civil war by armed rising against the democratic forces of the land at the end of February 1945, that is at a time when one of the last great German offensives on the Balaton was taking place.

In a similar decisive manner the Soviet organs stood up in Bulgaria against the schismatic activity of Dr. Dimitrov-Gemeto. And in the same way the Soviet organs pressed through the Control Commission the right wing in Hungary, their insistence to adhere strictly to the armistice conditions, and so helped to paralyze all attempts to reverse or slow down the path of the people's democratic revolution.

To sum up, it is necessary to point out that we agree with the theory that principal premises for successful social and economic changes, that also means the socialist revolution, are created in the sphere of inner political life of this of that country. The chances given by internal political development can however be realized only under the premises of appropriate external conditions. That

means primarily such a configuration of forces on the international scale which make concrete assistance of world imperialism and ascension of domestic reactionary forces impossible in a country where democratic processes are taking place. And such external conditions worked favorably for the inhabitants of a number of European countries after the Second World War. The principal factor which influenced such favorable external conditions was the arrival of Soviet troops and their further sojourn in this part of Europe. This factor operated in the before mentioned directions, especially in the sphere of internal development, in the sphere of internal social and economic transformations.

It is however necessary to see that the future of the people's democracies was also secured by the standing the USSR had in world politics after the war — a superpower, which surpassed all other superpowers (except the United States) by her military, economic and moral power. The importance of the Soviet Union was so great now, that none of the problems of European or world politics could have been resolved without her. Beside that the Soviet Union gained an enormous moral credit during the war. The world public admired the unprecedented heroic fight of Soviet citizens in the years of the Great Patriotic War.

The Soviet government could make use of its position in this new set-up after the Second World War to help a number of European and Asiatic countries to ensure the before mentioned proper chances which enabled them to follow a road they chose themselves, the basic premises of which were being formed already during the years of the national liberation struggle.

So the Soviet Union could help even those countries whose territory she did not liberate directly or those that liberated themselves to a great extent as for instance the nations of Albania and Yugoslavia. It is necessary to mention here the great activity of Soviet diplomacy in this direction.

This Soviet activity objectively assisted the newly formed people's democratic regimes to emanate themselves from external political isolation. Beside that these regimes could, in their struggle against the attempts of the imperialist states to interfere openly into their internal affairs, lean on the moral political and diplomatic support of the Soviet Union.

This assistance commenced with the endeavors of Soviet diplomacy to bring about just armistice agreements with former German satellites. Another concrete expression of this Soviet support was indisputably the diplomatic recognition of the new governments in the people's democratic countries by the Soviet Union. This was not only a formal diplomatic act, but also a serious warning to internal and external reaction, which tried to overthrow by force the new inner political development. The Soviet government was the first to recognize the democratic Polish government (at the beginning of

January 1945) and was also the first superpower to take up diplomatic relations with the new governments in Rumania (August 6th), Bulgaria (August 14—16th) and Hungary (September 25 th). And even before that at the beginning of January 1945 the Soviet government was again the first to recognize the democratic government in Albania. Again it was the Soviet Union who convinced her coalition partners of the necessity to recognize the Tito government, formed after the agreement Tito—Šubašić. It is characteristic that while the Western powers connected the question of recognition of these governments with political speculations, the Soviet government respected the basic rights of the nations to choose their own fate.

The Soviet government acted similarly during the negotiations of peace treaties with former German satellites, that is Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria. It defended the new Yugoslav—Italian frontier (the question of Trieste and the Julian region), defended Albania and Bulgaria against the unjust territorial claims of Greece. During the peace treaty negotiation the Soviet government also enforced the just demand that the question of the navigation of the Danube should be decided by the Danubian states themselves, that means the states lying on the banks of this river. Thanks to the decisive stand of Soviet representatives at the peace conference the exaggerated demands for compensation by the Western powers were rejected. It serves to the historical merit of Soviet diplomacy that the peace treaties of February 1947 did not become, as often happened in the past, an instrument of subjugation of the defeated nations by the victors, but an instrument to render equal position and free internal development in the future possible to the defeated countries. The efforts of Soviet diplomacy thus accomplished that the peace treaties did not damage national independence and sovereignty of the mentioned countries, did not deprive them of their democratic achievements and did not prevent further socialist changes in Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary. The conclusion of these treaties helped to strengthen the position of the people's democratic countries in international politics, liquidated their external insecurity which up to now rendered the subversive activity of international reaction possible.

The friendship treaties of cooperation and mutual assistance concluded during the second half of the 1940's between the Soviet government and individual people's democratic countries (Czechoslovakia, Poland and Yugoslavia during the war, the rest in 1948) and between individual people's democratic states (1947—49), have also been of importance to the process of strengthening the new regimes. They were also a legal confirmation of new interstate relations inside the upcoming world socialist bloc. Relations, based on the principles that respected equality and national sovereignty, general mutual cooperation and brotherly mutual assistance. The treaties also

created a basis for collective security of the countries of the world socialist bloc and became an important instrument in safeguarding international cooperation and strengthening world peace, a barrier placed into the way of imperialist aggression. The treaties helped to unite the socialist countries into one firm whole and to create international conditions for building of socialism and communism in the socialist countries.

The diplomatic and political assistance along with economic aid of the Soviet Union to the people's democratic countries primarily in the years 1947—9, was of great importance. In this phase, so important for the development of individual democratic lands, basic changes took place inside individual states in the economic sphere as well as in the spheres of social relations and politics, the consequences of which led to the strengthening of socialist relations in production and of political power of the workers and peasants.

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The victory of democratic revolutions in a number of European countries had been prepared by long preceding development. The influence of the Great October Socialist Revolution and historical successes of the first socialist state, the expansion of national liberation struggle in individual countries, all this, together with the great victory of Soviet troops during the Second World War created such suitable conditions that a group of East European countries withdrew from the world capitalist system and gradually developed a socialist road of their social development.

The process of the rise of the people's democratic states, the growth of national and democratic revolution into a socialist one, was different in each country. It was a complicated process, characterized by a sharpened class struggle in each individual country as well as on the international scale. And the reason why no open civil war or imperialist intervention ensued was the decisive role of the internationalist assistance and aid of the Soviet Union, her military and political might and tight cooperation with the progressive forces of the mentioned countries where deep social changes were taking place. Only with the help of the Soviet Union could the nations of the people's democracies ward off all the attacks of world imperialism and to proceed to create a new type of a state — a state building up a socialist society.

Such were the origins of the world socialist bloc and Lenin's idea about the necessity to convert »the dictatorship of the proletariat from national (i. e. existing in one country and unable to determine world politics) to international (i. e. dictatorship of the proletariat in several developed countries which were able to have a decisive influence on world politics)«,⁸ was confirmed.

⁸ V. I. Lenin, *Pol'nyje sobrannyje sošinėnija*, 41, 165.

The Soviet Union has a decisive share in the existing reality of the existence of a powerful community of states of the world socialist bloc. During the Second World War her troops liberated completely or in part territories of ten European countries. A territory of more than one million square kilometers with a population of 113 million. More than seven million Soviet soldiers participated in this struggle and more than a million of them lost their lives liberating other nations and lands. 600,000 were killed in Poland, 69,000 in Rumania, 140,000 in Hungary and 140,000 also in Czechoslovakia. On the territory of Yugoslavie died 8,000 Soviet soldiers and thousands more in Austria and Norway.

