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# POLITICAL SCIENCE ISSUES

Academic journal

**Nikolay P. MEDVEDEV,**

Chairman of the Editorial Board, Doctor of Political Sciences,  
Professor of Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Peoples' Friendship  
University of Russia (RUDN University) (Russia, Moscow)

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**Editor-in Chief of the Review – Nikolay P. MEDVEDEV,**  
Doctor of Political Sciences, Professor of Faculty of Humanities  
and Social Sciences, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia  
(RUDN University) (Russia, Moscow)

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E-mail: [voprospolitolog@yandex.ru](mailto:voprospolitolog@yandex.ru),  
[souzpolitolog@yandex.ru](mailto:souzpolitolog@yandex.ru)

Executive Secretary  
*Shkurina S.S.*

Computer-aided makeup by  
*Antsiferova A.S.*

Translated by  
*Chernyshova E.V.*

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The scientific journal is published since 2011 at the “Publishing House “Science Today”. Translated (eng.) version of the journal is published since 2016. Since its inception, the journal was guided by high scientific and ethical standards and today it is one of the leading political science journals in Russia.

The purpose of the journal is to promote scientific exchange and cooperation between Russian and foreign political scientists.

The journal is intended for the publication of the results of fundamental and applied scientific research. Thematic focus of the journal is reflected in the following permanent headings: “History and philosophy of politics,” “Political institutions, processes and technologies,” “Political regionalism and ethno-politics,” “Political culture and ideologies,” “Political problems of international relations and globalization.”

Format of publications: scientific articles, reviews, scientific materials, materials of round tables, scientific reviews, scientific reports devoted to research problems in the field of politics and political science.

The Editorial Board and the editors of the journal in their activities are guided by the principles defined by VAK of Russia for scientific journals, including: presence of the institute of peer review for the expert quality assessment of scientific articles; information openness of the publications; availability and compliance with the rules and ethical standards for the submission of manuscripts by the authors.

The target audience of the journal is Russian and foreign specialists-political scientists, as well as graduate students and masters in the fields of political science, state and municipal management and international relations.

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Full details of the journal and its editorial policy, requirements to the preparation and publication of articles, archive (issues since 2011) and additional information are available on the website: <http://voprospolitolog.ru>

E-mail address: [voprospolitolog@yandex.ru](mailto:voprospolitolog@yandex.ru)

# CONTENTS

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## POLITICAL PROCESS IN RUSSIA

<i>Zhuravlev O. V., Tushkov A. A.</i> National Maritime Policy of Russia on the Pacific and Indian Ocean Regional Routes .....	5
<i>Kononov L. A., Chebotarev A. V.</i> Development of Theoretical Positions about the Perspective State Policy of the Russian Federation on Anti-Immigration Extremism .....	12
<i>Rumyantsev O. G.</i> On Some Political Science Aspects of the 2020 Constitutional Reform in the Russian Federation .....	19
<i>Nazarov V. P.</i> On the Question of the Evolution of the Concept of National Security .....	27
<i>Pohozhaev V. I.</i> Some Priorities of the Modern State National Policy of the Russian Federation .....	34
<i>Yang Chunlei</i> Influence of Confucianism on the Political and Cultural Elite of the Russian Society .....	41

## PROBLEMS OF EURASIAN AND POST-SOVIET COOPERATION

<i>Mikhailenko A. N.</i> How to Disclose Russia's Foreign Policy Potential? .....	49
<i>Zalysin I. Yu.</i> Features of Modern Terrorism .....	63
<i>Emirov R. M.</i> On the Prospects of Islam as a System-Forming Factor in the Caucasus .....	68
<i>Pliev S. M.</i> The Role of Information Warfare on the Example of the 2008 Armed Conflict in South Ossetia .....	75

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND WORLD POLITICS

<i>Pyzh V. V.</i> Geopolitical Picture of the World on the Eve of the Second World War: Lessons of Victory for the Geopolitics of the XXI Century .....	82
<i>Nazarov A. D., Nazarova E. A.</i> Phenomenon of Import EXPO: New Approaches in the State Policy of Regulating Exhibition Activities in the PRC .....	104
<i>Lantsov S. A.</i> Ethnic Terrorism and Ethnic and Political Conflicts of the XIX-XX Centuries: Analysis of Socio-Political and Ideological Factors .....	114
<i>Rodionova M. E.</i> Specifics of Foreign and Russian Experience in Financing Political Parties .....	123
<i>Temeryuk A. S.</i> Analysis of the Distribution of Election Results to the Finnish Parliament in the Course of Four Electoral Cycles .....	132
<i>Zhambaeva U. B.</i> Tibet Buddhism in the Yuan Dynasty Political Context .....	142

## REFLECTIONS ON THE READ

<i>Slizovskiy D. E., Medvedev N. P.</i> Afterword to the Article by O. G. Rumyantsev "On Some Political Science Aspects of the 2020 Constitutional Reform in the Russian Federation" .....	148
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OUR AUTHORS .....	156
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AUTHORS' GUIDELINES .....	158
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**V. V. PYZH**

*Doctor of Sciences (political sciences),  
Head of the Chair of social and humanitarian disciplines,  
National State University of Physical Culture,  
Sport and Health named after P. F. Lesgaft,  
Professor at the Chair of humanities,  
Institute of Almazov National Medical Center  
of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation,  
expert of the Commission on defense and security issues  
of the Inter-parliamentary Assembly of the CIS member states,  
Saint Petersburg, Russia*

## **GEOPOLITICAL PICTURE OF THE WORLD ON THE EVE OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR: LESSONS OF VICTORY FOR THE GEOPOLITICS OF THE XXI CENTURY**

*The article deals with the geopolitical situation and the world balance of power in the run-up to the Second World War and the essence of the world processes in the interwar period. Events preceding the outbreak of hostilities. Cause of war. The participation of the USSR in the Second World War and the Great Patriotic War. Lessons and geopolitical outcomes of the victory.*

**Key words:** *Great Patriotic War, the Second World War, Victory of the Soviet people, defeat of German fascism, Soviet armed forces, Red Army, lend-lease, Resistance movement, internationalism, patriotism, geopolitics, international relations.*

*«...I believe that all who profit from the war and who contribute to it should be shot on the first day of hostilities by trusted representatives of honest citizens of their country, whom they send to fight.»*

***Ernest Hemingway,  
from the preface to the book “Goodbye, weapons!”***

History, as we know, raises more questions than it gives clear answers. Any attempt to evaluate a historical event from just one point of view is bound to fail. In the pursuit of truth, the historians are in great danger. Even to the events of yesterday, many of us have an ambiguous attitude. To an even greater extent this applies to the events of the past.

Now history is a real battleground where both geopolitical interests and the interests of individual national elites collide. Before our eyes, modern politicians are turning historical science into a battlefield. It, like any other science, is formed by specific people with their worldview and interests. Even a simple enumeration of well-known historical facts is always personal. Any interpretation of a simple chronology already has a point of view that differs from other points of view on the same chronology.

Soon we will celebrate 75 years since the end of the Great Patriotic War and World War II. By historical standards – this is a moment, but it is a long time by human standards. Therefore, interest in the events of those times does not weaken. There are many reasons for this.

The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people redrawn the map of the world and defined a new world order not only in the XX, but also in the XXI century. The horrors of war make you wonder: who is to blame and what should I do so that it doesn't happen again. The war was an unprecedented test of all the material and spiritual forces of the Soviet Union and became the most severe test of the fighting qualities of the Red Army.

In our time, we unavoidably have to evaluate the results of this “examination” in terms of the effectiveness of social systems and guidelines of various states, and use the results of this assessment both for the “internal consumption” and for propaganda purposes.

As L. Ivashov aptly put it, in the pre-war period, “a new global entity was actively entering the world stage, it was the “world backstage” (financial and industrial capital in alliance with the political and military elites of the West), whose goal was the global power of financial capital” [6. P. 4-13].

The USSR, as the geopolitical center of the Eurasian continent, remained, as Russia was before, the main object of aspirations of the contenders for global dominance.

Practically nothing has changed since the time when Prime Minister of Great Britain L. George declared that “the traditions and vital interests of England required the destruction of the Russian Empire in order to secure English rule in India and realize English interests in Transcaucasia and Minor Asia” [6. P. 8].

Preparations for the Second World War began when the First World War was not yet over. The financial capital was again its initiator. The state was merely a tool. Preparations for the war continued and were not, and could not be, unexpected for any politician or military. The only question was who would start it first and when. That was decided by the leading financial group that claimed to be the world's leader. The internal contradictions of the world financial system that had not yet been fully developed were resolved through a war.

As A. Ralph Epperson writes in his book “the Invisible Hand: Initiation into the Secret Version of History,” multi-millionaire banker Meyer Rothschild said: “Give me control over the nation's money and I don't care who is making its laws” [2. P. 455].

On November 25, 1936, Germany and Japan signed an agreement in Berlin on joint activities in the fight against the Communist International (Comintern) in order to prevent the spread of Communist ideology in the world. Italy joined the Pact in November 1937, Hungary and Manchukuo (a state formed by Japan on the occupied territory of Manchuria) – in February 1939, Francoist Spain – in March 1939. In November 1941, the Pact was extended for 5 years, at the same time it was joined by Finland, Romania, Bulgaria, as well as the puppet governments of Croatia, Denmark, Slovakia, and the government of Wang Jingwei formed by the Japanese in the occupied part of China [18].

Historians note that the war in Spain served for the future Hitler coalition as an example of how far Western countries can go to ensure security in Europe.

A participant in those events, George Orwell (Eric Arthur Blair) in his essay “Remembering the war in Spain,” published in London in 1943, wrote: “the outcome of the war in Spain was decided in London, Paris, Rome, Berlin – anywhere but not in Spain. After the summer of 1937, everyone who could see ahead realized that the Republic could not win unless there were profound changes in the international balance of power” [13].

But the further back those days go, the more acute is the struggle for truth, the more sophisticated are falsifications of the history of those years and the past events. More and more often, we witness a tendentious desire of certain opportunistic and biased not only historians and publicists, but also political figures to distort the truth about the prehistory of the World War II and about the components of the Victory. Attempts are made to de-heroize it, to whitewash some participants, and sometimes real traitors.

On the eve of the 75th anniversary of the Victory, various Russophobic organizations became active, trying to put Hitler and Stalin on the scales of responsibility for the outbreak of World War II.

So, in September 2019, on the eve of the opening of the exhibition “75 years of liberation of Eastern Europe from Nazism,” the Bulgarian political elite provoked a scandal over the historical memory of the World War II, accusing Russia of “half a century of repressions.” In the Czech Republic, the authorities are trying to remove the monument to Marshal Ivan Konev from Prague. And today, there are many similar acts in Europe saved from Nazism.

On 19 September 2019, the European Parliament adopted a resolution “On the Importance of the European Memory for the Future of Europe” by 535 votes in favour, 66 against and 52 abstentions. The document was initiated by Polish MEPs on behalf of the European conservatives and reformists faction, which includes the ruling Law and Justice Party of Poland. The text of the resolution emphasizes that: “the World War II, the most destructive in the history of Europe, was a direct consequence of the infamous Nazi-Soviet Non-aggression Treaty of August 23, 1939, also known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and its secret protocols, according to which two totalitarian regimes, set out to conquer

the world, divided Europe into two zones of influence.” At the same time, the resolution does not contain a word about the policy of appeasement of the aggressor by Western countries in order to reorient Hitler’s aggressive plans from the West to the East, and about the culmination of this line – the Munich Agreement of 1938. Its participants gave the sovereign state of Czechoslovakia to Hitler, and later Poland and Hungary joined the division. While the USSR was the only power that in the pre-war years resisted the Nazi military threat.

A similar attempt to rewrite history is being made by the so-called Institute of National Memory of Poland. The poles are trying to shift their responsibility for the beginning of World War II in Europe to the government of the USSR, but here it is important not to rant, but historical facts: Poland’s allies Great Britain and France did not want to come to its aid in September 1939. Why? Moreover, in contrast to their political position towards Germany, to which they then formally declared war, they did not declare war on the Soviet Union. Thus, for themselves and their descendants, they forever divided the actions of the USSR and the Third Reich both in relation to Poland, and in principle in the context of the beginning of the Second World War in Europe.

We know the words of Winston Churchill, who said on October 1, 1939, that the Soviet troops should have stood on the lines that they then reached. He even called their presence there a “second front” against Hitler.

But Poland was among the countries that flirted with Hitler for anti-Soviet purposes in the 1930s. Moreover, unlike Great Britain or France, Poland expected to become a direct ally of the Third Reich in its aggression against the USSR, and in 1938 almost took part in the partition of Czechoslovakia, breaking off the Teszyn Region from it.

It was the Polish Ambassador Jozef Lipsky, who in 1938 supported Hitler in solving the “Jewish question” by expelling Jews from Europe to Africa. “If he does it,” the Ambassador said in his report, “we will put up a magnificent monument to him in Warsaw.”

After reading the report of the Polish Ambassador to Germany Yu. Lipsky to the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs Yu. Bek, even today’s politically colorblind people who trying to falsify history, I think, should see the light.

Let’s consider the following: “..the Chancellor (Hitler) received me today in Obersalzberg in the presence of Foreign Minister Ribbentrop at 4 PM. The conversation lasted more than two hours. Before that, the Chancellor received the Prime Minister of Hungary and the chief of the Hungarian General Staff. ... (Hitler) pointed out that he had told Chamberlain that the Sudeten question should be resolved peacefully or by war in such a way that the Sudetenland would be returned to Germany.

Chamberlain returned to London, convinced as a result of this conversation of the necessity of rejecting the Sudetenland. The occupation of the Sudetenland by force would, according to the Chancellor, be a more complete and definite

solution. Nevertheless, the Chancellor claims that if his conditions are accepted, he will not be able to refuse to accept them in front of the public of his country, even if part of the Czechoslovak problem would remain unsettled. Therefore, the Chancellor is considering how to solve the remaining part of the problem concerning Hungary and Poland. In this regard, he invited the Prime Minister of Hungary and me for talks.

With regard to the Hungarian demands, I specifically highlighted the question of Transcarpathian Rus, emphasizing the strategic moment in relation to Russia, the Communist propaganda carried out on this territory, and so on. I got the impression that the Chancellor was very interested in this problem, especially when I told him that the length of the Polish-Romanian border is relatively small and that by means of a common Polish-Hungarian border across Transcarpathian Russia we would create a stronger barrier against Russia. In addition, I pointed out about Transcarpathian Russia that this territory, which Slovakia does not claim, was given to Czechoslovakia only as a mandate, that its population is very low and strongly mixed, and that Hungary has the greatest interest in it.

Clarifying our point of view regarding the immediate area that Poland is interested in (Teshyn), I noted: ...at this point, we would not have retreated before the use of force if our interests were not taken into account.

In further analysis of the tactics that should be used to solve the entire Czechoslovak question, the Chancellor said:

1. if his proposals are not accepted by Chamberlain, the situation will become clear, and, according to his warning, he is ready to take up arms to join the Sudetenland to the Reich.

2. If the Sudetenland proposals were accepted and he was asked to guarantee the remainder of Czechoslovakia, he would take the position that he would be able to guarantee it if Poland, Hungary, and Italy did the same (he considered the inclusion of Italy an important counterbalance to the French and English guarantees). He understood that Poland and Hungary would not give these guarantees without addressing the issue of their minorities. I have made this assurance on behalf of the Polish government.

3. The Chancellor, quite confidentially, stressing that I could draw the appropriate conclusions from this, brought to my attention that even today, in the event of a conflict between Poland and Czechoslovakia on the basis of our interests in Teshyn, the Reich would take our side (I think that the Chancellor should also have given this statement to the Hungarian Prime Minister, although I was not told about it). The Chancellor advises that under such circumstances our action should not begin until after the German occupation of the Sudetenland, since then the whole operation would be shorter.

Later, during the conversation, the Chancellor insisted that Poland is the primary factor protecting Europe from Russia.

... beyond the line of known German interests, we have completely free hands;

... that he had the idea of solving the Jewish problem by sending them to emigration to the colonies in case of a consent from Poland, Hungary, and maybe Romania (*here I replied that if this finds its solution, we will put up a beautiful monument to him in Warsaw*). In accordance with the instructions in the above conversation, I also raised the issue of Polish-German relations. I must say that the moment was not very suitable, since the Chancellor was completely occupied with the upcoming conversation with Chamberlain.

I raised the issue of Danzig, suggesting to him the possibility of concluding a direct Polish-German Treaty that would stabilize the position of the free city.

...At the end of the conversation, I touched upon the possibility of your meeting with the Chancellor as soon as possible, if necessary. The Chancellor accepted this with pleasure, noting that the meeting could be very useful, especially after the conversation with Chamberlain.

Ribbentrop, for his part, asked me to ask you if you would like to make a statement on the issue of Polish demands for Czechoslovakia, following the example of the Hungarian Prime Minister, so that it could be used in negotiations with Chamberlain. In addition, Ribbentrop assured that the German press will cover our actions against our minority in Czechoslovakia as widely as possible» [1].

Whatever the so-called Institute of National Memory of Poland says today, it cannot rewrite history: Poland was among the countries that flirted with Hitler for anti-Soviet purposes in the 1930s. Moreover, unlike the Great Britain or France, Poland expected to become a direct ally of the Third Reich in its aggression against the USSR, and in 1938 almost took part in the partition of Czechoslovakia, breaking off the Teszyn region from it. Apparently, under the anti-Russian rhetoric of Warsaw there is a desire to hide their own mistakes in the 1938 domestic and foreign policy.

Thus, the lower house of the Polish Parliament adopted a resolution on January 9, 2020, which claims that the Soviet Union was responsible for the beginning of World War II in the same way as Hitler's Germany.

This decision was commented on by the official representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry M. Zakharova: "It seems that, as in the days of the Inquisition, science is declared heresy by the Polish Sejm, and supporters of historical facts are accused of witchcraft by it. This is how ideology defeats truth. And the truth is recorded by the Nuremberg Tribunal. If the Polish Sejm doubts its decisions, then it is necessary to declare it. Such an approach has its own qualification – revision of the results of the Second World War" [30].

You need to be extremely blind and deaf not to notice it then and an outspoken Russophobe to blame the Soviet Union for unleashing the Second World War today.

But as the years and decades pass, events and the people who participated in them become veiled in a haze of uncertainty, as if out of focus. This is due to the fact that each generation of historians writes a book of people's lives under the strong influence of their time, historical will and ideological attitudes.

If this happens during a revolution, then the perception of events is colored in its tones. The arrival of counter-revolution changes the palette of colors that historians and diplomats use, and then white becomes black and vice versa. And only in a political democracy does it become possible not to have a poor one-dimensional vision and assessment of the past, but to have a three-dimensional and objective view.

This is the most productive approach. It suggests that historians should try to explain events and evaluate historical personalities and events.

Today, when we turn our eyes back to the history of this great war, we are even more convinced that the victory over German fascism was possible primarily because the war itself had the character of a universal, popular war, which can not be considered every war.

Only the war that affects the feelings of national dignity and self-love, touches the soul of people, awakens the instinct of national self-preservation, causes the desire to stand up for the protection of violated shrines and the right to exist and live in accordance with one's own views and beliefs becomes popular.

According to the official data, 72 states with a population of 1.7 billion people were involved in the World War II, 110 million people were mobilized, and 55 to 60 million of the world's population died during the 6 years of the war.

On the Soviet front, 70 to 80 percent of all the Hitler troops and his allies were active. Britain, the United States, and the rest of the Soviet-allied world (56 countries in all) accounted for just over 20% of the war's severity. In 1943, in all other theaters of war, only 25 to 45 divisions of the Great Britain and the United States fought together, and the USSR put up to 489 divisions.

At the same time, we must keep in mind that the assistance of our allies in the anti-fascist bloc was not as large in scale as some falsifiers of history are now trying to imagine.

In the early period of World War II, Neutrality Acts were adopted in the United States, according to which the only way to provide assistance to any of the belligerents was to sell weapons and materials exclusively for cash, and transportation was also assigned to the customer, the "pay and take" system.

The Great Britain then became the main consumer of military products in the United States, but very soon it exhausted its foreign exchange funds. At the same time, President Franklin Roosevelt was well aware that in the existing situation, the best way out for the United States was to provide full economic support to the countries fighting against the Nazi Germany. Therefore, he actually "pushed through" the Congress on March 11, 1941 the "law to ensure the protection of the United States," also called the Lend-Lease Act. From that time on, weapons and strategic raw materials were provided to any country whose defense was recognized as vital to the United States, under the following conditions:

1. Weapons and materials lost in the course of hostilities were not subject to payment.

2. Any property left over after the war that was suitable for civilian purposes had to be paid in full or in part on the basis of long-term loans provided by the United States.

3. Unused equipment was supposed to be returned after the war to the United States [10].

There are still various, often contradictory opinions about the role of lend-lease during the Great Patriotic War. Many spears were broken in the discussions on the topic “could the USSR do without the lend-lease?” Many authors believe that, most likely, USSR was able to win. Of course, it is not possible to calculate the price that would have been paid [25; 27; 15].

Lend-lease deliveries accounted for 15% of our own production for all types of aircraft, 12% for tanks and self-propelled guns, and about 2% for anti-aircraft artillery guns. Car deliveries were the most significant. The Red Army received 427,000 trucks and cars (70% of all available vehicles), which gave it mobility. The Soviet Navy also received significant lend-lease assistance. It included 596 warships and vessels built at Western shipyards, which made up 22.3% of the total number of ships and vessels produced by the domestic industry at that time.

Lend-lease aid, as well as British and Canadian supplies to the USSR in total did not exceed 4% of Soviet industrial production during the war years, and main supplies were made in the years from 1943 to 1944, when a radical change in the war was already achieved.

The government of the Soviet Union paid for them with gold, manganese, and other materials needed by the United States, which were brought back by their ships and planes.

It is a widely recognized fact that lend-lease was a unique precedent when countries with different socio-economic structures combined their efforts in the fight against a global evil [15. P. 46].

On June 6, 1944, our allies opened a second front in Europe. The allied forces chose the coast of Normandy (France) for the landing. Here they concentrated 39 divisions, 12 separate brigades, and 10 commandos (marine commando units).

On April 25, Soviet troops met with the allied troops on the Elbe, and on May 8, Nazi Germany signed an act of unconditional surrender. The hotbed of the Second World War in Europe was eliminated [14. P. 12-13].

Thus, the USSR bore the brunt of the Second World War and became the main obstacle to the German-fascist domination of other nations. Italy, Spain, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Finland and even France, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, some poles, Baltics, Western Ukrainians, Caucasians, Krymchaks and even Russians, and many others fought against Russia on the side of Germany.

Not necessarily officially and not necessarily at the front with weapons in hand. You can fight with economy, complicity, etc. When the occupation of France began, the owner of the Renault company Baron Louis Renault, willing

to save his company from ruin, actively cooperated with the German authorities. He visited the Reich Chancellery, met with the leadership of the Third Reich and got acquainted with the latest examples of German technology. The Germans set up Renault factories to produce trucks – 3-ton AHS and 5-ton AHR. Renault produced more than 35,000 trucks for the Wehrmacht during the war.

Messerschmitts were produced in Hungary. In France, the Luftwaffe produced bombers, transport and liaison planes, scouts and aircraft engines (every eighth engine for the Luftwaffe was produced in France). The French automobile industry produced only 20 percent of all vehicles produced during the war for the Wehrmacht (this is only trucks produced during the war, without taking into account the already built trucks seized after the capture of France in the 40th as trophies).

Belgian fire arms were widely used by the Germans (the favorite SS gun was the Belgian “Browning high power”). The bulk of the oil consumed by the German armed forces was extracted and processed in Romania.

For German military production, economic ties with neutral countries were of great importance. Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal and Turkey continued to systematically supply it with strategic raw materials, machine tools, equipment, ball bearings, quality steel, tools, ferroalloys, pulp, automobiles, locomotives, radio equipment, optical instruments, naval vessels, weapons and ammunition. In 1942, Sweden, Switzerland, and Spain accounted for 50.3 percent of all German iron ore imports, while Sweden accounted for 33.8 percent of lead and 28.2 percent of zinc ore. The total value of material assets received from neutral countries per year exceeded 1.2 billion DM. In addition, these countries provided services to Germany for military and commercial transportation [19].

All this is called collaboration. It requires a separate discussion (1).

This was the most terrible invasion of Europe in Russia. It already took place in history: in the first Millennium during the great migration of peoples (the Empire of Germanarich), in the XIII century (the crusade of the dog-knights, organized by the Pope and repulsed by the great Alexander Nevsky) and in the XIX century – the invasion of the “two hundred languages” headed by Napoleon).

From the point of view of today, it is appropriate to ask the question: who, why and how organized the attack of Hitler’s Germany on the USSR?

Its purpose was eloquently expressed by the US Senator and later the 33rd US President Harry Truman: “If we see that Germany is winning, we should help Russia, and if Russia is winning, we should help Germany, and so let them kill as many as possible...” [12].

In the run-up to the World War II, the world remained Eurocentric, but its geopolitical structure was unstable.

In political processes, the world’s leading players clearly adhered to the essence of their geopolitical concepts.

Russia (the USSR), geopolitically sharply weakened, was at this time almost in international isolation. It had mostly rural illiterate population and lost almost

all of the old ruling and cultural elite. The economy and infrastructure were just beginning to take shape again, and so, to the global geopolitical actors the country seemed to be an ideal territory for partition and subsequent absorption.

As you know, one of the main results of the First World War was humiliation of Germany in accordance with the ancient Roman principle of *Vae victis* (“Woe to the vanquished”). Germany lost its vast territories and had to pay predatory reparations that further spurred the need for revision of the Versailles-Washington system designed by the victorious powers – Britain, France and the United States. There was also a need for restructuring the “geopolitically unjustified” borders in Europe and Asia in favor of Germany and its allies – Italy and Japan.

Defeated by Britain and France in the First world war, Germany, humiliated and trampled, could only survive by changing its geopolitical position. It had to take the raw material sources either from Britain and France, or from Russia.

According to the authoritative opinion of Prof. L. Ivashov, “the theory of living space” developed by Professor of Geography at the University of Munich General Karl Haushofer (1869-1946) became the official doctrine of Nazi Germany. The author of the concept of the “continental bloc” Haushofer believed that “the day when Germany, Russia and Japan unite will be the day that determines the fate of the English-speaking world power and the death of the gods.”

The German geopolitician believed that the joint efforts of the two continental powers – Germany and Russia – could establish a “New Eurasian Order” and restructure the space of the World Island in order to completely remove it from the influence of the “Sea Power” [5. P. 4].

The coming world war was being prepared as a struggle for world domination, its main content being the decisive battle for the geopolitical space of Eurasia. Space, which not only had an important geographical and resource potential, but also had a different image of the human community, radically different from the Western civilization.

The USSR, as the geopolitical center of the Eurasian continent, was, as before, the main object of the aspirations of the contenders for global dominance.

By this time, the achievements of the independent Soviet state and the success of socialist construction were obvious. For the conquest of the USSR the path of military defeat was chosen.

The initiator country was defined for this purpose. A political figure was found – Adolf Hitler, an energetic and proactive nationalist, a convinced anti-Communist, who raved about the idea of seizing a living space for Germany in the East, and showed good abilities as a large-scale organizer.

As soon as the Nazis came to power in Germany by universal popular vote, they set about their black business. First, trade unions were roughly dispersed. Then came the arrests and massacres of Communists and their sympathizers. Then there were the excesses of the storm troopers. Then, on September 15, 1935, the NSDAP Congress passed the Nuremberg racial laws: “On the citizen of the

Reich” and “On the protection of German blood and German honor,” by which all Jews were outlawed.

Further, the political events were developing rapidly. In 1935, all the leading European countries entered into allied relations with Germany, and in 1936, Germany and Japan signed the anti-Comintern Pact. On February 20, 1938, in the Bundestag, Hitler declared that Germany was striving for rapprochement with all states, but not with the Soviet Empire. Then came Munich. The British magazine “Time” in the issue of January 2, 1939, and a number of other publications unanimously recognize A. Hitler as the man of 1938. Thus, A. Hitler was helped to strengthen the armed forces and the economic potential of Europe was literally handed to him. The fascists adopted the theory of racial uniqueness of the German nation as an ideological weapon, and for the majority of peoples (including the Slavs) they introduced the category of “*untermensch*,” i.e. “subhuman.”

The Soviet Union demonstrated a diametrically opposite national approach: unity and equality of all (more than 170) nations and nationalities living on its territory, equality of all major faiths. This example was especially contagious for the peoples of the East, the American continent, and the European Slavs.

German philosopher Walter Schubart, who emigrated from Germany in 1941, told about the upcoming catastrophe of the Western civilization and the historical mission of Russia, in his book “Europe and the soul of the East”, he wrote: “Russians, with their developed capacity for seeing wholeness, felt constantly and clearly that nothing should be considered separately. From the moment they began to engage themselves, their thoughts revolve, from Chaadaev to the Eurasians, around the question: who are we in relation to Europe? Younger or only younger, or just other heirs of European or harbingers of a new, Eastern culture?”

This question led to a more general question: what is the difference between peoples – in age or the opposite types? And this already borders on a big problem: what are the determining factors of history? What is the meaning of the story? Those who look at the fate of peoples in this way expand their consideration to the rank of general cultural philosophy” [17. P. 92].

Regarding future developments, he noted: “I am now raising the question not of what Bolshevism means for Russia, but of what it means for Europe; and the question is not so: The Third Reich, or Third International, fascism or Bolshevism. No, we are talking about a global historical conflict between a part of the world Europe and a part of the world Russia, between the Western European and Eurasian continents” [17. P. 46].

This state of affairs and unfavorable trends for the West frightened the elite of Western countries, the “world backstage,” and they were looking for a way out of the existing situation. The way out for the “fight against Bolshevism” was found in the creation of fascist regimes: fascism against Bolshevism.

The Vatican was also enlisted as an ally in the fight against Bolshevism. In 1929, Pope Pius XI concluded the Lateran agreements with fascist Italy,

which provided for the formation of the papal state of the Vatican; in 1930, he declared a crusade against the USSR, calling for “democracy,” including Italy and Germany, to jointly solve the problem of Russia. What was the problem? On July 19, 1933, a concordat was concluded between Germany, where the Nazis had just come to power, and the Holy See, according to which the Church recognized the Nazi regime, and the government guaranteed the rights of the Church. In 1937, Pope Pius XI issued an Encyclical against communism [16].

For the sake of historical justice, it is worth saying that the new Pope Pius XII (from the beginning of 1939) condemned the actions of the Nazis against Jews and Poles in December 1939. But by this time the conflagration of the great war was already breaking out in the expanses of Europe, and later the Church’s insight into the identity of A. Hitler, his true goals and objectives, could not change much. He went with manic perseverance to his goal.

Thus, in 1936, Germany and Italy supported a revolt in Spain against the legitimate Republican government. Berlin and Rome, having sent their troops to Spain, became the main culprits of the three-year civil war in that country, and in 1937 Germany forcibly annexed Austria. Fascist Italy captured Ethiopia in 1936 and occupied Albania in 1939.

In 1937, Germany, Italy, and Japan signed the so-called “anti-Comintern Pact,” and in 1940 they also signed the Treaty on military-economic Union, which was based on an agreement on the division of spheres of influence. During this period, these countries strenuously increased their military and economic potential, shifted their economy to a military scale, and deployed multi-million-strong armies.

In such circumstances, the foreign policy interests of the Soviet leadership focused on creating a system of collective security, but the Western states did not support such a desire for peace, they did not agree to a joint fight against the aggressor during the Soviet-Anglo-French negotiations in August 1939. Western countries were “sympathetic” to Hitler’s expansionist plans, hoping to direct them against the Soviet Union.

And this “good” goal was announced to the satisfaction of the behind-the-scenes organizers in a note from the German foreign Ministry to the Soviet government dated June 22, 1941 “... the German government cannot remain indifferent to the serious threat on the Eastern border. Therefore, the Fuhrer ordered the German armed forces to withdraw this threat by all means. The German people are aware that in the upcoming struggle they are called not only to protect their Homeland, but also to save the world’s civilization from the deadly danger of Bolshevism and to clear the way for a true flourishing in Europe” [29].

The policy of the Soviet state in the pre-war period was to delay the war by all possible and impossible means. Today, this is a reproach to the leadership of the state. Many pages of various texts are devoted to this issue with figures of oil, metal, timber, and bread supplied to Germany. But the USSR had no other option.

The Great Patriotic War was the development and consequence of the Second World War unleashed with the tacit consent of European countries by Nazi Germany on September 1, 1939. An aggressive military coalition was formed to wage war against the USSR, based on the triple Pact concluded between Germany, Italy, and Japan.

The leadership of our country had a difficult choice:

– Conduct a pre-emptive strike, become an aggressor in the eyes of the world community and remain in complete world isolation. And the USSR was already an aggressor in the eyes of the world community after the Finnish company, as well as for ideological reasons of the capitalist West. For a preemptive strike, it was necessary to concentrate troops on the border. Extremely unsuccessful fighting with the Japanese in the East in 1938-1939 showed a weak combat capability of the army, although those clashes were propagandistically perceived as victorious. The experience of the Finnish campaign finally showed the inability of the army to a preemptive strike.

Such a blow for Russia meant the death of the entire community as a whole, and not just a military defeat!

– By concentrating troops on the border, waiting for a strike, provoking Hitler to make the USSR a victim of the aggressor in the eyes of the world community. War will become inevitable. It will be possible to get allies for further fighting.

However, concentrated troops can, in case of failure, instantly perish under the blows of an experienced enemy. In this case, as a result of the rapid capture of the Western regions of the country, the most modern military industry of the USSR will be in the hands of the enemy. In the East, it is still under construction (stand-in companies).

Then the death of the entire community is inevitable, since it will be impossible to equip a new army, and even train it, in principle.

– Disperse the troops and continue their training. This, of course, would save some of the troops in case of a failure at the time of the enemy's attack and will allow them to gradually enter into contact with the enemy. But it is likely to gradually grind them out and the USSR may lose most of the army. However, Germany will lose time to evacuate industrial enterprises to the East, and it will be possible to modernize them there for military purposes. Then there is a chance for the survival of the community. Just a chance! The only chance.

As the Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor Yu. T. Trifankov rightly notes, Stalin chose the latter option. That was his choice, his right and responsibility [20].

Under these conditions, the USSR was forced to agree to a Non-aggression Treaty with Germany. The Treaty was signed in Moscow on August 23, 1939. It defined the mutual obligations of the parties in the political and military fields. It was concluded for 10 years. The Soviet Union was able to continue strengthening the country's defense capability.

Considering the reasons for the heavy defeats of the Red Army in the initial period of the war, we can agree with the opinion of V. M. Tugov, who notes that:

First, Nazi Germany has subdued the entire economic and military potential of most European countries.

Secondly, the fascist armies had extensive experience in conducting victorious wars in the West.

Third, Stalin miscalculated the possible timing of the attack on the USSR.

Fourth, the Stalinist repressions were a serious cause of our failures. They affected many military theorists and practitioners. Only from May 1937 to September 1938, about 40,000 commanders and political workers were repressed.

Fifth, the fascists had superiority in technical equipment and the level of combat training of their troops.

Sixth, the failures were also caused by skewed ideological work. For a long time, negative stereotypes such as the belief in the absolute power of the Red Army and the weakness of the enemy, the low moral and political consciousness of its rear, and other myths were implanted in the public consciousness of Soviet people [21. P. 10].

The Second World War lasted 2194 days or 6 years and one day, and involved 61 States or almost 80% of the world's population. Military operations were conducted on the territory of 40 countries. Both wars were a real global catastrophe in the history of mankind. They claimed the lives of more than 60 million people [11; 9. P. 548-551; 7].

Newsreels have preserved for posterity the footage in which on June 24, 1945, Marshal G. K. Zhukov, sitting on a white horse, took the Victory Parade, which was commanded by Marshal K. K. Rokossovsky. When 200 soldiers turned sharply to the right and threw the banners of the Nazi Wehrmacht to the ground at the Mausoleum, Red Square froze. It was raining, but in that great moment of celebration everyone forgot about the bad weather and the tragedies that the war had brought to each of our homes. And today we remember the price of the great Victory.

The victory over Nazi Germany and its satellites was achieved by the joint efforts of the anti-Hitler coalition and all freedom-loving peoples. However, the objective course and results of the war showed that all its hardships fell on the participants of the anti-Hitler coalition not to the same extent. The main role in the defeat of Nazi Germany, militaristic Japan and their allies was played by the Soviet people and their armed forces [24].

On March 6, 1942, U.S. President F. D. Roosevelt wrote: "From the point of view of grand strategy... it is difficult to escape the obvious fact that Russian armies destroy more enemy soldiers and weapons than all the other 25 states of the United Nations combined" [8. P. 55].

The analysis of the military and political results of the Second World War allows us to formulate some conclusions and draw the necessary historical lessons.

### **Geopolitical results of the War and Victory:**

1. The main result of the Great Patriotic War was the complete defeat of the fascist bloc and the liberation of the world from the threat of Nazi enslavement. Preserving not only the Soviet Union, but also many countries of the world, their independence and sovereignty.

The peoples of the Soviet Union and its Armed Forces played a decisive role in the victorious outcome of the Second World War. On the Soviet-German front, 607 divisions of the fascist bloc were defeated and captured, while the allies defeated and captured 167 divisions.

The Soviet Union bore the brunt of World War II. It should be emphasized that for three years it fought one-on-one against the fascist bloc. The Soviet-German front remained the main one throughout the war. During the four years of the struggle, the enemy concentrated between 56% and 77% of divisions against the Soviet troops. On other fronts, it limited its efforts to 20 divisions, which was no more than 6% of their total number.

2. The Great Patriotic War was the most important component of the Second World War. It was the most severe of all the wars that our country has ever experienced. In terms of the scale of combat operations, the participation of the masses of people, the use of a huge amount of equipment, and tension, it surpassed all the wars of the past.

The USSR emerged from the Second World War as a victorious power, with the most powerful military-industrial potential, a huge combat-ready army (more than 11 million people), armed with the best military equipment, invaluable combat experience and the highest fighting spirit, and represented a force that could not be ignored.

3. The result of the war was a significant change in the political map of the world. The old colonial system collapsed, and the British Empire broke. In the third world countries, a powerful wave of the people's liberation movement was rising, the struggle for national independence. The Soviet Union received new allies in the face of the liberated countries of Eastern Europe, the Far East, and China.

4. The victory in the Great Patriotic War was a decisive factor that opened up new prospects for social development and progress for humanity, and created conditions for many countries and peoples of the world to choose their own path of development.

5. The price paid by the Soviet people for the Great Victory:

– total losses amounted to 27 million people, including irretrievable losses at the front that amounted to 8.668 million people, i.e. the main victims of the war were civilians, the elderly, women, and children. About 1 million Soviet soldiers died liberating the countries of Europe;

– 1710 cities, 70 thousand villages and towns, 30 thousand industrial enterprises, 1876 state farms and more than 90 thousand collective farms were destroyed and looted.

The results of the Great Patriotic War contributed to the awareness of the danger that wars bring, led to the understanding that they should be excluded from the life of society. Referring to the times of the Second World War is a good opportunity to remember that to repel any possible aggression and reliably ensure the country's security, a powerful and combat – ready army and navy are required.

**The sources of Victory:**

1. The main source of the suffered, immensely dear, but difficult victory lies in the spiritual layers of our people. The people rose up for a just Patriotic War. Asceticism, courage, unparalleled fortitude, faith, and heroism cemented the political, social, military, and technical factors of the war into the stratum that formed the basis of victory. The military and labor feat of the people was duly appreciated:

More than 7 million people were awarded orders and battle medals.

– More than 11.7 thousand people received the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, including 104 people who were awarded twice and three people who were awarded three times;

– More than 16 million people were awarded the medal “For valiant labor in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945”;

– 201 people received the title of Hero of Socialist Labor;

– 204 thousand people were awarded labor orders and medals;

– The highest military commander's order of “Victory” was awarded to 11 outstanding Soviet military marshals: L. A. Govorov, I. S. Konev, R. Ya. Malinovsky, K. A. Meretskov, K. K. Rokossovsky, S. K. Timoshenko, F. I. Tolbukhin and General of the Army A. I. Antonov. Generalissimo I. V. Stalin, Marshals G. K. Zhukov and A. M. Vasilevsky were awarded this Order twice.

2. An important source of victory was the higher efficiency of the Soviet organization of economy [23. P. 832].

From 1941 to 1945, Soviet industry produced:

– 1428 thousand aircraft;

– 110.3 thousand tanks and self-propelled guns;

– 523.5 thousand guns.

In the period from 1941 to 1944 German industry produced:

– 638 thousand aircraft;

– 53.8 thousand tanks and self-propelled guns;

– 170,1 thousand guns.

3. Superiority of the Soviet military school over the German one should also be considered one of the sources of Victory.

“It is historically interesting to examine how the Russian military leadership, which was wrecked with its principle of rigid defense in 1941, developed into a flexible operational leadership and conducted a number of operations under the command of its marshals, which on the German scale deserve high praise, while the German command under the influence of commander A. Hitler abandoned

the operational art and ended up with a poor idea of a tough defense, which eventually led to complete defeat,” wrote the Chief of the General Staff of the Wehrmacht’s land forces, General Franz Halder, in a post-war memoirs [3].

4. The victory was secured by the stability and continuity of state and military administration. With the beginning of the war, the main body of state and military administration was created – the State Defense Committee.

5. Creating an anti-Hitler coalition, joining the efforts of the allied countries.

At the end of 1941 and in February 1942, the United States provided the USSR with interest-free loans of US \$1 billion under the condition of repayment in for 10 years starting from the fifth year after the end of the war. In general, lend-lease deliveries amounted to: 15% of aircraft; 12% of tanks; 22% of warships and vessels of Soviet production. Significant assistance was provided in motor transport, steam locomotives, railcars and aluminum supplies.

The USA received from the USSR 300 thousand tons of chrome ore, 32 thousand tons of manganese ore, a significant amount of platinum, and technology for the production of frost-resistant tires. The peak of deliveries was in 1943-1944.

The opening of the second front, as events have shown, created more favorable conditions for the Red Army’s offensive and reduced its losses. Since the summer of 1944, Germany has been in the grip of two fronts. The countries of the anti-Hitler coalition worked closely together and supported each other.

#### **Lessons of the great Victory for the geopolitics of the XXI century:**

1. The main lesson of the great Victory is the conclusion that preparation for war should be carried out in peacetime. Modern military science clearly understands this, but readiness for war is not only the readiness of the Armed Forces, but also the readiness of the entire state, all government institutions, and the entire management system. The state’s management system must ensure its readiness for war, must have high survivability, reliability, and mobility.

2. One lesson is that war is much easier to start than to end. Once started, it develops further according to its own laws, the outcome of it is almost impossible to plan. Victory does not always come to those who started the war. The German fascists planned a short-term victorious war. But it was prolonged and led to their defeat.

3. War cannot be planned either its scale or the nature of the means used in it. Starting as a local one, it can draw other states into its orbit and become a global one. Such a course of events is all the more likely with the higher level of development of the human society.

4. The first period of the great Patriotic war clearly showed that an army that was not mobilised and had a low level of combat training was not able to resist an army of invaders. Saving on the needs of the defense, the armed forces and combat training leads to severe consequences.

“When the Army is not properly cared for, when it does not receive the moral support, then there is a new morality that corrupts the army. The military is be-

ginning to be treated with disdain. The army should enjoy the exclusive care and love of the people and the government, this is the greatest moral strength of the army. The army must be cherished,” this simple truth was voiced by I. V. Stalin in his speech at the graduation of students of military academies in May 1941.

It is important to remember this today.

5. The Great Patriotic War was an unprecedented test of the strength of our state. Only a people with a powerful fortitude and patriotic consciousness could resist the armies of the enemy, who had conquered the whole of Europe. The patriotism of the Soviet people was an important source of victory over fascism. In the light of what has been said, it is impossible to ignore the acute problem of patriotic education when speaking about the lessons of the war. Patriotic consciousness of the society, formation of state patriotism as a harmonious unity of national and personal interests.

6. Creating foreign policy conditions and forming a bloc of reliable allies. It is impossible to underestimate the huge role in the defeat of fascism of the countries of the anti-Hitler coalition, the achievement by its members of the unity of mutual goals, tasks and actions aimed at the defeat of a common enemy.

7. The need to constantly study the experience of the bloodiest and most ruthless war in the history of the mankind, to study the combat experience, to carry out a deep and impartial analysis of victories and failures, causes and consequences. We must not forget this, we must not forget our history. This is what will help us to avoid previous mistakes and new ones.

8. The experience of the war proved: victory can only be achieved by the joint efforts of all the armed forces in their close interaction, which leads to the conclusion about the need for a harmonious comprehensive development of the Armed Forces. This parting message in his book “Memories and reflections” was left to us by the Marshal of Victory G. K. Zhukov [28].

### **Conclusions:**

Analysis of the results and lessons of the Second World War throughout the post-war period was the sphere of ideological clashes and attempts to rewrite the history in favor of the geopolitical and other interests of Western countries, which had previously tried to take the main credit for the victory over Nazi Germany.

Victory changed the world, gave it a new quality. The Second World War once again led to a violent change in the global geopolitical configuration. This is legally confirmed by the decisions of the Yalta and Potsdam conferences. As a result of the redistribution of zones of geopolitical influence, the balance of forces in all strategically important regions of the world has changed significantly again [26. P. 286].

Only two great powers – the USSR and the United States – entered the post-war political limelight. The USSR created an empire of a qualitatively new type – a world socialist system that united countries on the basis of a single ideology. The United States has consolidated its leadership in the capitalist world.

The military-political and economic center of the capitalist system for the first time moved from Western Europe to North America.

Today, 75 years after the victory of the Soviet people in the Great Patriotic War, in the context of globalization and the changing balance of power, new centers of influence are emerging in the world, and a polycentric system of international relations is being created. The dynamics and direction of the formation of a new world order are determined by a complex of contradictions between participants in the world political process. For the leading powers, the experience of joint actions against a common enemy is still memorable. However, many things are perceived differently today.

The main contradiction is the intense competition between the West, which is striving for global dominance, primarily the United States, and the NATO countries, and the growing new centers of power – China, Russia, India, and some other countries, that are gaining economic and political weight. The geographical area of such competition is the whole world.

According to the well-known American political scientist and political figure Zb. Brzezinski, “for the United States, Eurasian geostrategy includes purposeful leadership of geostrategically dynamic states and careful handling of catalyst states in geopolitical terms, while respecting two equal interests of America: in the short term – the preservation of its exclusive global power, and in the long term – its transformation into an increasingly institutionalized global cooperation.

Using the terminology of the more violent times of ancient empires, the three great duties of imperial geostrategy are to prevent collusion between vassals and maintain their dependence on the common security, to maintain the submission of subordinates and ensure their protection, and to prevent the unification of barbarians” [4].

Humanity has entered the twenty-first century with a great load of dangers and threats to its development. And, although these threats, at first glance, are more predictable than the previous ones, but the level of their danger is not fully understood. Moreover, there is an obvious tendency to expand the conflict space in the world and, which is extremely dangerous, to spread it to the zone of our vital interests.

According to the famous researcher of American studies A. I. Utkin, “a new global redistribution of the world is already underway. And in the center of the battle is again Russia with its huge reserves of raw materials. Therefore, the “velvet” and “orange” revolutions in the post-Soviet space, the wars in the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan, planned and unleashed by the US in recent times, are not accidental. American revanchism is a revenge for the great victory of the USSR over fascism” [22].

An unprecedented information war is unfolding in the modern world, it leads to a distortion of the meaning and significance of the Second World War and the Great Patriotic War. Any perversions of the results and meaning of the Second

World War arise in connection with the desire of the whole of Europe to wash away its shame, because the USSR was opposed not just by Germany, but by a United Europe led by Germany.

This puts on the agenda the task of rethinking the entire range of issues related to both the main aspects of the international security and the principles of Russia's national security and the protection of its national interests.

Russia, as a great power building its own (civilizational) development strategy, will always face threats to its national security. Therefore, on the one hand, there should be no complacency at the level of the citizen, the leadership, and society. On the other hand, there is no dramatization and no desire to be closed.

There must be normal, responsible and effective work, first of all, by those structures that are related to ensuring national security. Such work is an important traditional component of the policy of any viable, independent and self-sufficient state.

The pre-war experience and lessons of the great Victory teach that threats and challenges are the most important elements that are embedded in the national security strategy of the state. Threats don't just come out of nowhere. They are closely related to the extent to which the national interests of certain states conflict with each other.

Modern threats and challenges to the national security of the Russian Federation are determined by the fact that today our country is building its own civilizational path of development regardless of how and to what extent major players in the international arena accept or do not accept this fact. As long as the threat of war persists, the guarantee of peace remains the preservation of strong, efficient armed forces and their maintenance in a high degree of combat readiness.

#### **NOTES:**

(1) Collaborationism (French Collaboration) in the legal interpretation of international law is a conscious, voluntary and deliberate cooperation with the enemy, in its interests and to the detriment of one own state.

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