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USTASHA PROPAGANDA ON THE 1943 BIG THREE CONFERENCE IN TEHRAN, AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ALLIED DECISIONS FOR THE OUTCOME OF WORLD WAR II, THE DEFEAT OF THE THIRD REICH AND THE DOWNFALL OF THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA

USTAŠKA PROMIDŽBA O KONFERENCIJI „VELIKE TROJICE“ U TEHERANU 1943. I ZNAČAJ SAVEZNIČKIH ODLUKA ZA ISHOD DRUGOG SVJETSKOG RATA, PORAZ TREĆEG REICHA I SLOM NEZAVISNE DRŽAVE HRVATSKE

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Abstract

Based on the primary documents of the Croatian State Archive, the Fonds of the Government Presidency of the Independent State of Croatia (the NDH), the documents on the Great Alliance, 1942-1943 (the Tehran Conference), and information from daily and periodical journals, the author of the article explains the ways in which the public was informed in the NDH and how media was governed in a totalitarian state like the NDH. The paper, which is dedicated to the crucial period of World War Two, additionally analyzes topics such as the decisions of the Alliance in Tehran, the reaction of the Ustasha government to the political and military plans of the Alliance, as well as the consequences for the NDH authorities, which the said decisions brought about. The first meeting between the Big Three was considered by the Ustasha authorities to be a proof of the Soviet victory and dominance in south-eastern parts of Europe, as well as a step towards the restitution of Yugoslavia led by the Bolsheviks, or Tito's Partisans, under the presumption that the Third Reich was defeated. Using the influence of the current press, the Ustasha regime tried to form the public opinion that there was no alternative to the alliance between the NDH and the Third Reich and that any other solution, apart from the victory of the Axis powers, would lead to the loss of the state.

Sažetak

Na temelju dijela izvorne građe, Fonda Predsjedništva vlade Nezavisne Države Hrvatske i zapisa sastanaka „velike trojice“ u Teheranu te dnevnih i periodičnih tiskovina koje su izlazile u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj, autor članka prije svega pruža uvid u način javnog informiranja i položaj tiskovnih medija u totalitarnoj državi, kakva je bila NDH. Uz to, u radu se, koji obrađuje prijelomno razdoblje Drugog svjetskog rata posebno tematiziraju odluke Saveznika iz Teherana, reagiranja ustaških vlasti prema političkim i vojnim odlukama Saveznika, kao i posljedice koje su po vlasti NDH proizašle iz dogovora Saveznika. Ustaške vlasti, autor zaključuje, prvi sastanak predsjednika SAD-a, SSSR-a i Velike Britanije u Teheranu ocjenjuju kao potvrdu podređenog položaja zapadnih Saveznika u sprezi sa Sovjetskim Savezom, sovjetske dominacije na jugoistoku Europe i korak ka obnovi Jugoslavije, ali pod vodstvom boljševika, Titovih partizana, bude li Treći Reich poražen. Ustaški režim, služeći se tada dominantnim tiskovnim medijima, nastojao je stvoriti opće uvjerenje među građanima NDH kako alternative savezništvu s Trećim Reichom, zapravo nema te da bi svako drugo vojno i političko rješenje, izuzev pobjede sila Trojnog sporazuma, značio gubitak države.

Tehran – the first meeting of the Big Three

The first conference of the Big Three was held from 28 November to 1 December 1943 in Tehran. The presidents of the USA, the USSR and Great Britain joined to make decisions which would predetermine the military and political cooperation of the Allies until the war ended, and, equally significant, to strengthen their alliance. The transcripts of several bi- and trilateral meetings in Tehran reveal the scope of positions shared by the Allies in late 1943, and their priorities. Stalin had the main say in Tehran and insisted that the Allied forces agree on the way in which Germany would be disabled from rising anew. Although the post-war fate of Germany was not fully agreed on in Tehran, Roosevelt's plan to divide Germany into several parts (Churchill advocated the isolation of Prussia from the rest of the Germany) was considered acceptable by both Roosevelt and Stalin, which proved fundamental as early as Crimea in early 1945 /1/. Stalin also demanded rigorous measures against the German army, including the elimination of 50,000 to 100,000 German officers, which was unacceptable to Roosevelt and Churchill as the representatives of the democratic world /2/. Stalin was military and strategically invested in the arrangement of terms for Operation Overlord, and the Western Allies committed to its execution in May 1944. The safety of Western boundaries was also a highly significant issue for the Soviets, and resulted in the Curzon Line as the new USSR border to the West, along with the obligation to compensate the post-war Poland for the territory, at the expense of Germany. In addition, the agreement was reached to coordinate the military command of all three forces. Stalin committed to commencing warfare against Japan once Germany was defeated. It was agreed that the Partisan forces in Yugoslavia would thenceforth be aided both in logistics and equipment. Turkey was invited to join the Allies by the end of 1943, and a renewed support was given to the foundation of the United Nations organization, following the Moscow conclusions /3/.

The respect of the Western Allies for the role that the USSR played in the war against Germany and its allies, as well as for the newly formed military dominance of the Red Army, was evident from their attitude towards the Soviet

requests in Tehran. The victory over Germany was more important than the right to self-determination of small Baltic nations, or the issue of the eastern Polish border – so much so that Roosevelt jokingly told Stalin at one point that he had no intention of starting a war with the USSR over some three countries in the Baltic. Stalin said the three Baltic states had already been a constituent part of the Tsarist Russia prior to World War One, and nobody had minded the fact when Russia had entered the Entente. In his own attempt to retain the British colonies, Churchill did not oppose Stalin's demands in the east and north of Europe. The agreement was made and Roosevelt told Stalin in confidence that he had to restrain himself with regard to Poland and small Baltic states until late 1944, because he was facing elections in the USA, and counted on the votes of 6 million Polish Americans and other Baltic immigrants. To this, Stalin consented /4/.

Tehran demonstrated the power of the Allied forces, exemplified by their military and post-war plans, but also strengthened the alliance. The points which the NDH press presented as antagonisms and disputes in the Allied camp, actually brought the Allies closer together. Ustasha propaganda was also blind to an important fact – that the strife against Germany and its allies joined Great Britain, the USSR and the USA in a wartime and political alliance, whose main goal was to defeat Germany. The Alliance would last as long as the common goal remained unfulfilled.

The first news that the Big Three had met appeared in the NDH press in early December 1943, without any significant information on its proceedings or decisions. Apparently, there was no detailed information even in the press of the neutral Sweden and Switzerland, and the scanty reports from the Reuter were heavily censored. On 4 December, referring to a more comprehensive report in the *Globereuter*, *Hrvatski narod* published news which covered the conclusions *set in paper* from the preparatory meeting in Cairo. The Zagreb daily further informed its readers about the Allied problems on the Pacific front, and on the battlefields in Europe and Asia. In a comment on the meeting of military officials, presided by the American general D. Eisenhower, it was said that there was no joint military strategy by the Allies, that Americans eagerly awaited a stronger joint offensive on Japan, Russians the opening of a

“second front” in Europe, and Chiang Kai-shek a greater military and material aid in Asia /5/. On 8 December, the same paper published agency news from Stockholm, a scant and general report on the Tehran conference.

The statesmen Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill gave a joint statement in which they committed to cooperative actions in war and in peace, the destruction of German forces, and the formation of post-war peace with both great and small nations participating in the destruction of tyrannies, slavery, oppression and intolerance /6/. Behind this rather general statement, a communiqué read out loud at the end of the conference, there hid huge problems and disagreements in the Allied camp, *Hrvatski narod* said. The issue of Polish borders, as well as the position of Finland and the Baltic countries, seemed to have been delegated to the Soviets, which jeopardized their existence. In Tehran, *Hrvatski narod* said, the re-organization model of the Balkans was discussed, along with the analysis of the imminent disarmament and organization of post-war Germany /7/.

Spremnost, on the other hand, published alarming news from England, where the Allies planned to deliver the entire Central and East Europe, with Prague as the capital, to the Soviet Union /8/. According to the German *Basler Nachrichten*, the thesis was further supported by a diplomatic incident involving the Polish government-in-exile and Moscow. The Soviet diplomatic service was apparently unimpressed by the praise, given by the Polish government-in-exile, of the Red Army’s war activities, which cast a renewed doubt on the Russian expansionist goals towards their western neighbours, *Spremnost* concluded /9/.

Referring to the news from the *United Press*, *Hrvatski list* revealed the card up Stalin’s sleeve in Tehran: *Stalin has lost eight million men.* Since the Western Allies could not compete with the Soviet contribution to the current course of the war, *Hrvatski list* said, Stalin wisely used his arguments when he negotiated with Roosevelt and Churchill about the defining of interest spheres and setting up borders in east and northeast Europe: *Whenever he (Stalin) was confronted with the issue of Finland and the Baltic countries, Poland etc., he always replied in the same manner: emphasizing*

these eight million victims. In Tehran, Roosevelt and Churchill agreed to tacitly cede the requested western border to the Soviet Union, showing respect to the sacrifices that the USSR had suffered in the warfare. *Hrvatski list* further said that it would have to be followed by the revision of Poland’s eastern borders and the strife for the survival of small Baltic countries. In a commentary of the Big Three conference, *Hrvatski list* concluded that the Tehran meeting was the capitulation of the USA and Great Britain before the Soviet Union. *The very location of their meeting with Stalin clearly indicates the subordinate role that Great Britain and America must play before their red ally /10/.*

The repercussions of the Tehran meeting were also taken up by the Sarajevo *Novi list*, singling out a speech by General Jan Smuts /11/ in which he allegedly said that, when the war ended, Germany would be wiped off the map of Europe, leaving on it only Great Britain and the Soviet Union. According to Amsterdam sources, on this occasion Smuts said:

The Soviet Union is the new titan in Europe, and he will tread on this continent to become its master /12/. Not even Turkey, which kept its neutrality since the beginning of the war, could elude Soviet aspirations. Soviets requested, *Hrvatski narod* said, the supervision of Constantinople and the Black Sea straits, along with the control over those Balkan nations which had a historical and religious connection with the Moscow Orthodox Church /13/.

The decisions from Tehran were given an ironic comment in the form of a caricature published in the first issue of the humorous magazine *Vrabac*, from 1944. The caricature shows the “Tehran” Stalin trampling the British and American flags, while telling the world: *I have conquered my friends, but how will I conquer my enemies? /14/.* In a similar manner, the New Year issue of *Hrvatski narod* showed the Allied relations after Tehran in the form of a caricature. Roosevelt, Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek bow down while wishing Stalin a happy New Year 1944, which illustrates the balance of power in the Allied camp, but also portends the rising significance of the Soviet Union in the formation of the post-war world /15/.

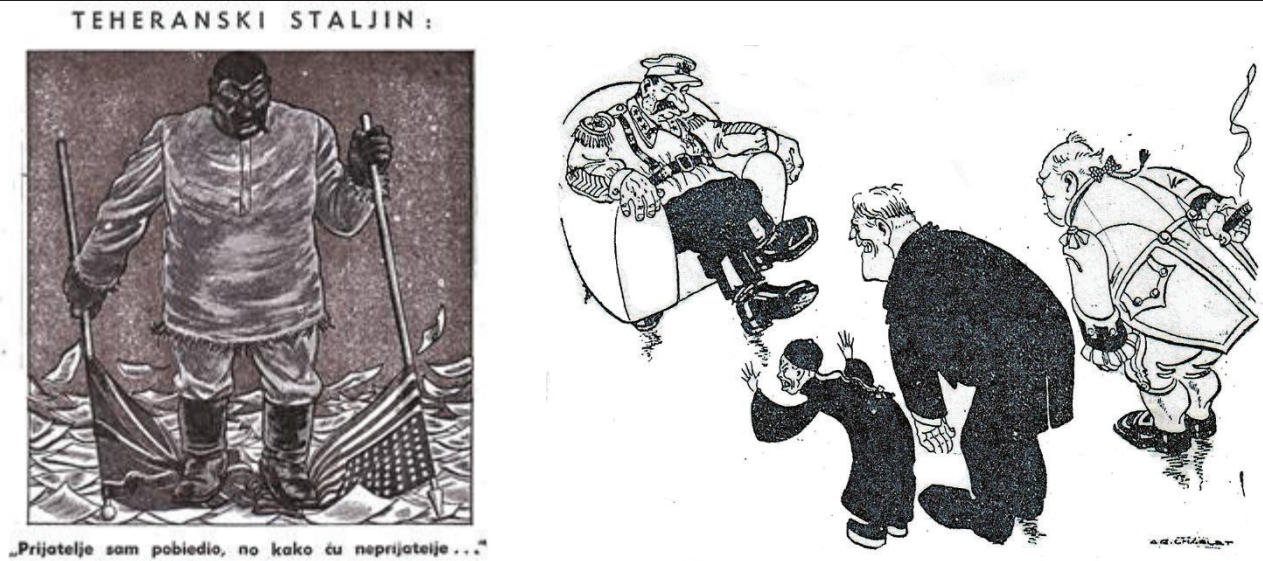


Figure 1: a caricature published in the first issue of the humorous magazine *Vrabac*, from 1944.

Figure 2: The New Year issue of *Hrvatski narod* showed the Allied relations after Tehran in the form of a caricature.

Tehran decisions and the NDH

The Ustasha leadership was aware of the importance of the Tehran decisions, especially the one to support Tito and the Partisan movement. The specific aid to the Anti-fascist movement was sent by the Allies soon after the conference in the form of air-borne support, and the bombing of Sarajevo /16/, Varaždin /17/, Zagreb /18/, Split, Prijedor and Travnik /19/. These were attested in the NDH press from late 1943, which accused the Allies of barbarity and terrorism in Croatian cities /20/.

In its article *Što je bombardirano u Sarajevu*, the Sarajevo *Novi list* accused the Western Allies and General D. Eisenhower of helping the Partisans and carrying out a terrorist attack on Sarajevo. Tito had, the article said, convinced the Western Allies by his lies that his army had at least 200,000 soldiers and that it could be a useful ally in the southeast Europe to the Allies. Therefore, it is further said, Tito asked for air-borne support, promising to capture Sarajevo. He lied, however, that the Croatian people did not want their land, and left out the fact that only a minority of Croats had become renegades *against their own homeland*. *Novi list* equates the Chetniks and the Partisans, although the article testifies to the contrary – that the Allies had acknowledged Tito and renounced the policy of supporting D. Mihailović:

Tito's Bolsheviks strive in vain to prove to the world that they are against the Chetniks of Draža Mihailović. Even our bitterest enemy should be aware that these two, both Tito's brigands and Draža's Chetniks, are one and the same to us. They both fight against the ideals of the Croatian people and they both kill and plunder us. They intend to establish Greater Serbia, against which the Croatian people have been fighting for over twenty years, with immense sacrifices, immense suffering, and renouncing all we possess.

The assumption that Tito and the communists were working on the formation of Greater Serbia would be further developed in *Hrvatski narod* of 11 January 1944. It said that Draža Mihailović had ordered as early as 1941 that no battles were to be fought in Serbia, but only in Croatia, which was accepted by the Partisans. The reporter, signed only by a capital M, considered this the proof that Partisans were under Serbian leadership, or that they were as anti-Croatian in their character as Chetniks /21/. Although no explanation was given for the fact that both the NOVJ and the KPJ were led by a Croat, Marshal Josip Broz Tito, another article in *Hrvatski narod* further develops the assumption that the communists planned to form Greater Serbia. The federalist model of Yugoslavia, voted for by AVNOJ in Jajce on 29 November 1943, was interpreted in the article *Tko je izumio federalizam* to be a covert plan for Greater Serbia. In the introduction, the readership was reminded of Croatian intellectuals from the interwar period, who naively believed in the fed-

eralist concept, but actually lived in a Greater Serbia. The conclusion read:

The Partisans are, actually, as much Greater Serbs as Draža Mihajlović himself when they request a federalist organization of the Soviet Yugoslavia, in which five local states would be Serbian, and one Serbian and Croatian each. The Partisans have fully embraced the concept of Greater Serbia, pre-dating World War One /22/.

Building upon the thesis that the Partisan movement had a pro-Serbian orientation, and in the wake of the Tehran decisions, an article from 5 December 1943 published in Sarajevo *Novi list*, further developed the idea that Bolshevism proposed a danger to Croats, since it did not recognize the concept of nationality. It concluded there was nothing strange about Croatia being pushed into a Greater Serbia. The article blamed everything on the Soviets and their political strategy to bolshevize the southeast of Europe, which presented another danger to Croatia, through Tito and his Partisans:

The Soviets mean to create in our country, and indeed in this part of Europe, a pocket of Bolshevism. They would, if this was to come about, easily make the transition over to us. It has never crossed our minds to join the Soviet Union. On the contrary, it is by lying down our lives and sacrificing ourselves that we show best we will not give an ear to the Soviet Union, or to Tito, its chief hireling and agent. In closing remarks, the article spoke of the international legal position of the NDH, and what the Ustasha movement represented: In vain do their war reports keep silence that we Croats exist, that we fight against them and die. In vain do they strive to mask our fight by the activities of an occupier... But here our Ustashes and our Home Guards fight, here Croats combat a hellish plan, which would otherwise be imposed upon our people /23/.

The thesis propagated by the Ustashes, that the goals of communists were identical to those of the Chetniks, namely to create Greater Serbia, was completely inaccurate. On the contrary, the Yugoslav communists fought a war against the Chetniks and the idea of a Greater Serbia, while simultaneously trying to diplomatically thwart the plan of the Yugoslav, London-based government-in-exile to restore the Kingdom of Yugoslavia after the war. For this reason, one of the decisions in Jajce was to revoke the right to legally govern Yugoslavia from the so-called Yu-

goslav government abroad, and to deny King Petar II Karađorđević's return to the country. The Allies would not accept this /24/.

The resolutions of AVNOJ in Jajce do not correspond to the interpretations from the NDH press. At the meeting, the main goals of the National Liberation War were defined – the victory over fascism and the liberation of Yugoslav nations, which implied the destruction of the Axis-created NDH, and the settling of the national issue on the Yugoslav territory. The Yugoslav government, NKOJ, was formed, and AVNOJ was declared the superior executive authority of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia. At the Jajce session, the resolution was passed by AVNOJ, in the name of national Anti-fascist Councils, to create Yugoslavia as a federal state. The principle of national self-governance, including the right to separate and unite with other nations, was supposed to guarantee the full equality of the nations of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina /25/.

It was of immense importance to the Partisan movement in Yugoslavia that the Western Allies and the Soviet Union jointly decided in Tehran they would support Josip Broz Tito and the resistance led by the communists. This was the *de facto* recognition of the NOVJ as an allied army, which fought a common enemy on the Yugoslav territory. Already in Tehran, it was agreed by the Allies that a new federal community of Yugoslavia would be created. On this occasion, it was decided that Yugoslavia would be reinstated in complete territorial integrity and independence. The issue of its western borders and claims by Italy would be dealt with after the war, on the basis of proposal made by the US President W. Wilson in 1919. The attempts made during 1944 by the right wing of the HSS and a part of the Ustasha movement in the NDH, which were meant to bring Croatia closer to the Allies as *corpus separatum*, would be doomed. Since Tehran, the Allies aided and supported Partisans alone, the only force that opposed Germans and guaranteed the reconstruction of Yugoslavia, and they supported the cooperation between the HSS and communists /26/.

Nevertheless, the Allies in Tehran did not recognize the resolutions of AVNOJ, the supreme representative body of the Yugoslav nations, from 29 November 1944 in Jajce. These pertained to the

formation of the government, headed by Marshal Tito and the communists, whereas King Peter and the London-based government-in-exile were forbidden to return to the country. The Western Allies, or more precisely Churchill, who negotiated for the Allies' with Tito /27/ during 1944, insisted on the treaty between NKOJ and the Yugoslav government-in-exile. This would be accomplished by the agreements between Tito and Ivan Šubašić, the Prime Minister of the exiled Yugoslav government, on 16 June and 1 November 1944, on the island of Vis /28/. After Tehran, the Allied policies in regard to the Yugoslav issue were united. The message from Churchill to Stalin in early 1944, shortly after the Tehran conference, attests to the Allied agreement against unilateral actions and in favour of the exclusive support being given to the NOP on the territory of former Yugoslavia, along with the attempt to bring NKOJ closer to the London-based government-in-exile /29/. Churchill did not desire a communist Yugoslavia, so Stalin accepted a compromise which would include the royal Yugoslav government-in-exile in the new Yugoslavia project.

Conclusion

Apart from several departures in *Spremnost*, Ustasha propaganda advocated a single solution from Tehran almost to the end of the war – the fight for the Croatian state alongside its German ally. As incoherent as it may sound, it meant they would fight to the final defeat, the downfall of the NDH and the persecution of war criminals. The agitation taking place through the media was highly absurd, justifying the propaganda through the holy strife for national goals as directed by the Ustashas. Of the many dailies, the prominent role in creating such an atmosphere was played by the major NDH dailies – *Hrvatski narod*, *Hrvatski list* and the Sarajevo *Novi list*. The article *Mnogi su progledali* from 16 December 1943, published in *Hrvatski list*, said that many in the NDH had already opened their eyes to the fact against who the two year war had been led, or what the “forest” followed: *The war in Croatia is not fought against the Ustashas, it is fought against the Croatian people*. The assumption that the Ustashas were saviours of the Croatian people, or the identification of Ustashism and historical Croatian-hood, was the basis of the Ustasha ideology /30/. Ustasha press kept insisting on the fallacy that the

Croatian people had no alternative to the Ustasha policy, and that any confronting policies would mean the return of Croatia to the Greater Serbia commonwealth. This was certainly incorrect, since it was Croats who led the Communist Party (Josip Broz Tito, Ivo Lola Ribar, Vladimir Bakarić) and from June 1944 on, through the incentive of the Western Allies, Ivan Šubašić became the Prime Minister of the London-based Yugoslav government-in-exile. It was Croats who negotiated the creation of a new, post-war Yugoslavia with the Allies in 1944. The role of the HSS from 1943 on, the troubles taken to enable the NDH to enter the Allied camp, and the significant contribution of the HSS members to the anti-fascist movement, should equally not be forgotten /31/. Though illogical, the NDH press insisted on proving that the Croatian people faced a gridlock. The German ally was losing the war, which was strikingly obvious from the war reports of early 1944, but the readership was being convinced that there was no alternative, since only Germans still opposed the communists. This is why the Sarajevo *Novi list* warned its readers, in the article *Kad Englezka zahvaljuje* from 27 January 1944, about the alliance with Great Britain. The Allies had left Draža Mihailović, it was said, although he had only recently been celebrated as the “soul of resistance” against the Germans: ... *currently, his interference with the policy of the Moscow protégé Josip Broz is being called a curse*. The firm alliance of the British and Soviets was also noted:

The fact that this man (J. B. Tito), who spent several years in prison according to the Observer itself, has been formally acknowledged as an authority and a marshal by the British government, is a typical representation of the British policy in the Balkans /32/. Proving the dangers of cooperation with the Allies where the *Croatian case* is concerned, Ustasha propaganda confirmed, using Yugoslavia as an example, how strong the alliance is between the USSR and Great Britain. This was a complete opposite to their previous endeavours. The confusion created among Ustasha ideologists was the direct result of the Tehran resolutions and the unambiguous unity of the Allies. In Tehran, Churchill accepted Tito and the NKOJ for allies, and Stalin allowed for inclusion of the government-in-exile in the formation of a new Yugoslavia. The agreement was accomplished easily enough, because the most important issue for the

Allies was to defeat Germany and its allies, while political issues in East and Southeast Europe were of a lesser importance. During the Tehran meeting, the *Main Office for Propaganda* sent to the editorial boards, in the guise of article templates, a large number of advertisements and news dedicated to Bolshevism, the Soviet Union and post-war frameworks. Two articles had undisputable influence on the tone in which Croatian newspapers would report in late 1943 – *Što nam predstoji ako.....* and *Dobar saojet: «Postanite boljševici»*. In the first, it was clearly said what the biggest part of Europe, including Croatians, could expect if the Soviets won: *a horrific death of millions, and exile into forced labour in the Far East for the rest of our people. All that we hold dear in our souls and hearts, our churches, our beautiful old towns, great poets and learned men of our own, will be wiped off the face of the earth*. The second article warned those who expected to be saved by the Western Allies *Forget all about such expectations! Become Bolsheviks!* The message of the Ustasha leadership to the Croatian public was clear – the Soviets had the main say in the Allied camp, and it was not viable that the principles of the Atlantic Charter would be applied. If the Tehran plan was realized and the Third Reich truly beaten, its consequences were the downfall of the Croatian state, and a new era of the enslavement for the Croatian people /33/.

Notes

- /1/ Documents on the Great Alliance, 1942-1943. *Tehran Conference: Tripartite Dinner Meeting*, November 28, 1943, Roosevelt's Quarters.
- /2/ Documents on the Great Alliance, 1942-1943. *Tehran Conference: Tripartite Dinner Meeting*, November 29, 1943, Soviet Embassy.
- /3/ Documents on the Great Alliance, 1942-1943. *Tehran Conference: Tripartite Dinner Meeting*, November 29, 1943, Soviet Embassy.
- /4/ Documents on the Great Alliance *Tehran Conference: 1942-1943, Roosevelt-Stalin Meeting, December 1, 1943, Roosevelt's Quarters*. Documents on the Great Alliance, 1942-1943. *Tehran Conference: Tripartite Political Meeting*, December 1, 1943, Conference Room.
- /5/ HN, No. 902, 4 December 1943. Two days before the Big Three conference in Tehran, on 27 November 1943, Roosevelt, Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek met in Cairo. Stalin was not present due to terms of the neutrality agreement with Japan. It was agreed that a war would be fought against Japan in Asia and the Pacific until Japan's unconditional surrender. Japan would have to retreat from all Pacific islands

occupied since the outbreak of World War One in 1914. It would also have to retreat from all territories taken from China (Manchuria, Formosa and the Pescadores Islands), which would be returned to the Republic of China. Provisions were made for the establishment of a free and independent Korea. The attack on Pearl Harbour and the commencement of war on the Pacific turned Chiang Kai-shek into the Anglo-American ally in Asia. Chiang Kai-shek was named the Supreme Commander of Allied forces in the China war zone, including Indochina. After Operation *Torch*, however, Western Allies decided to continue operations on the Mediterranean and to prepare for Channel Dash, since their priorities were to drive Italy out of the war and to make Germany capitulate. C. Kai-shek had to settle for logistic support he received from the USA. Roosevelt, therefore, did not keep his promises to Chiang Kai-shek in regard to the American landing on the Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal, with the aim of capturing Java and Sumatra, and threatening the Japanese positions in Burma and Indochina. Nevertheless, from late 1941, Americans sent a 500 million dollar aid to C. Kai-shek and his Kuomintang, in order to strengthen the Chinese army and resistance to Japan. This was cleverly used by Chiang Kai-shek, mostly for personal gain and to prevent the strengthening of the communists (for example, he kept 200,000 soldiers on the territory occupied by the Soviets, in order to stop the Chinese communists from gaining in strength), while never starting a single offensive against Japan during the entire war. By the time of the Tehran conference, the USA kept China in a privileged position and allowed for a special status, due to the belief that it would be impossible to defeat Japan without China. However, when the Soviet intervention in the east, once the war with Germany ended, was agreed, the USA interest waned and the importance of Chiang Kai-shek's Chungking was significantly reduced in the Allied camp. This would become prominent during 1944, when Josef Stilwell, Roosevelt's representative who was also an officer in C. Kai-shek's military command, revealed C. Kai-shek's tactics and the weak points of China. It became clear that China was not a powerful enough ally in Asia in autumn of 1944, when Japanese undertook the last military offensive on China and occupied a large number of American airports, from which Claire Lee Chennault's "Flying Tigers", the special USA air-force, successfully bombed Japanese territories. H. Liddell Hart, Basil, *History of the Second World War*, New York 1970, p 499, pp 509-510, p 630, pp 633-634. Murray Williamson; Millett Allan R., *A War to be Won*, Harvard University, 2001, pp 164-168, pp 228-232. Calvacoressi, Peter; Vint, Guy, *Totalni rat*, Beograd 1987, p 281, pp 668-679.

- /6/ HN, No. 905, 8 December 1943, p 1. *Spremnost*, No. 97, 26 December 1943, p 4.
- /7/ HN, No. 906, 9 December 1943, p 1.
- /8/ *Spremnost*, No. 94, 12 December 1943, p 4: *Odjeci iz svijeta – iz Central European Observera*
- /9/ *Spremnost*, No. 94, 12 December 1943, p 5: *Big three i Poljska*.
- /10/ HL, No. 289, 10 December 1943, p 3.
- /11/ Jan Smuts (1870-1950) South African Premier in two mandates, 1919-1924 and 1939-1948.
- /12/ SNL, No. 788, 5 December 1943, p 3: *Konferencija bez značaja*
- /13/ HN, No. 887, 17 November 1943, p 2.
- /14/ Vrabac, No. 1, 7 January 1944, p 1.
- /15/ HN, No. 923, 1 January 1944, p 4: *Godina 1944. u savezničkom taboru*.
- /16/ SNL, No. 788, 5 December 1943, p 3.
- /17/ HL, No. 128, 3 June 1944, p 4.
- /18/ HN, No. 973, 1 March 1944, p 1: *Glas prosvjeda i osude*.
- /19/ HN, No. 926, 6 January 1944, p 2: *Novi teroristički napadaji na hrvatske gradove*.
- /20/ Marica Karakaš Obradov elaborates on the aims of Ustasha propaganda in regard to the Allied bombings of the Third Reich, the Kingdom of Italy and occupied France, begun in early 1943, or after the surrender of Italy, and especially after the Tehran conference. One of the main tasks of the NDH press was to illustrate the “uncivilized” behaviour of the Western Allies, the “culturecide” of architectural heritage and the violation of humanitarian principles. The issue of special significance for the NDH press were the Allied bombings of the NDH territories, connected to the Partisan resistance and their military aims. In the NDH, newspapers were an important means of promulgating state policies and “educating” the people. They wrote about the material damage suffered by “innocent civilians in terrorist attacks”, but never about victims among German soldiers or the armed forces of the NDH – an obviously opportune move. In the NDH newspapers published in Dalmatia, there was a more positive attitude towards the Western Allies than those published inland, which was attributed by the Propaganda Bureau of the NDH government to the maritime history and French and English connections. Karakaš Obradov, Marica, *Anglo-američka bombardiranja Hrvatske u Drugom sovjetskom ratu, Saveznički zračni napadi na Nezavisnu Državu Hrvatsku 1943.-1945.*, Hrvatski institut za povijest, Zagreb 2008, pp 48-61.
- /21/ HN, No. 930, 11 January 1944, p 3.
- /22/ *Tko je izumio federalizam*, HN, No. 951, 4 February 1944, pp 1-2. This probably referred to Vojvodina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia, as the part of the Yugoslav federation which would be claimed by Serbs.
- /23/ SNL, No. 788, 5 December 1943, p 3.
- /24/ The solution was reached in two agreements made between Tito and Šubašić in 1944, and confirmed at the Allied conference in Yalta. Bilandžić, Dušan, *Hrvatska moderna povijest*, Zagreb 1999, pp 163-166, pp 180-181. Jakovina, Tvrtko, *Između kralja, poglavnička i maršala – Odnos Saveznika prema Hrvatskoj/Jugoslaviji 1945.*, Symposium 1945. – *razdjelnica hrvatske povijesti*, Zagreb 2005, p 170, p 172, p 177. Đilas, Milovan, *Revolucionarni rat*, Beograd, 1990, p 382.
- /25/ Petranović, Branko; Zečević, Momčilo, *Jugoslavija: 1918.-1988. Tematska zbirka dokumenata*, Beograd 1988, pp 655-659. Bilandžić, Dušan, p 154.
- /26/ Schmidt, Amy, *Hrvatska i zapadni saveznici*, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 34, No. 1, Zagreb 2002, p 80, p 85, p 90.
- /27/ Prior to the conference of ministers in Moscow, which preceded Tehran, Tito used Soviet diplomatic channels to send a message from Jajce that they would not recognize the royal government, due to their support of D. Mihailović, and that the King was forbidden to return. The Soviets did not present at the Tehran conference this resolution by the Central Committee of the KPJ, respecting the attitude of the British, who still thought there was a possibility of reconciliation between the Chetniks and the Partisans. Nearly to the very end of the war, British diplomacy considered Serbia to be Chetnik-oriented, and Western Yugoslavia Partisan. The Tehran resolution, however, redirected aid to the Partisans. Đilas, Milovan, pp 363-364.
- /28/ Bilandžić, Dušan, p 152, pp 163-166.
- /29/ Churchill, Winston, *Tajna prepiska Churchill – Staljin*, Zagreb 1965, pp 301-302. Just after Tehran, the British government obtained consent from the USSR to find a compromise for the issue of Yugoslavia. This is evidenced by a message which the Soviet government sent to A. Eden, dated December 1943. The royal Yugoslav government-in-exile, led by B. Purić, was thus pressured by Great Britain, the USSR and NOP, as well as those emigrants who would not follow the policy of support for Draža Mihailović. The correspondence between Tito and Churchill in January, February and March of 1944, paved the way to negotiations on Vis and the agreement between the NKOJ and the royal government. Churchill overthrew Purić's government by June and expressed his willingness to sacrifice Mihailović and meet Tito half way. Petranović, B; Zečević, M, p 678.
- /30/ HL, No. 294, 16 December 1943, p 5. In *Spomen knjiga prve obljetnice NDH*, in the context of Ustasha-led liberation of the country, it is explicitly said that Ustashism is the foundation of the Croatian state – *the most crucial and powerful movement for the survival of the Croatian people*, and that led by the Poglavnik, it

is the best warranty of the great Croatian future in a new future Europe. A new Europe is being created, Ustasha Croatia is being erected, and it fights alongside its old allies, the invincible German army, against common enemies. *Spomen knjiga prve obljetnice NDH*, Zagreb 1942, p 10. The quote clearly states that a new Croatia was possible only in a *New Europe*, conformed to the new values, and that only a single political force was able to accomplish this, Ustashes. These were the same ones who accomplished a national revolution, liberated the country, and were given the task, under the new circumstances, to accomplish a social revolution. Apart from Ustashes, another set of politically-minded Croats would be unimaginable. The totalitarianism which they insisted upon was actually an integral part of the *new European movement* ideologies, National Socialism and Fascism - the way of the Ustasha. Croatia would not have a Duce or a Führer, but the Poglavnik; it would not have the Gestapo, but the UNS. It would, however, use a very similar way to connect the party and the country, the country and the nation, and find similar or identical enemies. Jelić-Butić, Fikreta, *Ustaše i NDH 1941.-1945.*, Zagreb 1977, pp 150-151.

/31/ Matković, Hrvoje, *Povijest Hrvatske seljačke stranke*, Zagreb 1994, p 434.

/32/ *Kad Englezka zahvaljuje*, SNL, No. 830, 27 January 1944, p 2.

/33/ HDA, Fonds of the Government Cabinet, DIPU-GRP, Box 75, AU 31

Abbreviations and explanations:

1. AVNOJ – Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia
2. DIPU – State Investigative and Propaganda Bureau
3. GRP – Head Office for Propaganda
4. HDA – Croatian State Archives
5. HL – the Croatian Post (*Hrvatski list*)
6. HN – the Croatian People (*Hrvatski narod*)
7. HSS – the Croatian Peasant Party
8. KPJ – Communist Party of Yugoslavia
9. NDH – Independent State of Croatia
10. NKOJ – National Committee for the Liberation of Yugoslavia
11. NOB – Peoples' Liberation War
12. NOP – Peoples' Liberation Movement
13. NOVJ – People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia
14. SNL – the Sarajevo New Post (sarajevski Novi list)

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