

## ВСЕСВІТНЯ ІСТОРІЯ

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### DEMOCRACIES AND THE HOLODOMOR

**Abstract.** *The well-known dictum by the famous economist and philosopher Amartya Sen that famine does not take place in modern democratic states is widely-accepted. Modern democracies have the ability to deal with food shortages by mobilizing their vast productive and transport capacity. Dictators fail or refuse to mobilize the resources of their countries and aid from abroad for political and other reasons. Hence famine. Although Sen's dictum is correct, it leaves out the question of democracies' connivance with dictatorships that ignore famine. At the time of the Holodomor the United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt went out of his way to ignore the Holodomor for geopolitical calculations. Washington viewed Japan's invasion and takeover of Manchuria with much anger, not because of concern about democracy in China but because of the potential loss of its political and economic interests in China to Japan. Taking advantage of the disinformation propagated by the infamous reporter for The New York Times Walter Duranty, Roosevelt conceded to the Soviet dictator and opened diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in late 1933. Here the great-power interests of the United States coincided with the Soviet Union against those of Japan in the Far East. This was not the first time Washington secretly collaborated with the Bolshevik dictatorship. (At the time of the Washington Naval Conference in 1921-1922 Washington and Moscow secretly worked together against their perceived common enemy, Japan.) Washington's willful disregard of the Holodomor was a quiet "appeasement" of Stalin and should be remembered as such. It should also be remembered that Roosevelt's "appeasement" did not end with the Holodomor. It continued into the time of Stalin's Great Terror and beyond.*

**Keywords:** Holodomor, democracy, disinformation, Roosevelt, Stalin, appeasement, the Far East.

### ДЕМОКРАТІЇ ТА ГОЛОДОМОР

**Анотація.** Широко відомим є твердження видатного економіста й філософа Амартії Сена про непридатність голоду сучасним демократичним державам. Теперішні демократії мають можливість долати дефіцит продуктів харчування, використовуючи та мобілізуючи весь свій величезний продуктивний потенціал. Натомість диктатори відмовляються мобілізувати ресурси своїх країн та закордонну допомогу з політичних або інших причин. Звідси голод. Щоправда, ті ж демократії часом нехтували становищем у своїх колоніях, що призводило до спалахів голоду, наприклад, в Ірландії чи Індії. Незважаючи на обґрунтованість наведеної вище тези, А. Сен все ж не порушує важливої проблеми потурання демократій диктатурам, що ігнорують голод у своїх державах. Голодомор в Україні є характерним прикладом. Дозволимо собі припустити, що в разі чіткої й відкритої артикуляції західними демократіями скепсису щодо сталінської дезінформації про відсутність голоду, мільйони життів могли б бути врятованими. США, які часто сприймаються міжнародною спільнотою лідером демократичного світу, у цьому випадку зазнали жальовідного провалу. На відміну від голоду початку 1920-х рр. в Росії та Україні, коли США активно допомагали тим, хто голодував, у 1932-1933 рр. офіційний Вашингтон не запропонував жодної допомоги. Ігноруючи очевидну інформацію, адміністрація Білого Дому навіть не визнавала факту Голодомору. Президент США Ф. Рузвельт, керуючись геополітичними розрахунками, намагався не помічати трагедії Голодомору. Він бачив у Й. Сталіні союзника в неминучому зіткненні з новою силою, яка зростала, в Азії – Японією. Вашингтон гнівно обурювався вторгненням Японії в Північно-Східний Китай у 1931 р. і поглинанням імперією Маньчжурії в

1932-му. Це глибоке занепокоєння американського президента було викликано зовсім не стурбованістю про небезпеку для демократії в Китаї, а скоріше загрозою, яку становила Японія політичним та економічним інтересам США в цій країні. Рузвельт із задоволенням сприймав за щиру правду сталінську дезінформацію, яку поширював горезвісний Уолтер Дюранті на сторінках «Нью-Йорк Таймс». Президент демократичної Америки дав радянському диктатору «користь сумніву», прагнучи завоювати його довіру. З цією метою Ф. Рузвельт наприкінці 1933 р. ініціював встановлення дипломатичних відносин із СРСР. Агресія Японії на Далекому Сході гармонізувала великодержавні інтереси США та Радянського Союзу. Ф. Рузвельта і Й. Сталіна зблизила саме Японія, а не нацистська Німеччина. Про свою стурбованість загрозою поширення японської агресії проти Радянського Союзу американський президент згадав навіть у повідомленні про встановлення дипломатичних відносин з радянською державою. Вашингтон далеко не вперше йшов на таємну співпрацю з більшовицькою диктатурою. Так, зокрема, було під час Вашингтонської військово-морської конференції 1921-1922 рр. Тоді США і Радянська Росія таємно об'єдналися у співпраці проти свого спільного ворога – Японії. Відтак, у 1932-1933 рр. маємо ще одну спробу Й. Сталіна зіштовхнути капіталістичні держави на свою користь, протиставити одну капіталістичну владу іншій. І радянський диктатор досяг блискучого успіху. Ігнорування Голодомору Вашингтоном було не що інше, як «умиротворення» Й. Сталіна, подібне до «умиротворення» А. Гітлера наприкінці 1930-х рр. І це слід пам'ятати, як і пам'ятати про те, що умиротворення Й. Сталіна Ф. Рузвельтом не завершилося Голодомором. Така політика щодо СРСР тривала до Великого терору 1937-1938 рр. і Другої світової війни 1939-1945 рр. Ідеться про забутий приклад моральної капітуляції західної демократії перед тоталітарною більшовицькою Москвою.

**Ключові слова:** Голодомор, демократія, дезінформація, Ф. Рузвельт, Й. Сталін, Далекий Схід.

**Statement of the problem.** The economist and philosopher Amartya Sen famously noted that no famine takes place under democracy. The world in the modern era, characterized by enormous productive and transport capacities, has adequate provision for the population of any given society across the globe to survive a food crisis through outside aid, provided that the political regime is willing to receive aid to help the population. Non-democratic regimes often fail to feed the population through malice, neglect, or indifference. The Holodomor in Ukraine in 1932–33 is one such example. Demographic catastrophes in the twentieth century, however, are not the monopoly of non-democratic regimes. The Bengal famine of 1943 in India, for example, was due, at least partially and possibly to a large extent, to the utter indifference of a democratic regime to the needs of its colonial subjects.

While famines did occur under democratic regimes, far more common in the twentieth century was the willingness among democratic powers to collaborate with dictatorships whose policies caused demographic catastrophes and mass killings. These cases are inconvenient truths for any political regime, and especially for democracies. Yet they need to be examined and the failures of democracies need to be acknowledged.

The present essay examines the cases of the Holodomor in Ukraine and analyzes the challenges that confronted democracies (particularly the United States) in the face of Communist dictatorship (the Soviet Union) on the Eurasian continent in the 1930s.

**The Statement of the Basic Material.** It is often forgotten that in the twentieth century Western and Soviet imperialism collaborated, at the cost of smaller powers such as Poland, when it suited their needs. The recent work by Andrzej Nowak<sup>1</sup>. This was one of a number of such instances of appeasement of imperialist aggression prior to the famous appeasement of the Nazis in 1939. For example, Professor Nowak notes the 1931 appeasement of Japan when it grabbed Manchuria, “once regarded as the beginning of ‘appeasement’”<sup>2</sup> The appeasement of Moscow by Washington that followed immediately after, however, seems to be almost completely forgotten. For this reason alone, this instance of appeasement deserves to be examined and discussed carefully. Moreover, like many historical events, this event, too, offers important historical lessons for smaller countries such as Ukraine that strive to live independently of neighboring imperial powers.

Washington’s appeasement of Moscow in the 1930s was not new: it followed historical precedents of its own. In 1921–1922, for example, Washington was willing to collaborate with the Bolsheviks to contain its imperialist rivals, especially Japan. Concerned about Japan’s naval expansion, Washington sought to discredit Japan’s military presence in the Soviet Far East as an imperial scheme rather than an anti-Communist war. Washington famously succeeded at that time

<sup>1</sup> Nowak A. *Pierwsza zdrada Zachodu: 1920 – zapomniana appeasement* demonstrates very well the West’s sacrifice of Poland to Soviet imperialism in 1920. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Tylko tam, s. 13.

in breaking Japan's diplomatic codes.<sup>3</sup> During the Washington Naval Conference from November 1921 to February 1922, the United States confidentially gave de-crypted Japanese diplomatic correspondence to the representatives of the Far Eastern Republic. (The Far Eastern Republic, a buffer state created by the Bolsheviks in 1920, was merely a front set up to stymie Japan's ambitions.) The Far Eastern Republic delegates then exposed Japan's secret territorial ambitions in the Far East. This resulted in Japan being forced to accept terms unfavorable to its naval expansion. The US hid its hand by working closely yet secretly with the Bolsheviks.<sup>4</sup> Japan was thus made to withdraw its military forces from the Russian Far East. Once the Japanese forces were withdrawn, the political utility of the Far Eastern Republic expired and it was soon abolished and absorbed into Soviet Russia. During these years, from 1918 to 1922, Moscow politically seduced the Americans with the prospect of fantastically attractive economic concessions for American business.<sup>5</sup> What kinds of secret agreements were concluded, if only orally, between them is unknown. The Far Eastern Republic, some leaders of which sought freedom from Moscow's command, may well have promised attractive deals to the Americans without clearing them with Moscow.<sup>6</sup> These dealings, while demonstrating America's willingness to work with the Bolshevik dictatorship for its foreign interests, largely serve to highlight how much further the US would be willing to take them just ten years later.

To fully understand this development, one must remember that the early 1920s were a period of acute famine in southern Russia and Ukraine. Herbert Hoover, the "Great Humanitarian," and other Americans organized an extensive humanitarian relief for the famished. In spite of the relief, millions of people (the estimates range from one million to five million) died in the famine. Without the American relief far more people would have died. The American relief effort ended in 1923 when Moscow began to export grain even while the famine was still not completely under control. As one historian has put it, "Soviet leaders had evinced a willingness to risk a terrible and massive human tragedy in order to expedite general economic development."<sup>7</sup>

There is no evidence that Hoover and others were motivated by military, intelligence, or economic benefits in extending relief to the famished people in Russia. Nevertheless, once the crisis in the Far East ended and the famine in the south began to subside, Moscow demonstrated no intention of honoring the promises of economic concessions it made to the United States. Such concessions were predicated on the American recognition of the Bolshevik government. As a result, Americans who had been most favorably disposed to the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries lost influence in American political circles.

The Bolsheviks, in fighting both Japanese territorial ambitions and the famine in the south, proved to be past masters of colluding with imperialist powers to gain maximum political benefit. Yet it did not mean that they renounced their own hidden imperialist ambitions, which would become evident in 1939 when Moscow destroyed Poland in collusion with Nazi Germany and invaded Finland militarily. In fact, from the very beginning the Bolsheviks never truly abandoned their imperialist agenda. This manifested itself most clearly in China within a few years of the Bolshevik Revolution. True, Moscow renounced on paper its extra-territoriality in China as a demonstration of criticism of other imperial powers that clung to their colonial powers in China. Yet when it came to the colonial control of the Chinese Eastern Railway (that extended from Manzhuli to Harbin and Suifenhe), Moscow first renounced control, then withdrew its renunciation.<sup>8</sup> Stalin was concerned that China would yield its control to imperial powers.<sup>9</sup> While

<sup>3</sup> See: *Yardley, H. O.* The American Black Chamber. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1931.

<sup>4</sup> *Chervonnaya, S. A., & Evans, D. J.* Left behind: Boris E. Skvirsky and the Chita Delegation at the Washington Conference, 1921–22. *Intelligence and National Security*, 2014, Vol. 1, P. 9–57; *Behringer, P. W.* 'Forewarned Is Forearmed': Intelligence, Japan's Siberian Intervention, and the Washington Conference. *The International History Review*. 2016. 8:3. P. 367-393.

<sup>5</sup> See: *Косторниченко, В. Н.* Проект концессии американского предпринимателя Вашингтона Б. Вандерлипа и Советская внешняя политика начала 1920-х гг. *Americana*. Волгоград, 2000. № 4. С. 79-87.

<sup>6</sup> The president of the Far Eastern Republic, Aleksandr Krasnoshchekov, was subsequently tried (on charges of "corruption") in 1924 and executed in 1937. (See: *Argenbright, R.* Marking NEP's Slippery Path: The Krasnoshchekov Show Trial *Russian Review*. 2002. 61:2. P. 249–275.

<sup>7</sup> *Edmondson, C. M.* An Inquiry into the Termination of Soviet Famine Relief Programmes and the Renewal of Grain Export, 1922–23. *Soviet Studies*. 1981. 33:3. P. 382.

<sup>8</sup> See: *Elleman, B.* Diplomacy and Deception: The Secret History of Sino-Soviet Diplomatic Relations, 1917-1927. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1997.

pitting one imperial power against another, the Bolsheviks remained deeply concerned that “America will always be against Russia” and that “the Japanese and Americans will unite concerning the division of spheres of influence” in the Far East.<sup>10</sup> Later, in 1929, Moscow even waged a brief war against China over the control of the railway. In the end, in 1935, Moscow, finding it difficult to pretend to be an anti-imperial power, ignored China and sold the railway to Manchukuo, the puppet government of the imperial occupier of Manchuria!

Moscow’s rhetoric, therefore, of resisting a capitalist threat in fact collapsed under the possibility of gaining its own economic and imperialist benefits, revealing the Bolsheviks’ willingness to work with other imperialist powers when it proved politically advantageous.

The international situation in the Far East changed dramatically in the 1930s. The Soviet Union and the United States established diplomatic relations in late 1933. While the United States extended famine relief to Ukraine and Russia in 1921–22, by 1932–33 Washington knowingly adhered to Stalinist propaganda and even failed to acknowledge that there was a famine. Had it helped the starving people in 1932–33, undoubtedly many lives would have been saved. In fact, with no outside help millions of people died of hunger in 1932–33 in the Soviet Union. The reason is very clear: Washington and Moscow joined forces against Tokyo. The rapprochement was a supremely political move carried out at the cost of millions of lives. Ultimately, it was more Washington’s “appeasement” of Moscow than the world’s “appeasement” of Japan, because Washington intended not to appease the Asian imperialist power, at least in the long run.

Japan’s military invasion of Manchuria in September 1931 and the foundation of its puppet government Manzhouguo (Manchukuo) in early 1932 changed fundamentally the political configuration in the Far East. Stalin insisted that it was a menacing challenge to Soviet power. He claimed that the Soviet military presence in the Far East was too weak to present an effective force and took a humiliatingly submissive position toward Japan. He even censured those (including Soviet Commissar of Foreign Affairs Maksim M. Litvinov) willing to take a harsher stance toward Japan.<sup>11</sup> While placating Japan, Moscow began in earnest to court Washington as a counterweight.

The Manchurian invasion took place when Herbert Hoover was the President of the United States. Hoover had organized, among others, the aid to the famished people in Russia and Ukraine in 1921–22. He was also a staunch opponent of Communism. He had no inclination to come to terms with Moscow. Nor did he have any intention of sanctioning Japan’s capture of the vast Manchurian land by force. Thus in 1932 the so-called “Stimson Doctrine,” named after Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson, came into being: non-recognition of international territorial changes by force. Needless to say, behind this doctrine lay the American intention not to let Japan monopolize Manchuria. After all, the United States, like Japan and other imperial powers, maintained extra-territoriality in China. Moreover the United States had long advocated the “Open Door Policy” in China, not to be outdone by other imperial powers (especially Japan and Russia).<sup>12</sup> In any event, the Stimson Doctrine remained a doctrine and was not enforced against Japan. The effect was, at least in the short term, a toleration if not appeasement of Japan’s aggression.

Franklin D. Roosevelt had no desire to appease Japan, at least in the long run. He sought to use Moscow against Japan. Moscow courted the United States, as it had done ten years earlier, as a counterweight against Japan and was more than happy to come to terms with Washington. In campaigning in 1932 for the presidency against the incumbent Republican President Hoover, Roosevelt played his hand craftily. On the one hand, he never publicly advocated recognizing the Soviet government so as not to alienate millions of American people of Slavic origin (particularly ethnic Poles and anti-Soviet émigrés from the former Russian Empire). On the other hand, he eagerly consulted Walter Duranty, the infamous correspondent of *The New York Times* in Moscow who knowingly denied the existence of famine in the Soviet Union and deliberately misrepresented

<sup>9</sup> A testimony by Henk Sneevliet who was a Comintern delegate to China in the early 1920s. His recommendation that the railway be returned to China was not accepted by Moscow. Stalin is said to have cited the case of Persia as an example of Russia’s withdrawal leading to “an increase in American influence”. Stalin’s remark, however, may refer to a later period, the mid- to late-1920s. (See: *Saich, T. The Origins of the First United Front in China: The Role of Sneevliet (Alias Maring)*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991. Vol. 1. P. 133.

<sup>10</sup> Remarks by P. A. Kobozev, the prime minister of the Far Eastern Republic in 1922 cited in Saich, vol. 1, p. 401.

<sup>11</sup> See: Сталин и Каганович. Переписка. 1931–1936 гг.; Сост.: О. В. Хлевнюк, Р. У. Девис, Л. П. Кошелева, Э. А. Рис, Л. А. Роговая. Москва: РОСПЭН, 2001. С. 122.

<sup>12</sup> In 1917 Washington did acknowledge Japan’s “special interests” in China (the “Lansing-Ishii Agreement”). This did not prevent the United States from advocating the “Open Door Policy.”



the Communist country as a successful experimentation with modernization, a lesson the capitalist countries (including the United States) should learn.<sup>13</sup>

Throughout 1933, when millions of people were dying in Ukraine and elsewhere in the Soviet Union, the newly elected President Roosevelt ignored numerous reports on the massive famine. He was now keen to mend relations with the Communist country. He did so finally in November 1933. "It was Walter Duranty, more than any other individual, who persuaded Franklin Roosevelt of the wisdom of granting diplomatic recognition to the Soviet government."<sup>14</sup> Historians have argued that Roosevelt was interested in using the Soviet Union as a lever to influence the European political scene complicated by Adolf Hitler's ascension to power in Germany in January 1933. It has also been argued that Roosevelt was interested in boosting the American economy by opening trade more widely with the Soviet Union. Indeed, American business circles had pressed Washington for the rapprochement with Moscow.

It is certain, however, that these were not the main reasons for Roosevelt's rapprochement with the Soviet dictator. On 16 November 1933 the two countries announced their diplomatic rapprochement. The following day Litvinov wrote almost ecstatically to Moscow about his conversation with Roosevelt: «Рузвельт при этом упомянул, что мы [Советский Союз] могли бы обмениваться с Америкой информацией о Японии. Он полагает, что нам нужно лет 10 для приведения Сибири в надлежащее состояние, в особенности для постройки дорог, и Америка готова все делать, чтобы отвратить от нас японские опасности»<sup>15</sup>. More revealing is a document from the Archive of the Foreign Ministry in Moscow. Roosevelt chose as first American ambassador to the Soviet Union William C. Bullitt, a man sympathetic with the Soviet Union who had personally known Vladimir I. Lenin. In a conversation with Grigorii Ia. Sokol'nikov, Deputy People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs on 13 December 1933, Bullitt was very frank about Roosevelt's motives, which Sokol'nikov's memorandum of the conversation betrays clearly: «После обмена любезностями Буллит перешел к разговору об отношениях на Дальнем Востоке. Он начал с того, что президент с самого начала был вполне твердо за установление дипломатических отношений с Советским Союзом, однако он ожидал наиболее подходящего момента; с другой стороны, в виду обострения советско-японских отношений, срок признания был установлен с таким расчетом, чтобы владивостокский порт мог замерзнуть и таким образом ему не грозила бы неожиданная атака японских судов, которые могли бы быть двинуты Японией, исходя из соображений, что улучшение советско-американских отношений требует немедленного удара по СССР»<sup>16</sup>.

Sokol'nikov, almost taken aback by such unexpectedly kind consideration by the American President, nevertheless found it necessary to assuage the American concern about the security of the Soviet Union: «На это я [Сокольников] сказал, что в нынешнее время атака порта морскими судами не является настолько опасной, как раньше, так как можно защитить порт с воздуха»<sup>17</sup>. This extraordinary record demonstrates unequivocally that Roosevelt's main reason for the rapprochement with Moscow was the containment of Japan in the Far East. Roosevelt, like Stalin, was not initially much concerned about the danger of Hitler to the world. In his aforementioned 17 November 1933 note to Moscow, Litvinov wrote: «Он [Рузвельт] надеется, однако, что Гитлер не выдержит и лопнет, но пока что является опасным милитаристским воспитателем юношества»<sup>18</sup>.

The Soviet-American rapprochement included certain provisos Moscow had to observe, such as the guarantee of freedom of conscience and the cessation of Communist propaganda in the United States. None of these concerned Roosevelt very much, and Stalin had absolutely no intention of observing them. Having ignored the Holodomor, Roosevelt was eager to take at face value the "Stalin Constitution", promulgated for Western consumption in 1936, which included a clause on the guarantee of freedom of conscience<sup>19</sup>. Roosevelt showed no interest in the genocidal attack on priests and believers in 1937–38 that followed in the promulgation of the Stalin Constitution.

<sup>13</sup> See *Taylor, S.J.* Stalin's Apologist: Walter Duranty. The New York Times's Man in Moscow. New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

<sup>14</sup> *Tzouliadis, T.* The Forsaken: An American Tragedy in Stalin's Russia. New York: Penguin, 2008. P. 55.

<sup>15</sup> Советско-американские отношения. Годы непризнания 1927-1933. Москва, 2002. С. 719.

<sup>16</sup> Архив внешней политики РФ (Further – АВП РФ), ф. 146, оп. 16, п. 153, д. 10, л. 250.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Советско-американские отношения... С. 719.

<sup>19</sup> See: *Tzouliadis, T.* The Forsaken... P. 204.

Notwithstanding the provisos, Moscow carefully yet successfully used the American Communist Party for propaganda and, more significantly, Moscow's intelligence penetrated the American establishment deeply<sup>20</sup>.

Even before the 1933 rapprochement, it was clear to Washington that many Americans and other foreign citizens had been disappearing in the Soviet Union without the knowledge of foreign consulates. Their fates were unknown and they were assumed to have been arrested. Some of them subsequently were released and their ordeals of arrest and punishment by Soviet security organs became known to the world. Washington was naturally concerned about these matters. Roosevelt, however, was happy to accept Moscow's empty assurance that American citizens would be given consular assistance in the event of arrest. Roosevelt continued to ignore the unpleasant facts of disappearing American citizens in the Soviet Union. After arriving in Moscow, Bullitt soon turned critical of Stalin and his government, so he was recalled to Washington by Roosevelt. His replacement, Joseph E. Davies, a corrupt and incompetent diplomat, attended two of the three show trials Stalin staged in Moscow (the so-called "Piatakov Trial" in 1937 and the "Bukharin Trial" in 1938) and reported on their justness: he saw "a clear conspiracy against the government" by the defendants. Moreover, he too failed to pay attention to the fate of Americans disappearing in the Soviet Union. Davies' indifference unnerved the American embassy staff so much that they even considered a mass resignation in protest<sup>21</sup>. Davies' conduct in fact stemmed from the instruction Roosevelt had given to him when he departed for Moscow. According to Loy W. Henderson, an American diplomat who worked under Davies, Davies told him that Roosevelt "had instructed him that his main mission in Moscow was to *win the confidence of Stalin*"<sup>22</sup>.

It was also during this time of Stalin's Great Terror that Washington and Moscow secretly began collaborating against Japan in China, where a full-scale war between Japan and China had broken out in the wake of the so-called Marco Polo Bridge Incident (on 7 July 1937). According to the Soviet master spy Pavel Sudoplatov, «Дело в том, что и мы, и американцы были вовлечены в военный конфликт между Китаем и Японией, и мы, и американцы оказывали Китаю значительную военную помощь, секретно консультируя друг друга по этим вопросам и в Москве, и в Вашингтоне»<sup>23</sup>.

Roosevelt decided to open diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union at a time when millions of Ukrainians (and other citizens of the Soviet Union) were dying from famine. He ignored the massive human catastrophe. Roosevelt was so keen to win Stalin's confidence that his Great Terror (in which almost one million innocent people were executed), his sensational show trials, and the disappearance of American citizens in the Soviet Union were not a priority. Roosevelt's diplomacy must be recognized as an appeasement of the Soviet dictator.

Roosevelt's reaction to Stalin's alliance with Hitler (in August 1939) and Stalin's military invasion of Finland (in November 1939) and annexation of the Baltic republics in 1940 was necessarily muted. Herbert Hoover, who lost the presidential election to Roosevelt in 1932, saw Roosevelt's appeasement of Stalin very clearly. Although one may call it "sour grapes," he had a point. A few days after Hitler attacked the Soviet Union, Hoover was alarmed by reports of further appeasement by Roosevelt: One of the real compensations America received for our enormous sacrifices in the last war [WWI] was from the large part we played in establishing the democracies of Finland, Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. We nursed them in their infancy. We spent hundreds of millions to help them grow to manhood. Does America feel quite right about aiding Stalin to hold his enslavement of them? That is where power politics will carry us. No doubt we will promise to aid Russia. But the war to bring the four freedoms to the world will die spiritually when we make that promise.

If we go further and join the war and we win, then we have won for Stalin the grip of communism on Russia, the enslavement of nations, and more opportunity for it to extend in the world. If we go into this war we will aid Stalin to hold his aggression against the four little

<sup>20</sup>See: *Haynes J. & Klehr, H. Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America.* New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2010.

<sup>21</sup> *Tzouliadis, T. The Forsaken...* P. 115–116.

<sup>22</sup> *A Question of Trust: The Origins of U.S.-Soviet Diplomatic Relations. The Memoirs of Loy W. Henderson.* Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1985. P. 417 (emphasis added).

<sup>23</sup> See: *Судоплатов П. Разные дни тайной войны и дипломатии. 1941 год.* Москва, 2001. С. 150.

democracies. We will help him to survive and continue his terror and his conspiracies against all democracies<sup>24</sup>.

As a former President of the United States, Hoover was not only familiar with great power politics but practiced it. Although he was no friend of Japanese imperialism and no supporter of its appeasement, he suspected that Roosevelt had no desire to avoid war with Japan, which broke out in December 1941.

Roosevelt was a politician who defended the national interests of the United States. He led the country out of the Great Depression and to victory during World War II. Today in the United States he is regarded as one of the greatest presidents in American history by both Democrats and Republicans (Roosevelt was a Democrat).

It is also clear, however, that Roosevelt chose to form a united, if unofficial, front with Moscow against Tokyo. Roosevelt defeated the non-interventionist Hoover to become president in 1933. He meant to influence the international political configuration in the Far East in favor of America. The question arises why Roosevelt chose to work with the Communist dictator over a constitutional monarch. Again, the reason is unavoidably related to American imperialist interests. Japan was an aggressive empire bent on staking out its territorial ambitions in Asia, particularly China. This posed an immediate threat to American interests, whereas Moscow played its cards well: even though it controlled the Mongolian People's Republic as a Soviet satellite and Xinjiang (Chinese Turkestan) as a de-facto colony, Moscow consistently pretended to be anti-imperialist. As Japan's democratic rule came to be increasingly eroded by growing militarism, its government frequently changed hands. In the ten years from Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931 to Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, Japan counted 13 prime ministers, on average more than one prime minister a year. Obviously dealing with such an unstable and unpredictable aggressive power was precarious. By contrast, the Soviet Union was a communist dictatorship. It is understandable that from a political point of view, it would have been far easier to strike a lasting deal with Moscow than with Tokyo.

Washington therefore decided to appease the Communist regime in order to control their common rival on the Asian continent. The result is that Washington chose, for the sake of its own interests, not to make an issue of millions of deaths in the Soviet Union. Whether Roosevelt could have acted differently is a question that can be argued in many ways. All the same, Roosevelt's appeasement of Stalin should not be forgotten. The appeasement of Hitler by Western democracies in 1938 has been condemned universally, but Roosevelt's appeasement of Stalin is almost completely forgotten. In this light, the following assessment by an American historian of Roosevelt's mission during Stalin's Great Terror sounds ironic: "His [Roosevelt's] greatest assets were his large vision that democracy around the world was imperiled and his increasing sense that he had been given the mission of defending it."<sup>25</sup> According to his wife's account, Roosevelt "had a real liking for Marshal Stalin himself."<sup>26</sup>

**The Conclusions.** In October 2015 a monument for the victims of the Holodomor was erected in the capital of the United States. (This was authorized by the US Congress in 2006.) This event was welcomed by Americans and Ukrainians alike as a belated acknowledgment by Washington of the millions of deaths in 1932-33 under Stalin. Maryna Poroshenko, Ukraine's first lady, attended the opening ceremony.<sup>27</sup> President Petro Poroshenko himself visited the memorial in March 2016 and thanked the United States and «to the whole civilised world for support in the common struggle for the restoration of justice and the rule of law»<sup>28</sup>. Neither in the US nor in Ukraine, however, was Roosevelt's appeasement of Stalin at the time of the Holodomor ever mentioned.

The question is not whether to condemn Roosevelt or not. Democracies do not always act for democracy's sake and great powers often pursue their own interests at the cost of smaller powers. The 1939 case is well known. The abandonment of Poland in 1945 is another well-known case.

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<sup>24</sup> See: *Nash, G. H. Freedom Betrayed: Herbert Hoover's Secret History of the Second World War and Its Aftermath.* Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2011. P. 233.

<sup>25</sup> Hamby A. L. *For the Survival of Democracy: Franklin Roosevelt and the World Crisis of the 1930s.* New York: Free Press, 2004. P. 393.

<sup>26</sup> *Roosevelt, E. This I remember.* New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949. P. 254.

<sup>27</sup> See: <http://www.president.gov.ua/news/marina-poroshenko-u-vashingtoni-vzyala-uchast-u-vidkritti-me-36267>.

<sup>28</sup> See: <http://www.president.gov.ua/news/pamyat-pro-golodomor-obyednuye-ves-civilizovaniy-svit-i-robi-36929>.

Andrzej Nowak added 1921 to the list of appeasements. It is time to remember 1933. Today's Ukraine would do well to recall the history of Stalin and his appeaser in the 1930s.

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