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# **Speech at Celebration Meeting of the Moscow Soviet of Working People's Deputies and Moscow Party and Public Organizations (1941)**

*Stalin*

28-36 minutes

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J. V. Stalin

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**November 6, 1941**

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COMRADES, twenty-four years have elapsed since the victory of the October Socialist Revolution and the establishment of the Soviet system in our country. We stand now on the threshold of the next, the twenty-fifth, year of existence of the Soviet system.

Usually at meetings in celebration of the anniversaries of the October Revolution the results of our successes in the realm of peaceful construction for the past year are summed up. We have

really the possibility to sum up such results as our successes in the realm of peaceful construction are growing not only from year to year, but from month to month. What these successes are and how great they are is known to all, both friends and foes.

But this past year is not only a year of peaceful construction. It is also a year of war with the German invaders who perfidiously attacked our peace-loving country. Only during the first six months of the past year were we able to continue our peaceful, constructive work. In the second half of the year more than four months were spent under conditions of a fierce war with the German imperialists. The war has thus become a turning-point in the development of our country for the last year. The war has considerably curtailed and, in some branches, altogether stopped, our peaceful constructive work. It has forced us to reorganize all our work on a war footing. It has converted our country into a united and all-embracing rear serving the front, our Red Army and our Navy.

The period of peaceful construction has ended. The period of the war of liberation from the German invaders has begun.

It is therefore quite appropriate to sum up the results of the war for the second half of the past year, or rather for the period of somewhat over four months of the second half of the year, as well as the tasks confronting us in this war of liberation.

### **The Course of the War for Four Months**

I have already said in my speech at the beginning of the war that the war had created a dangerous threat to our country, that a serious danger was looming over our country, that we must

understand and realize this danger and remodel our work on a war-time basis. Now, after four months of war, I must emphasize that this danger has not only not grown less, but, on the contrary, has even increased. The enemy has seized a large part of the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Moldavia Lithuania, Latvia, Esthonia and a number of other regions, has forced his way into the Donetz Basin, hangs like a black cloud over Leningrad and is threatening our glorious capital, Moscow. The German-fascist invaders are plundering our country, destroying the towns and villages created by the labours of the workers, peasants and intellectuals. The Hitlerite hordes are murdering and outraging the peaceful inhabitants of our country, having no mercy on women, children or old people. Our brothers in the regions of our country seized by the Germans are groaning under the yoke of the German oppressors.

Streams of enemy blood have been spilt by the men of our Army and Navy, who are defending the honour and freedom of our Motherland, courageously beating off the attacks of the bestial enemy and displaying examples of valour and heroism. But the enemy stops at no sacrifice, he does not care one iota for the blood of his soldiers, he throws into action more and more detachments to replace those which have been shattered, and is straining all his efforts to capture Leningrad and Moscow before the advent of winter, for he knows that winter bodes him no good.

In four months of war we have lost 350,000 in killed, and 378,000 missing, and our wounded number 1,020,000. In the same period the enemy has in killed, wounded and prisoners lost more than four and a half million men.

There can be no doubt that as a result of four months of war

Germany, whose reserves of man-power are already being exhausted, has been considerably more weakened than the Soviet Union, whose reserves are only now being mobilized to the full.

### **Failure of the “Blitzkrieg”**

In launching their attack on our country the German-fascist invaders thought that they would certainly be able to “finish off” the Soviet Union in one and a half or two months, and in this short period would succeed in reaching the Urals. It must be said that the Germans did not conceal this plan of a “lightning” victory. On the contrary, they advertised it in every possible way. The facts, however, have demonstrated the utter irresponsibility and groundlessness of this “lightning” plan. Now this mad plan must be regarded as having finally failed. (*Applause.*)

How is it to be explained that the “blitzkrieg” which succeeded in Western Europe has failed and collapsed in the East?

What did the German-fascist strategists count on when they asserted that they would finish off the Soviet Union in two months and reach the Urals in this short period?

They seriously calculated in the first place on creating a general coalition against the U.S.S.R., on enlisting Great Britain and the U.S.A. in this coalition, first having frightened the ruling circles of these countries with the spectre of revolution, and thus completely isolating our country from the other Powers. The Germans knew that their policy of playing on the contradictions between the classes of individual states, and between these states and the Soviet country, had already produced results in France, the rulers of which, having let themselves be frightened by the spectre of

revolution, in their fright laid their country at the feet of Hitler and renounced all resistance. The German-fascist strategists thought that the same would occur in Great Britain and the United States. The notorious Hess was in fact sent to England by the German-fascists precisely in order to persuade the English politicians to join in the general crusade against the U.S.S.R. But the Germans gravely miscalculated. (*Applause.*) Great Britain and the United States, despite the efforts of Hess, not only did not join in the campaign of the German-fascist invaders against the U.S.S.R., but, on the contrary, proved to be in one camp with the U.S.S.R. against Hitlerite Germany. The U.S.S.R. not only was not isolated, but, on the contrary, it acquired new allies in the shape of Great Britain, the United States and other countries occupied by the Germans. It turned out that the German policy of playing on contradictions and of intimidation by means of the spectre of revolution has been exhausted and is no longer suitable in the new situation. And not only is it unsuitable, but it is even fraught with grave danger for the German invaders, because in the new conditions of the war it leads to diametrically opposite results.

The Germans counted, secondly, on the instability of the Soviet system, and the unreliability of the Soviet rear, reckoning that after the first serious blow and the first setbacks of the Red Army, conflicts would break out between the workers and peasants, dissension would begin between the peoples of the U.S.S.R., uprisings would occur, and the country would disintegrate into its component parts—which would facilitate the advance of the German invaders right up to the Urals. But here, also, the Germans gravely miscalculated. The setbacks of the Red Army not only did not weaken but, on the contrary, strengthened even

further the alliance of the workers and peasants, as well as the friendship of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. (*Applause.*) Moreover, they converted the family of peoples of the U.S.S.R. into a single and unshakable camp, selflessly supporting its Red Army and its Red Navy. Never before has the Soviet rear been so firm as it is to-day. (*Loud applause.*) It is quite probable that any other State, having suffered such territorial losses as we have now, would not have withstood the test and would have fallen into decline. If the Soviet system has so successfully passed through this trial and even strengthened its rear, then this means that the Soviet system is now the most stable one. (*Loud applause.*)

Finally, the German invaders counted on the weakness of the Red Army and Red Navy, believing that the German army and German navy would succeed at the very first blow in overwhelming and dispersing our army and navy and opening the way for an unopposed advance into the depths of our country. But here, too, the Germans gravely miscalculated, overrating their own strength and underrating our army and navy. Of course, our army and navy are still young, they have been fighting for four months in all, they have not yet succeeded in becoming thoroughly seasoned, whereas they are confronted by the seasoned army and navy of the Germans, who have already been waging war for two years. But, in the first place, the morale of our army is higher than that of the Germans, because it is defending its native land from alien invaders and believes in the justice of its cause, whereas the German army is waging an aggressive war and is plundering a foreign country, having no possibility of believing even for a moment in the justice of its vile cause. There can be no doubt that the idea of defending one's own native land—and it is in the name

of this that our people are fighting—is bound to create, and actually is creating in our army, heroes who are cementing the Red Army; whereas the idea of seizing and plundering a foreign country—and it is in the name of this that the Germans are in fact waging war—is bound to breed, and actually is breeding in the German army, professional plunderers, devoid of all moral principles and corrupting the German army. Secondly, advancing into the depths of our country, the German army is moving farther and farther away from its own German rear, is forced to operate in hostile surroundings, is forced to create a new rear in an alien country, a rear which is at the same time being disrupted by our guerillas—all of which is radically disorganizing the supply of the German army, forcing it to fear its own rear, and destroying its faith in the stability of its own position; whereas our army is operating on its own native surroundings, enjoys the constant support of its own rear, has assured supplies of men, munitions and food, and has a profound faith in its rear. That is why our army has proved to be stronger than the Germans anticipated and the German army weaker than might have been expected judging by the boastful self-advertisement of the German invaders. The defence of Leningrad and Moscow, where our divisions lately wiped out about a score and a half of seasoned German divisions, shows that in the fire of our patriotic war there are being forged, and have already been forged, new Soviet fighters and commanders, airmen, artillerymen, mortar crews, tankmen, infantrymen and sailors, who to-morrow will become a deadly menace to the German army. (*Loud applause.*)

There is no doubt that all these circumstances taken together predetermined the inevitable failure of the “blitzkrieg” in the East.

## **Reasons for the Temporary Reverses of our Army**

All that, of course, is true. But it is likewise true that alongside these favourable factors there are a number of factors unfavourable to the Red Army, as a result of which our army is suffering temporary reverses, is obliged to retreat and to surrender a number of regions of our country to the enemy.

What are these unfavourable factors? What are the reasons for the temporary military reverses of the Red Army?

One of the reasons for the reverses of the Red Army is the absence of a second front in Europe against the German-fascist troops. The fact of the matter is that at the present time there are still no armies of Great Britain or the United States of America on the European continent to wage war against the German-fascist troops, with the result that the Germans are not compelled to dissipate their forces and to wage war on two fronts, in the West and in the East. Well, the effect of this is that the Germans, considering their rear in the West secure, are able to move all their troops and the troops of their allies in Europe against our country. The situation at present is such that our country is carrying on the war of liberation single-handed, without any military assistance, against the combined forces of Germans, Finns, Rumanians, Italians and Hungarians. The Germans preen themselves on their temporary successes and are lavish in the praises of their army, claiming that it can always defeat the Red Army in single combat. But the Germans' claims are empty boasting, for it is incomprehensible why in that case the Germans have resorted to the aid of the Finns, Rumanians, Italians and Hungarians against the Red Army, which is fighting absolutely single-handed without



any military help from outside. There is no doubt that the absence of a second front in Europe against the Germans considerably eases the position of the German army. But neither can there be any doubt that the appearance of a second front on the European continent—and it must unquestionably appear in the near future (*loud applause*)—will essentially ease the situation of our army to the detriment of the German army.

The other reason for the temporary reverses of our army is our lack of an adequate number of tanks and, partly, of aircraft. In modern warfare it is very difficult for infantry to fight without tanks and without adequate aircraft protection. Our aviation is superior in quality to that of the Germans, and our valiant airmen have covered themselves with glory as fearless fighters. (*Applause.*) But we still have fewer aircraft than the Germans. Our tanks are superior in quality to the German tanks, and our glorious tankmen and artillerymen have more than once put the vaunted troops of the Germans, with their numerous tanks, to flight. (*Applause.*) But we still have several times fewer tanks than the Germans. Therein lies the secret of the temporary successes of the German army. It cannot be said that our tank-building industry is working badly and supplying our front with few tanks. No, it is working very well and is producing quite a number of excellent tanks. But the Germans are producing considerably more tanks, for they now have at their disposal not only their own tank-building industry, but also the industry of Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Holland and France. Had it not been for this circumstance, the Red Army would long ago have smashed the German army, which does not go into battle without tanks and cannot stand up to the blows of our troops if it has not a superiority in tanks. (*Applause.*)

There is only one way of nullifying the Germans' superiority in tanks and thus radically improving the position of our army. This way is, not only to increase the output of tanks in our country several times over, but also sharply to increase the production of anti-tank aircraft, anti-tank rifles and guns, and anti-tank grenades and mortars, and to construct more anti-tank trenches and every other kind of anti-tank obstacle.

Herein lies our present task.

We can accomplish this task, and we must accomplish it at all costs!

### **Who are the "National Socialists"?**

In our country the German invaders, i.e., the Hitlerites, are usually called fascists. The Hitlerites, it appears, consider this wrong and obstinately continue to call themselves "National Socialists."

Hence the Germans want to assure us that the Hitlerite party, the party of the German invaders, which is plundering Europe and has organized the villainous attack on our socialist State, is a socialist party. Is this possible? What can there be in common between socialism and the bestial Hitlerite invaders who are plundering and oppressing the nations of Europe?

Can the Hitlerites be regarded as *nationalists*? No, they cannot. Actually, the Hitlerites are now not nationalists but *imperialists*. As long as the Hitlerites were engaged in assembling the German lands and reuniting the Rhine district, Austria, etc., it was possible with a certain amount of foundation to call them nationalists. But after they seized foreign territories and enslaved European nations—the Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Norwegians, Danes, Dutch,

Belgians, French, Serbs, Greeks, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, the inhabitants of the Baltic countries, etc.—and began to reach out for world domination, the Hitlerite party ceased to be a nationalist party, because from that moment it became an imperialist party, a party of annexation and oppression.

*The Hitlerite party is a party of imperialists, and the most rapacious and predatory imperialists among all the imperialists of the world.*

Can the Hitlerites be regarded as *socialists*? No, they cannot. Actually, the Hitlerites are the sworn enemies of socialism, arrant reactionaries and Black-Hundreds who have robbed the working class and the peoples of Europe of the most elementary democratic liberties. In order to cover up their reactionary, Black-Hundred essence, the Hitlerites denounce the internal regimes of Britain and America as plutocratic regimes. But in Britain and the United States there are elementary democratic liberties, there exist trade unions of workers and employees, there exist workers' parties, there exist parliaments; whereas in Germany, under the Hitler regime, all these institutions have been destroyed. One only needs to compare these two sets of facts to perceive the reactionary nature of the Hitler regime and the utter hypocrisy of the German-fascist pratings about a plutocratic regime in Britain and in America. In point of fact the Hitler regime is a copy of that reactionary regime which existed in Russia under tsardom. It is well known that the Hitlerites suppress the rights of the workers, the rights of the intellectuals and the rights of nations as readily as the tsarist regime suppressed them, and that they organize mediæval Jewish pogroms as readily as the tsarist regime organized them.

*The Hitlerite party is a party of enemies of democratic liberties, a*

*party of mediæval reaction and Black-Hundred pogroms.*

And if these brazen imperialists and arrant reactionaries still continue to masquerade in the togas of “nationalists” and “socialists,” they do this in order to deceive the people, to fool the simpletons and to hide under the flag of “nationalism” and “socialism” their piratical and imperialist nature.

Crows decked in peacocks’ feathers. . . . But no matter how much crows may deck themselves in peacocks’ feathers they will not cease to be crows.

“We must at all costs,” says Hitler, “strive to achieve the German conquest of the world. If we want to create our great German empire we must first of all oust and exterminate the Slav peoples—the Russians, Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Bulgarians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians. There are no reasons why this should not be done.”

“Man,” says Hitler, “is sinful from birth and can be ruled only with the help of force. In dealing with him all methods are permissible. When policy demands it one must lie, betray and even kill.”

“Kill everyone who is against us,” says Göring. “Kill, kill!—It is not you who will be held responsible, but I. Therefore, kill!”

“I emancipate man,” says Hitler, “from the humiliating chimera which is called conscience. Conscience, like education, mutilates man. I have the advantage of not being restrained by any considerations of a theoretical or moral nature.”

In one of the orders of the German command, dated September 25, to the 489th infantry regiment, and found on a killed German noncommissioned officer, it is stated:

“I order you to open fire on every Russian as soon as he appears at a distance of 600 metres. The Russian must learn that he is faced by a resolute foe from whom he cannot expect any mercy.”

In one of the declarations of the German command to the soldiers, found on the dead body of Lieutenant Gustav Ziegel, a native of Frankfort-on-Main, it is stated:

“You have no heart or nerves; they are not needed in war. Eradicate every trace of pity and sympathy from your heart-kill every Russian, every Soviet person. Do not stop even if before you stands an old man or a woman, girl or boy, kill! By this you will save yourselves from destruction, ensure the future of your family and win eternal glory.”

There you have the programme and instructions of the leaders of the Hitlerite party and of the Hitlerite command, the programme and instructions of men who have lost all semblance of human beings and have sunk to the level of wild beasts.

And these men, bereft of conscience and honour, these men with the morals of beasts, have the insolence to call for the extermination of the great Russian nation, the nation of Plekhanov and Lenin, Belinsky and Chernyshevsky, Pushkin and Tolstoy, Glinka and Chaikovsky, Gorky and Chekhov, Sechenov and Pavlov, Repin and Surikov, Suvorov and Kutuzov!

The German invaders want a war of extermination with the peoples of the U.S.S.R. Well, if the Germans want to have a war of extermination, they will get it. (*Loud and prolonged applause.*)

From now on our task, the task of the peoples of the U.S.S.R., the task of the fighters, commanders and the political workers of our Army and our Navy will be to exterminate every single German

who has set his invading foot on the territory of our Fatherland.

*(Loud applause. "Hear, hear!" Cheers.)*

No mercy for the German invaders!

Death to the German invaders! *(Loud applause.)*

### **The Defeat of the German Imperialists and their Armies is Inevitable**

Already the very moral degradation of the German invaders, who have lost all human semblance, and long ago sunk to the level of wild beasts, this one circumstance is already evidence of the fact that they have doomed themselves to inevitable destruction.

But the inevitable destruction of the Hitlerite invaders and their armies is not determined by moral factors alone.

There exist three other basic factors, which are operating more powerfully with each day that passes, and which are bound to lead in the near future to the inevitable defeat of Hitler's bandit imperialism. *(Applause.)*

First, there is the instability of the European rear of imperialist Germany, the instability of the "New Order" in Europe. The German invaders have enslaved the peoples of the European continent—from France to the Soviet Baltic, from Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Holland and Soviet Byelorussia to the Balkans and the Soviet Ukraine; they have robbed them of their elementary democratic liberties; they have deprived them of the right to dispose of their own destinies; have taken away their bread, meat and raw materials; they have turned them into their slaves; they have crucified the Poles, Czechs, Serbs, and decided that, having achieved domination in Europe, they can now use it as a basis for

building up Germany's world domination. That is what they call the "New Order in Europe." But what is this "basis," what is this "New Order"? Only the conceited Hitlerite fools fail to see that the "New Order" in Europe and the infamous "basis" of this order represent a volcano which is ready to erupt at any moment and overwhelm the German imperialist house of cards. They refer to Napoleon, assuring us that Hitler is acting like Napoleon, and that he resembles Napoleon in everything. In the first place, however, one should not forget Napoleon's fate. And, secondly, Hitler resembles Napoleon no more than a kitten resembles a lion. (*Laughter, loud applause.*) For Napoleon fought against the forces of reaction and relied on progressive forces, whereas Hitler, on the contrary, relies on the forces of reaction and is fighting the progressive forces. Only the Hitlerite fools in Berlin fail to realize that the enslaved peoples of Europe will fight and revolt against Hitler's tyranny. Who can doubt that the U.S.S.R., Great Britain and the U.S.A. will afford full support to the peoples of Europe in their struggle for liberation against Hitler's tyranny? (*Applause.*)

Secondly, there is the instability of the *German* rear of the Hitlerite invaders. So long as the Hitlerites were engaged in the assembling of Germany, which had been split up by the Versailles Treaty, they could enjoy the support of the German people, who were inspired by the ideal of the restoration of Germany. But after this aim had been achieved and the Hitlerites entered the road of imperialism, of the seizure of foreign lands and the subjugation of foreign nations, converting the peoples of Europe and the peoples of the U.S.S.R. into sworn enemies of present-day Germany, a profound change of feeling took place in the German people—against the continuation of the war, in favour of the termination of the war.

Over two years of sanguinary war, the end of which is not yet in sight; the millions of human lives sacrificed; starvation; impoverishment; epidemics; an atmosphere of hostility to the Germans all around them; Hitler's stupid policy, which has turned the peoples of the U.S.S.R. into the sworn enemies of present-day Germany—all this could not but set the German people against the unnecessary and ruinous war. Only the Hitlerite fools fail to understand that not only the European rear but also the German rear of the German troops represents a volcano which is ready to erupt and overwhelm the Hitlerite adventurers.

There is, finally, the coalition of the U.S.S.R., Great Britain and the United States of America against the German-fascist imperialists. It is a fact that Great Britain, the United States of America and the Soviet Union have united into a single camp, which has set itself the aim of smashing the Hitlerite imperialists and their predatory armies. The present war is a war of engines. The war will be won by the side that has an overwhelming preponderance in engine production. If we aggregate the production of engines in the U.S.A., Great Britain and the U.S.S.R., then we get a superiority of at least three times in comparison with Germany. That is one of the grounds for the inevitable doom of Hitler's robber imperialism.

The recent three-power conference in Moscow, attended by Lord Beaverbrook as representative of Great Britain and by Mr. Harriman as representative of the United States, decided systematically to help our country with tanks and aircraft. As is well known, we have already begun to receive tanks and planes on the basis of that decision. Even prior to that, England arranged for supplies to our country of such materials in short supply as aluminium, lead, tin, nickel and rubber. If to this we add the fact



that a few days ago the United States of America decided to grant the Soviet Union a loan of 1,000,000,000 dollars we can say with certainty that the coalition of the United States of America, Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. is a reality (*loud applause*), which is growing and will continue to grow to the benefit of our common cause of liberation.

Such are the factors which determine the inevitable doom of German-fascist imperialism.

### **Our Tasks**

Lenin distinguished between two kinds of wars—predatory, and therefore, unjust wars, and wars of liberation—just wars.

The Germans are now waging a predatory war, an unjust war, for the purpose of seizing foreign territory and subjugating foreign peoples. That is why all honest people must rise against the German invaders as their enemies.

In contradistinction to Hitlerite Germany, the Soviet Union and its allies are waging a war of liberation, a just war, for the purpose of liberating the enslaved peoples of Europe and the U.S.S.R. from Hitler's tyranny. That is why all honest people must support the armies of the U.S.S.R., Great Britain and the other allies, as armies of liberation.

We have not, and cannot have, such war aims as the seizure of foreign territories and the subjugation of foreign peoples—whether it be the peoples and territories of Europe or the peoples and territories of Asia, including Iran. Our first aim is to liberate our territories and our peoples from the German-fascist yoke.

We have not, and cannot have, any such war aims as that of imposing our will and our regime upon the Slavonic or other enslaved nations of Europe, who are expecting our help. Our aim is to help these nations in their struggle for liberation against Hitler's tyranny and then to leave it to them quite freely to organize their life on their lands as they think fit. No interference in the internal affairs of other nations!

But if these aims are to be achieved, we must crush the military might of the German invaders, we must destroy, to the last man, the German forces of occupation who have intruded into our country for the purpose of enslaving it. (*Loud and prolonged applause.*)

But for this it is necessary that our Army and Navy receive active and effective support from our whole country, that all our workers and office employees, men and women, work untiringly in the factories and supply the front with ever-increasing quantities of tanks, antitank rifles and guns, aircraft, artillery, trench mortars, machine-guns, rifles and ammunition; that our collective farmers, men and women, work untiringly in their fields and supply the front and the country with ever-greater quantities of bread, meat, raw materials for industry; that our whole country and all the peoples of the U.S.S.R. organize into a single fighting camp, waging, together with our Army and Navy, the great war of liberation for the honour and freedom of our Motherland, for the rout of the German armies. (*Loud applause.*)

This is now our task.

We can and we must accomplish this task.

Only when we have accomplished this task and routed the

German invaders can we achieve a lasting and just peace.

For the complete rout of the German invaders! (*Loud applause.*)

For the liberation of all the oppressed peoples groaning under the yoke of Hitler's tyranny! (*Loud applause.*)

Long live the unshakable friendship of the peoples of the Soviet Union! (*Loud applause.*)

Long live our Red Army and our Red Navy! (*Loud applause.*)

Long live our glorious Motherland! (*Loud applause.*)

Our cause is just—victory will be ours! (*Loud applause. All rise.*

*Shouts: "Cheers for the great Stalin!" "Long live Comrade Stalin!"*

*Prolonged applause. The Internationale is sung.*)

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