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**THE WAR CONFERENCES IN WORLD WAR II – THE WAY TO
RESTORE PEACE IN THE WORLD**

Bachelor Thesis

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Affirmation

I hereby confirm that I have elaborated this work independently and stated all the sources that I have used.

Date:

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Abstrakt

Ružbarská, Viktória: *Vojnové konferencie počas 2. svetovej vojny - cesta k nastoleniu mieru vo svete* – Ekonomická univerzita v Bratislave. Fakulta aplikovaných jazykov; Katedra interkultúrnej komunikácie – Vedúci záverečnej práce: PhDr. Mária Bláhová, PhD. – Bratislava: FAJ, 2020, 40 strán

Táto bakalárska práca popisuje konferencie druhej svetovej vojny, ktorých cieľom bolo nastolenie mieru vo svete. Na týchto konferenciách sa pravidelne stretávali predstavitelia tzv. protihitlerovskej koalície, ktorí rokovali o vojenských operáciách a znovunastolení mieru. Práca je rozdelená na tri kapitoly. Prvá kapitola analyzuje vznik protihitlerovskej koalície a chronologicky popisuje udalosti, ktoré viedli k jej vytvoreniu. Druhá kapitola rozoberá vojnové konferencie medzi predstaviteľmi Veľkej Británie a USA. Tretia kapitola už podrobnejšie opisuje konferencie Veľkej trojky, ktoré boli kľúčové pre budúce usporiadanie sveta. Hlavným cieľom tejto práce je analyzovať priebeh konferencií, prijaté rozhodnutia a taktiež poukázať na nezhody medzi účastníkmi konferencií, ktoré pramenili z ich odlišných ideológií.

Kľúčové slová: vojnové konferencie, mier, Veľká trojka, 2. svetová vojna, spojenci

Abstract

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This bachelor thesis focuses on the World War II conferences whose main task was to restore peace in the world. At these conferences, the representatives of the so-called anti-Hitler coalition met regularly to discuss military operations and establish peace in the world. The thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter analyses the formation of the anti-Hitler coalition and chronologically describes the events that led to its formation. The second chapter deals with the war conferences between the representatives of Great Britain and the USA. The third chapter thoroughly analyses the Big Three conferences, which were crucial for the future organization of the world. The aim of this thesis is to describe the negotiations, the decisions taken with its consequences and to point out the disagreements between the conference participants that stem from their different ideologies.

Key words: war conferences, peace, the Big Three, World War II, allies

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Introduction

After the end of the First World War, millions of people hoped that such a conflict would not happen again in the future. At the Paris Peace Conference, the victorious countries agreed to do everything in their power to prevent this. However, in 1939, the Second World War broke out, which had a major impact on mankind and the whole world. A key role in this war, played by the Big Three, consisted of the most important representatives of the Soviet Union, Great Britain and the USA, the world powers that despite their different ideologies joined together to defeat their common enemy and formed the so-called anti-Hitler coalition. The representatives of these countries met regularly at the conferences that had been first bilateral between Great Britain and the USA, and later joined by the Soviet Union. At the conferences, the Allies discussed not only military operations and the future organization of the world, but also how to establish long-lasting peace in the world, as their predecessors at the Versailles had failed in this task. The aim of this thesis is to analyse these conferences, the course of the negotiations, the decisions taken, but also to point out the different views among the Big Three, which often led to disagreements. It also partially evaluates the consequences of the decisions taken. To better understand the different interests of the Big Three at the conferences, the work points out that the Allies had not followed the same path at the beginning of the war, and only after some unexpected events they had no other choice but to unite themselves and defeat their common enemy. Therefore, the first chapter of this thesis is devoted to the formation of this coalition.

The bachelor thesis is divided into three chapters, which are arranged in chronological order. Throughout the thesis is used analytical method, by which we evaluate the most significant World War II conferences. In order to describe these conferences, works by mostly British and American authors such as William L. Neumann, John W. Wheeler-Bennett, Anthony Nicholls, Jonathan Fenby, Herbert Feis, F. Kimball, and E. Lehrman, were used. These historians dealt with the issue of diplomatic relations between the Western countries and the Soviet Union. In our work, we were careful when choosing literature and decided not to use works by Russian authors, as the facts in this works could be distorted.

The aim of the first chapter is to analyse the formation of the anti-Hitler coalition. It describes the beginning of the war cooperation between British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and the US President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The thesis also pays attention to the Atlantic Charter, by which these Western powers defined their further cooperation. This

chapter points out that their third partner Stalin had other plans at the beginning of the war, but these plans had been thwarted by Hitler, and the Soviet leader found himself in a position where he had no other choice but to accept help from the Western countries. The work analyses the problems of this coalition, which was fragile from the beginning, as its leaders came from different worlds and their cooperation would have been effective only if they had overcome all the obstacles and had made decisions that were beneficial not only for their countries but for the whole world.

The second chapter describes bilateral conferences between Great Britain and the USA, the conference in Casablanca, Washington and Quebec. The work highlights that although Stalin had not attended these conferences, he criticized the decisions Churchill and Roosevelt had taken. This section also presents an excerpt from Roosevelt's declaration of the unconditional surrender of Germany and Italy by which the western powers had pledged to fight until these countries surrendered. The second part of this chapter describes the less substantial conferences in Washington and Quebec at which Roosevelt and Churchill mainly discussed the opening of the second front.

The last chapter analyses the Big Three conferences, which were crucial for establishing peace in the world. This chapter describes the conferences in Tehran, Yalta and Potsdam. In Tehran, the Big Three dealt with the issues of the Polish government and its borders, the international organization, the post-war division of Germany and its reparations, or the specific date of opening the second front. Roosevelt's priority was mainly the declaration of war on Japan by the Soviet Union. At the next conference in Yalta, the Big Three addressed the same issues as Tehran, but the Allies had already reached an agreement on the Polish eastern border and its government. The thesis also mentions the publication of the Declaration of Liberated Europe by which the Allies promised to help all the liberated countries. At the end of this conference, Stalin's conditions for entering the war against Japan, or closer negotiations on the international organization, were discussed.

The last conference, which was crucial for the future organization of the world, is the conference in Potsdam. This thesis deals not only with the conference itself but evaluates the major events that took place before this conference, such as the end of the war in Europe, the appointment of Truman as the US president, and Stalin's ever-growing sphere of influence. At the Potsdam conference, the Allies faced the issue of the Polish western borders, the creation of a Foreign Ministers Council, the Soviet attack on Japan or how they

would deal with the defeated countries. The work at the end assesses to what extent these conferences have been successful, whether the decisions taken have resulted in long-lasting peace in the world.

1 The Anti-Hitler Coalition

“The alliance of Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union was just as much a marriage of convenience as the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939. It came into being because all three powers had the same enemy, at least in Europe” (J. Lyons, 1989, p.194).

World War II began on 1 September 1939 with the invasion of Poland by the German army led by Hitler. He became a German leader in 1933 after he gained popularity by publicly criticizing the Versailles Treaty imposed on Germany after WWI. The situation in Germany after the Great war was very difficult and as Bruun and Lee (1964) explain, people who felt they were being treated unfairly relied on Hitler, who had promised to win justice for them by war if necessary. And he was truly a man of his word. After his attack on Poland, Britain and France declared war on Germany. Britain played a very important role in this war because it was one of the members of the Anti-Hitler Coalition, which sought to defeat the enemy and bring peace to the world. This coalition also included the United States of America and the Soviet Union, although Stalin had other plans at the beginning of the war.

The Soviet Union followed another path at the beginning of the war, as Stalin had thought that Hitler could offer him more than the Western powers. As Paterson (1973) states, Vyaceslav Michajlovic Molotov as the new Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs did not hesitate to publicly declare that it had been easier for him to deal with the dictators. Great Britain had tried to form an alliance with the Soviet Union, but these efforts have failed. Instead, Germany and the Soviet Union signed The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact on August 23, 1939. Both sides agreed on not to provide any help to the third-party in case of a war. Keegan (1989) states that this pact also included the Secret Additional Protocol. In this protocol, Hitler and Stalin divided the spheres of influence in Eastern Europe. Hitler offered to Stalin Finland, Estonia, Latvia and the eastern part of Romania (Bessarabia). *“This diplomatic revolution was a time-gaining device for both nations which ignored ideological antagonism, but it threw the small nations into a state of consternation, confused the Japanese, and sealed the fate of Poland” (Bruun, E. Lee, 1964, p.18).*

Hitler successfully exploited the weakness of Great Britain and France due to their appeasement policy. The annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany known as “Anschluss” was also tolerated in 1938, and this policy reached its peak in September 1938 by signing the Munich Agreement, where the powers fell back to Hitler again and agreed to secede the Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia and its annexation to Germany.

When Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, returned from the Munich Conference, he declared peace, but the opposite was true. Perhaps Winston Churchill best commented the situation in the House of Commons: *“The British and France had to choose between the war and shame. They chose shame. They will have a war”* (Hill, 1997, p.45).

On September 1, 1939 a commando of German troops dressed in Polish uniforms destroyed the German transmitter on the Polish-German border, near Gliwice. The German army had crossed the Polish border and the World War II started. On September 3 of 1939, Great Britain and France declared war on Germany. But because they did not declare any military operation, the first eight months of the war were named as a “phoney war”. *“The Germans ensconced behind their newly-constructed “West Wall”, the French, holding their supposedly impregnable Maginot Line, and the British across the North Sea measured one another carefully”* (Bruun, E. Lee, 1964, p.21). MacKenzie (2012) explains that the naval blockade was supposed to destroy German war economy. Meanwhile, Britain and France were to mobilize their economic resources, and then either Hitler would be overthrown by an internal coup or it would lead to the ground attack on Germany. But Hitler believed that he had to take the initiative and defeat the enemy, instead of being dragged into the defensive war.

On 17 September 1939, the Soviet army crossed the Polish border. After this attack the Polish government surrendered and emigrated to London. Poland was divided into three parts. The western part of Poland was acquired by Germany, the eastern part of Poland was under the control of the Soviet Union and the central part of Poland was declared the General Government.

On September 28 of 1939, the German-Soviet Frontier Treaty as the continuation of Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact was signed, defining the further cooperation between Hitler and Stalin.

After the acquisition of Poland, Hitler began preparing his plans for the conquest of the rest of Europe starting with France. In June 1940 he took control of Paris and a few days later the French army surrendered. After that, France was divided into the northern part acquired by Germans with the centre in Paris and the southeast led by the puppet government headed by Pétain. At the same time, Italy declared war on France.

Simultaneously, Winston Churchill replaced Chamberlain and becomes new British Prime Minister. Keegan (1984) claims that Great Britain was the only country able to resist

the Germans. Churchill's policy was very different from that of Chamberlain. He did not plan to make concessions but wanted to fight until Germany would be destroyed. He spoke in the House of Commons in 1940 and said: *“I say to this House what I told the members of the government, all I can offer is blood, sweat and tears. Victory at any cost, victory despite all terror, victory, however long and hard the road is; for without victory there is no survival”* (Čermák, 2000, p.47).

Keegan (1984) explains that Hitler had been aware of British power and he had offered Churchill a peace treaty, but Churchill refused it. Wanner (2001) states that after the defeat of France, Hitler initiated a plan to occupy the British Isles in the summer of 1940. Churchill had known that Britain would not be able to resist the attack without American help, and therefore he asked Roosevelt for it. The US Congress had approved this request for assistance and provided Britain with torpedo-boat destroyers. According to Bruun and Lee (1964), the aim of the Nazis was to disrupt Britain's economy and morality. Britain won thanks to Czecho-Slovak, Polish, Belgian and Canadian pilots. Subsequently, Britain had made a strong resistance to the Germans, when the British Royal Air Force (RAF) prevented the Germans from landing in Britain. The Germans failed in this operation called Sea Lion.

In June 1941 Hitler attacked the Soviet Union. MacKenzie (2012) claims that this very sudden and unexpected attack, known as operation Barbarossa, was one of the turning points of the WWII. Stalin had declared himself the supreme commander of the armed forces and urged people to the so-called Great Patriotic War. Churchill had offered Stalin collaboration and the leader of the Soviet Union found himself in a position where he had no other choice but to accept help from Britain.

Wanner (2001) presents that after this attack, Churchill publicly declared that no one had been as much opposed to communism as he was in the last 25 years. But the British Prime Minister said all this was getting into the background. The past with all the crimes, mistakes and tragedies receded. According to Jacobsen (1979), the British-Soviet alliance began to form in July 1941 by signing an Anglo-Soviet Agreement where these powers agreed to provide each other with assistance and support of all kinds in the war against Hitler's Germany, and also that they would not negotiate nor conclude a ceasefire or peace treaty except by mutual agreement.

Before the British-Soviet alliance began to form, Churchill had agreed with Roosevelt on very close cooperation. As Lehrman (2017) states, Great Britain and the USA

agreed in 1941 to join forces and work to create a better future for the world. Their third partner, the Soviet Union, joined them later, and it was not entirely clear to Churchill nor Roosevelt whether Stalin's war goals had been the same as theirs.

Great Britain and the USA have always been closely related. According to Haugevik (2018), the traditional formulation of a 'special relationship' between the United Kingdom and the United States says that it is a relationship based on a common history, common values, common interests and a common language. Sir Winston Churchill (1993) even classified this relationship as a fraternal alliance of English-speaking countries. So, who else should be Britain's greatest ally in war against Nazi Germany than the United States?

Lyons (1989) states that Roosevelt and Churchill had been in touch since the beginning of the war, but their first meeting was not until 1941 in Placenta Bay where they signed the Atlantic Charter. This charter contained principles very similar to war objectives. According to Jacobsen (1979), Churchill and Roosevelt committed not to demand any enlargement of their territory or influence, not to tolerate any territorial changes that would be accepted by countries concerned, that they would respect the rights of people to choose the form of governance under which they would live. They also agreed that all states would have equal access to trade and raw materials under the same conditions, that they would seek cooperation from all nations to ensure that their economic conditions would be improved. And the last point of the Atlantic Charter was that after the destruction of the Nazi ideology, they would strive to ensure that all people would live freely without fear and would have equal rights. This document was later also signed by Stalin.

As Bruun and Lee (1964) highlight, another turning point in this war was the Japanese attack on the US base Pearl Harbor. Americans did not like Japan's progress in Asia, so they decided to impose trade sanctions on their business in the USA. Japan reacted by attacking a US naval base Pearl Harbor near the Hawaiian Islands on December 7th, 1941. A day after, the US entered the war and a few days later, Hitler declared war on the USA. Wanner (2001) claims that two days after the Japanese attack, Churchill and Roosevelt met at a Washington Conference to sign the United Nations Declaration, in which they had agreed to abide by the principles of the Atlantic Charter and to use all means to destroy their enemies.

The anti-Hitler coalition began to form by signing the already mentioned Atlantic Charter, where an Anglo-American alliance came into existence. Lyons (1989) states that

the United States and Great Britain approached this war as a struggle against Nazism and Hitler. The Atlantic Charter also reflected this approach. However, each of these countries took this document differently. Roosevelt thought that this charter would have global consequences, so that the British colonies would also be able to gain their independence. Churchill, however, thought that the Charter would only affect states that had lost their independence during the war. And their third partner Stalin did not seem to take this charter seriously.

Over the next five years, Churchill and Roosevelt had to overcome all the disagreements they had had to defeat their common enemy. In early 1943, the US general Eisenhower asserted: *“I am not so incredibly naive that I do not realize that Britishers instinctively approach every military problem from the viewpoint of Empire.”* But he emphasized that *“one of the constant sources of danger to us in this war is the temptation to regard as our first enemy the partner that must work with us in defeating the real enemy”* (Lehrman, 2017, p.2). It seemed that the British Prime Minister and the US President were very aware of this fact. They were more concerned about Stalin. After all, he was a dictator and he believed in ideology that had been totally different from theirs. This difference was significant, but Churchill and Roosevelt understood they still had to unite and defeat a much larger enemy than the Soviet Communism. Churchill once proved this by saying: *“The Russian danger is our danger, and the danger of the US, just as the cause of any Russian fighting for his heart and home is the cause of free men and free principles in every quarter of the globe”* (Wheeler-Bennett, Nicholls, 1972, p.33).

However, the coalition is very difficult to maintain, and this one had problems from the beginning. According to Neumann (1967), Great Britain and The USA recognized the same basic war aims. Even though their strategies sometimes differed, they kept some degree of collaboration. Wheeler-Bennett and Nicholls (1972) add that they were democracies, strongly opposed to Nazi regime and wanted to introduce democratic governments in the countries that wanted to break free from Nazi rule. On the other hand, a totalitarian regime had been established in the Soviet Union and no one knew what Stalin wanted. But *“as long as the Western Allies acknowledged the Soviet’s right to fulfil their war aims in Eastern Europe, Stalin appears to have been willing to extend the same recognition to Britain and America in Western Europe and the Mediterranean”* (Lyons, 1989, p. 194-195).

In the following years, a series of the conferences among the three major allied powers took place, where they jointly decided on the actions in the war against their common enemy – Nazi Germany.

2 Churchill-Roosevelt Conferences

2.1 Casablanca Conference

1943 was known as “a Conference Year”. In January 1943, Roosevelt and Churchill met in Casablanca that had been conquered by the Allies in November 1942. In Casablanca, the big “two” agreed on many military decisions, such as that the fate of the countries at both ends of the Mediterranean will be decided by the US and Britain, as well as putting constant pressure on Italy to be the first state of the Axis to give up.

Neumann (1967) states that Roosevelt came up with the idea of holding a conference to bring together the representatives of the Soviet Union, Great Britain and the USA, but he wanted only foreign ministers to attend. Churchill did not support this idea, knowing that Soviet ministers would not make any serious decisions, and that he himself can cope with Stalin. Roosevelt eventually agreed on the meeting of the Big Three, however, he did not want to discuss any major political issues before establishing a closer relationship between the Soviet Union and the USA, based at least on partial confidence.

But as Fenby (2008) claims, these plans were thwarted by Stalin as he did not want to leave the Soviet Union that had been going through one of the hardest battles of the war, the Battle of Stalingrad. His absence at this conference did not mean that he and the Soviet Union had been forgotten. Roosevelt and Churchill openly expressed no concern about Stalin's intentions, but they knew he could not be fully trusted.

Feis (1957) adds that Stalin made a mistake by not attending this conference as he could not influence the strategies he criticized. He demanded the opening of the second front in 1943 and since this matter remained unresolved, he was very dissatisfied with the results. In addition, there were concerns about the conclusion of a separate peace with Hitler. In order to avoid that, Roosevelt and Churchill had to convince Stalin and Hitler that Great Britain and the USA were determined to fight till the end.

Strategic cooperation with Stalin and the Soviet Union had been difficult, but it did not lead to any quarrel that Hitler could benefit from. Wanner (2001) explains that Stalin's

relations with the Western Allies were often burdened with various interests. For Stalin, the most important benefit from his relationships with the USA was the Lend-Lease program that provided the US allies with military equipment, industry supplies, food, etc. The Soviet Union would not survive without American help.

According to Wheeler-Bennett and Nicholls (1972), Roosevelt wanted to make sure that after defeating Germany and Italy, the Allies would help the USA to win the war against Japan. He needed some firm statement from the Soviet Union, but he had to wait for another conference hoping that Stalin would attend.

Neumann (1967) adds that Roosevelt felt the necessity of making a public announcement in order to prove that Great Britain and the USA were ready to fight Germany and Italy until their unconditional surrender. At the press conference, the US president declared: *“Peace can come to the world only by the total elimination of German and Japanese war power...The elimination of German, Japanese, and Italian war power means the total unconditional surrender by Germany, Italy and Japan. That means a reasonable assurance of future world peace. It does not mean the destruction of the population of Germany, Italian, or Japan, but it does mean the destruction of the philosophies in those countries which are based on conquest and the subjugation of other people”* (H. Feis, 1957, p. 109).

Fenby (2008) claims that Churchill did not expect this statement and had not heard it before Roosevelt's speech. It surprised him, but they had developed this strategy together, and the British government even made it harder not only for Germany but also for Italy. The Allies had refused to negotiate with the Axis countries and were determined to destroy Nazi regime and liberate occupied Europe. It was already clear to everyone that Hitler was a dictator that could not be handled. *“The Führer was, in Churchill's words, 'a maniac with supreme power to play out his hand to the end, which he did; and so did we'.”* (Wheeler-Bennett, Nichols, 1972, p.62).

On the other hand, unconditional surrender had been criticized because it was clear that right after the war, Germany would be destroyed and left with nothing, no Law nor Constitution. Additionally, according to Neumann (1967), many historians have been wondering whether these conditions did not prolong war by strengthening Germany's will to resist and not surrender, but there is no evidence that this could strengthen German morale.

Wheeler-Bennett and Nicholls (1972) explain that the unconditional surrender was the only way how to satisfy people who fought for their lives and struggled against horrible ideology of Nazism and Fascism.

2.2 The Trident and the Quadrant Conference

Following the Casablanca Conference in January, Churchill and Roosevelt met at a Washington conference in May 1943, also called Trident. Three months later they met in Quebec at a conference codenamed Quadrant. The Roosevelt-Churchill conferences devoted a good deal of time to military operations and to political decisions involving Italy (Neumann, 1967). As Wanner (2001) states, they had agreed in Washington that Italy would be quickly conquered and that the invasion of Sicily would take place in July 1943.

Moreover, Feis (1957) claims that at the Trident Conference, Churchill and Roosevelt decided that they would open the second front by launching the cross-channel attack in the spring of 1944. This operation was to be conducted by British navy. The Prime Minister unlike Americans was not very pleased with this idea. The outcomes of this conference were more favourable to Americans than the results from Casablanca. Perhaps one of the reasons was that this conference was held on their home ground, so they were better prepared to support their arguments.

Fenby (2008) highlights that Roosevelt's priority was the meeting with Stalin, which has not yet occurred. A necessity to establish better relationship between the USA and the Soviet Union should also ensure better post-war cooperation. Stalin was aware of this, but in that time, he had been more concerned that the second front would not be open until the spring of 1944. Churchill justified this by saying that this military operation would be extremely difficult but from Stalin's point of view, the Western Allies were breaking the agreement that had been concluded between them. In the telegram he had sent to Churchill and Roosevelt, Stalin made it clear that he felt disrespected: *"You say that you quite understand my disappointment. I must tell you that the point here is not just the disappointment of the Soviet Government, but the preservation of its confidence in its allies, a confidence which is being subjected to severe stress."* (Wheeler-Bennett, Nichols, 1972, p.83).

Wanner (2001) adds that after this telegram, Stalin stopped communicating with the other representatives of the Allied powers for some time. Everyone feared he might join the

other side. It had been clear to Roosevelt that his meeting with Stalin would be rescheduled again.

Later in 1943 the Allies had defeated Germany on several fronts, and one of the greatest achievements was the unconditional surrender of Italy, declared by Italian Prime Minister Badoglio on 8 September 1943.

The Trident Conference was followed by a Conference in Quebec, attended again only by the British and American representatives. Neumann (1967) claims that they had reopened the topic of opening the second front, but they did not reach any conclusions. A very important issue to be discussed was the division of post-war Germany. Wheeler-Bennett and Nicholls (1972) state that Roosevelt thought he understood the German mentality claiming it would be best to divide it into more parts in order to prevent another military conflict in the future. The German economy was not supposed to be somehow weakened, but it was necessary to eliminate all activities related to the arms industry. But this conference was just an introduction to this issue, as Roosevelt and Churchill could not deal with these questions without their third partner Stalin.

The first meeting of the Big Three was scheduled for November 1943 and was to take place in Tehran.

3 The Big Three Conferences

3.1 The Tehran Conference

From November 28th to December 1st, 1943, the Tehran Conference codenamed “Eureka” was being held, attended by all the members of the Big Three – the British Prime Minister W. Churchill, the American president F. D. Roosevelt and the Soviet leader J. V. Stalin. They discussed questions that were crucial for the fate of Central and Eastern Europe. The meetings were mostly informal.

Fenby (2008) states that this conference was very important for Roosevelt as he had never meet Stalin before. As already mentioned, the American president wanted to create special relationship with the Soviet dictator for better post-war cooperation. At the beginning of the conference, *“Roosevelt avoided getting into specifics on political issues, fearing that premature attention to detail could raise threats, both at home and abroad, to*

the international relationship he hoped to foster. He treated Churchill as a charter member of the board of directors and spoke directly at Stalin during the Big Three session. Welcoming the “new members to the family circle,” Roosevelt spoke with bland optimism of friendship, frankness and his confidence that our three great nations would cooperate closely to win the war” (Kimball, 1997, p. 254).

Wheeler-Bennett and Nicholls (1972) state that one of the main issues of this conference was the “Operation Overlord”, also known as Normandy landing. After divergent views on the timing of this operation, the Allies eventually agreed that it would take place in June 1944. Fenby (2008) adds that the Big Three decided that at the same time a landing in southern France would take place.

The Big Three had also been talking about post-war borders in Europe and post-war organization of Germany, but they did not come to agreement on these points. Fenby (2008) explains that Roosevelt wanted to divide Germany into three or more states that would be deprived of the armed forces. He also stated that reparations must be granted, but in the form of materials. Manak (2011) claims that Churchill presented his thoroughly elaborated proposal for the division of Germany. The main point was that Prussia must be separated from Germany as it was an area with very developed arms industry. Stalin disagreed with both plans, arguing that it would certainly not be enough to separate Prussia from Germany, as they all fought "like a wild". Wanner (2001) presents that Stalin referred to his enemies as talented people who could recover. Stalin's humour became a source of disagreement between him and Churchill. According to Neumann (1967), the Soviet dictator spoke of the need to kill at least 50, 000 German officers in order to put an end to German militarism. Churchill took it seriously and argued angrily that he would be shot rather than agree to such cruelty.

The decisive question of how Germany would be organized after the war had not been resolved. The negotiations in Tehran were rather the initial stage of studying this problem, and like Churchill (1993) later wrote in his book, Stalin considered this conference to be only “preliminary talks”.

The establishment of a new international organization to maintain peace in the future was still a matter of less interest, but it was one of the Roosevelt's top priorities. According to Feis (1960), in a private conversation with Stalin, he proposed the foundation of an executive council consisting of one British dominion, one Asian nation, one Middle Eastern,

one South American and two European states together with a Big Four. This council would be able only to make suggestions, while the power to deal with threats would remain in the hands of the police. Stalin proposed to create three regional councils, one for Europe, another for the Far East and the last one for the USA. Churchill agreed to this proposal and added that the USA should be a member of the European council. Wanner (2001) explains that Roosevelt was very hesitant about that, as the American isolationism was very strong to be the part of an organization that would purely pursue European matters, however in the case of an emergency they would turn to the US military. This issue was postponed to another conference.

The next item of the agenda was the question of Poland. Neumann (1967) highlights that this question was very important for Churchill as he wanted the Poles to have a strong and independent state. He suggested that the Polish post-war borders should be delimited at the so-called Curzon line and the Oder line, including East Prussia. Stalin eventually agreed, and Churchill said he would submit this proposal to the Polish government in exile in London.

Before the end of the conference, Stalin ensured Roosevelt that the Soviet Union would join the war against Japan after the defeat of Germany.

At the end of this conference, the Allies had signed a Declaration of the three powers where they proclaimed: *“Emerging from these cordial conferences, we look with confidence to the day when all people of the world may live free lives, untouched by tyranny, and according to their varying desires and their own consciences. We came here with hope and determination. We leave here, friends in fact, in spirit, and in purpose”* (Langsam, 1958, p.97).

3.2 The Yalta Conference

The Yalta Conference, also known as “Argonaut”, was the second Big Three conference and the last for Roosevelt. It was held at the Livadia Palace in Yalta, Crimea. It began on February 4, 1945 and it had a great importance, as many issues remained unresolved and the war was slowly coming to an end. The Allies dealt with the division of Germany and its occupation, the reparations, the question of Polish government and its borders, the conditions of the Soviet entry in the war against Japan and finally in the agenda was the nature of new international organization.

“President Roosevelt doubtless hoped to begin the conference by creating an atmosphere of trust between the Soviet and American delegations” (Wheeler-Bennett, Nicholls, 1972, p.225). According to Neumann (1967), Stalin was eager to divide the spheres of influence in Europe. Roosevelt had noticed at the outset that Stalin wanted to destroy the Germans more than before. Churchill was also concerned about Stalin’s behaviour after the war. The way the Russian army fought suggested that after the war, Stalin might try to establish a totalitarian regime in the countries he had liberated.

The main topic of discussion was the destruction and subsequent division of Germany. The Allies wanted to divide it into three zones, which would be divided among themselves. As already mentioned, Churchill wanted to separate Prussia and create a new German state. Additionally, Kimball (1997) claims that Churchill defended French interest and suggested that they should get some part of post-war Germany too. He argued that they had suffered enough, and they deserved it. However, that was not the only reason for Churchill. Moreover, Fenby (2008) states that Churchill wanted France to possess strong army in the future in the event of another military conflict. Roosevelt, as a great opponent of Charles de Gaulle, argued that France could not be one of the dominant countries and had to be supervised by four policemen. He even tried to turn Stalin against France, but he failed. Eventually, the Allies had agreed that France would acquire one of the occupation zones too. The exact plan was to be drawn up by foreign ministers.

Feis (1957) explains that since the Soviet Union was one of the countries most affected by the war, Stalin's biggest concern was the establishment of the reparations. His plan began with the abolition of factories, the weakening of the industry, and the complete elimination of the arms industry. He also demanded from Germany to provide reparations in the form of material that should be distributed equally among the Allies and the countries that had suffered the most. Fenby (2008) claims that Churchill did not support Stalin’s idea arguing that after the WWI, Germany rebelled strongly against the reparations and their rebellion led to the WWII. He feared the impact it could have.

The Allies had split the differences and signed The Secret Protocol on reparations where they agreed that: *“Germany must pay in kind for the losses caused by her to the Allied nations in the course of the war. Reparations are to be received in the first instance by those countries which have suffered the heaviest losses and have organized victory over the enemy”* (Neumann,1967, p. 144).

After discussing Germany, all the attention shifted to the question of the Polish border. This question had been already discussed in Tehran, but the Allies had not reached an agreement. Regarding this, Churchill expressed the idea that *“the British would never be content with a solution which did not leave Poland a free and independent state. Poland must be “a mistress in her own house and a captain of her soul”* (Wheeler-Bennett, Nicholls, 1972, p.235). Stalin was uncompromising on the Polish border, as Poland was a direct neighbour of the Soviet Union and if someone was to attack the Soviet Union in the future, it would certainly be through Poland. According to Neumann (1967), he wanted Poland to be strong, free and independent, but he could not agree with Roosevelt's or Churchill's proposals. He suggested that the borders of Poland should be moved to the Neisse River. The Allies eventually agreed on the Curzon line and that the Oder and Neisse river would form the eastern Polish border. Churchill (1993) suggested that Poland must receive territorial compensation, but the decision on the final arrangement would be taken only at the post-war peace conference.

Another unresolved problem related to Poland was the question of the Polish government, which would be accepted by all the representatives of the Allied powers. Fenby (2008) states that Roosevelt and Churchill wanted Polish government-in-exile to assume power, however Stalin had different idea in his mind. He wanted Lublin Poles to take control, but these were not supported by a third of Poles neither Roosevelt nor Churchill. They feared that if these Poles came to power, Poland would be under Soviet control in the future. That is why Roosevelt and Churchill wanted to approve free elections in which only democratic parties would take part. The representatives of the Big Three had agreed that there would be formed a Polish provisional government and signed the Comunique: *“The Provisional Government which is now functioning in Poland should therefore be reorganized on a broader democratic basis with the inclusion of democratic leaders from Poland itself and from Poles abroad. This new Government should then be called the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity”* (Neumann, 1967, p.149)

Fenby (2008) adds that the Allies had also signed The Declaration on Liberated Europe, by which they promised to hold elections on democratic basis in liberated countries. However, Neumann (1967) questions if Stalin took this declaration seriously. To what extent should Europe have been liberated after the war with the increasing influence of the Soviet Union? Churchill feared that one regime would replace the other. It was very difficult to negotiate with Stalin, as it was obvious that he was uncompromising and preferred his

interests to the interests of others. According to Feis (1957), this was also the case of Iran, where there was a growing concern that future post-war relations between the Allies would be disrupted. Iran had always been a source of the disagreement between the British and Russians, but it became an important war base during the war. For this reason, they signed an agreement to withdraw their troops from this area after the war.

Another point that was to be discussed were the conditions under which the Soviet Union would enter the war against Japan. According to Langsam (1958), Roosevelt was driven by fear and he was ready to offer Stalin anything in exchange for his help. The Soviet leader demanded acquisition of the areas in Asia, and Roosevelt promised to give him these areas in order to save millions of American lives.

Neumann (1967) described this agreement as one of the biggest Roosevelt's mistakes made at the Yalta Conference. American concerns that the Japanese would fight another 18 months after Germany's defeat was extremely pessimistic. They underestimated the power and effect of atomic bombs, which were later ready for use.

The last issue the Allies had to deal with was the nature of a new international organization to secure peace in the world in the future. Feis (1957) states that the Allies agreed on the name "United Nations". As already mentioned, this organization should be formed by four policemen, the representatives of the four world powers, who would have permanent seats in this organization and six smaller nations who would be elected for a definite period. However, even on this point the Big Three could not agree. Roosevelt and Churchill already knew that their ideas about freedom and peace in the future would be very difficult to implement in the countries liberated by the Red Army, even if they did not want to admit it. Wheeler-Bennett and Nicholls (1972) add that the Allies agreed that the inaugural meeting of the United Nations would take place on 25 April 1945 in the USA and that it would be attended by all the countries that would sign the Declaration of the United Nations.

According to Bruun and E. Lee (1964), the Yalta meeting was the last before the surrender of Germany. The Big Three postponed more matters than they had resolved. The different views, especially between Stalin and the West, sometimes seemed unsolvable.

Most of the agreements reached at the Yalta Conference had already been negotiated before. „*In most ways Yalta was a fulfilment of what had already been worked outThe Yalta “myth“ became, like the Versailles Treaty and WWI, a misleading symbol of what have been or, rather, what critics wished had been*“ (F.Kimball, 1997, p.317). However, Fenby

(2008) argues that the Yalta Conference was responsible for the future division of Europe between the West and East.

After Churchill returned to London, he faced not only the war in the world but also the one at the British parliament. He was worried that he would be deposed from his position as Prime Minister. His fears stemmed from the dissatisfaction of his policy with Stalin, especially on the question of the Polish government. *“Churchill has done to the Poles at Yalta exactly what Chamberlain did to the Czechs at Munich.”* (F.Kimball, 1997, p.320). The Tories accused him of violating the Atlantic Charter he had signed with Roosevelt. As Churchill (1993) wrote later in his book, the Atlantic Charter was very difficult to adhere during peace settlements. One British MP tried to justify this act by saying: *“I believe it is in the apparent conflict between documents like the Atlantic Charter and the facts of the European situation...You do not move suddenly from a world in which there are international rivalries into a world where there is international cooperation”* (Thompson, 1983, p.11-12).

On the contrary, Roosevelt had very optimistic feelings about the outcome of the Yalta negotiations after he had returned to Washington. The Polish eastern border was a compromise that he did not support, but in return Poland was to be recompensed with some territories. According to Kimball (1997), the Poles living in the USA accused Roosevelt of not defending their interests. As far back as at the 20th century, many Poles were living in the USA and they expected their president to stand up for them. In addition, Roosevelt’s Chinese friends, whose part of the territory he promised Stalin, had expected the same from the American president. Perhaps, his severe health condition could be blamed for his actions. He died on 12 April 1945.

3.3 The Potsdam Conference

3.3.1 Road to Potsdam

On May 2, 1945, Hitler's Germany was finally defeated. The Germans had to surrender unconditionally. The role of the Big Three as major peacekeepers was more important than ever. But the Big Three has changed. The new US President Truman has come on the scene and Churchill was replaced by Clement Attlee during the negotiations in Potsdam.

Although “*lacking practical experience in diplomacy*” (Paterson, 1973, p.3), Harry S. Truman became the US President after Roosevelt's death. “*Truman took office ill-prepared for the situation and decisions he faced in foreign affairs, he had not been part of Roosevelt's inner circle and knew little of the policies and programs under consideration* (Neumann, 1967, p.163). One of the biggest challenges for Truman was the question of the Soviet Union. Truman's advisers had made clear that “*Americans were tired of babying the Russians*” (Neumann, 1967, p.163). Germany had been defeated and the USA had no longer comply with all the Stalin's requests. However, Churáň (2001) claims that Truman wanted to continue with Roosevelt's policy who had always intended to create special relationship with the Soviet Union in order to maintain peace in the future.

Feis (1960) claims that Churchill had sent a telegram to Truman, where he openly expressed his concern about the Soviet Union. He feared that Stalin would remain the most powerful in Europe after the US and the British forces would be destroyed and that soon in all the territories liberated by the Red Army, the Communist regime would be established. Neumann (1967) adds that Churchill even compared Stalin's sphere of influence to Napoleon when he was at the height of his power. He therefore wanted the next conference to be held as soon as possible.

Wanner (2001) states that Stalin had already been building up his sphere of influence in Western Europe, and it seemed that one of Churchill's greatest fears would soon be fulfilled. Stalin concluded agreements with the Lublin Poles and with the government in Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. He violated the Declaration of Liberated Europe he had previously signed.

Eventually it was clear to everyone that the correspondence among the Big three would not solve the problems they had faced after the surrender of Germany and that another conference must be held. Eventually the Big Three agreed that the conference will be held in Potsdam on 15 July.

3.3.2 Negotiations

“In many ways this conference marked the turning point in the relations of the West and Soviet-Russia. For while an outward show of unity was preserved and important decisions were taken, rifts and misunderstanding appeared which were never bridged or properly corrected” (Bruun, Lee, 1964, p.52)

Officially, the Potsdam Conference began at Cecilienhof Castle on 17 July, as Stalin had arrived at Potsdam two days later due to his health condition. According to Fenby (2008), the Big three together with their delegation negotiated every day about important issues, except 26th and 27th July, when the British delegation's political leaders went to London because of the General elections results. The Conservative Party had lost the election and Churchill did not return to Potsdam. From 28 July, the British delegation in Potsdam was led by Labour politician Clement Attlee.

According to Feis (1960), Churchill, Truman and Stalin prepared their agenda for quite a long time. Each of them had different interests, the Americans wanted to avoid discussing the territorial issues that Churchill wanted to talk about, they had focused mainly on the war against Japan. Stalin was particularly interested in the reparations that the Germans had to pay and the division of the spheres of influence.

After the war in Europe ended, many questions remained unresolved. The first, however, was how many war-affected countries were to participate in peacebuilding. According to Wheeler-Bennett and Nicholls (1972), the Allies did not want to make the same mistakes made after the WWI, when the Peace Conference in Versailles had been held without enough preparations. At this Conference, the Council of the Foreign Ministers was to be established, with its main function to prepare peace treaties with defeated countries. At the first session, Truman commented: *"I propose as the best formula to meet the situation the establishment of a Council composed of the Foreign Ministers of Great Britain, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, China, France, and the US."* (Feis, 1960, p.182). Neumann (1967) claims that the fact that China and France should be the part of this Council had raised several questions, such as why China should decide on matters in Europe. Eventually, the Allies had reached an agreement that China would not deal with the European affairs and France would not interfere in the peace treaties. Churáň (2006) adds that the Council of the Foreign Ministers was to prepare peace treaties with the former satellites of Germany - Romania, Finland, Hungary and Italy. Stalin also urged the Western Allies to renew diplomatic relations with these countries. Truman confronted Stalin as the governments in most of these countries were not democratic and the renewal of diplomatic relations would be difficult. Eventually, they decided that after the conclusion of peace treaties with recognized democratic governments in the former satellites of Germany, the Allies would support their application for UN membership, but the question of diplomatic relations will be examined by each of the governments separately in the future.

According to Feis (1960), the Allies intended to weaken German economy, however, they had to take care of the well-being of German citizens who were not to blame for this situation. Bruun and Lee (1964) state that the Allies were to destroy Germany's war potential, but the economy was to be set so that Germany's standard of living would not fall below the average living standard of the European countries. *“The task of creating a new, democratic Germany in the midst of rubble and homeless refugees seemed to be difficult enough without eliminating large segments of industry. Neither the Americans nor British were ready to restore Germany to full prosperity”* (Neumann, 1967, p.171).

The Allies also took necessary steps to guarantee democratic development of Germany in the future. Wheeler-Bennett and Nicholls (1972) state that they agreed to disarm and demilitarize Germany, impose a ban on arms production, abolish the Nazi Party and the organizations or institutions associated with it and to remove members of the Nazi party from public positions and private enterprises. Additionally, they had agreed to control German education to completely remove Nazi and militarist doctrines and that German judiciary would be reorganized in accordance with the principles of democracy.

According to Fenby (2008), the Allies decided that control of the whole Germany would be taken over by the Supervisory Board, which would include representatives of the Soviet Union, the United States of America, Great Britain and France. Throughout Germany, local government had to be reinstated and only democratic political parties were allowed, but no central German administration was created.

The question of reparations was one of the most difficult. Wanner (2001) states that the plan of the Soviet Union was that Germany would pay 20.000 million to victorious powers, Stalin demanded 56% of this amount, and the rest of it should be divided between the USA and Great Britain. However, *“as the fact about the devastation of Germany became more obvious, the British and the Americans absolutely refused to countenance this figure as a practicable possibility”* (Wheeler-Bennett, Nicholls, 1972, p.333). Churáň (2007) explains that the Soviet side eventually had to withdraw from the required amount of \$ 10 billion. Instead, it was agreed that each victorious power would take the reparation from its own occupation zone. In addition, the Soviet Union gained 25% of the industrialized Western occupation zones. But to acquire this share, they had to give the same percentage of raw materials and food to the USA and Great Britain from their occupation zone that had been predominantly agricultural.

Feis (1960) state that a question of the German navy has been discussed since the first day of the conference. Churchill wanted its sinking or division, Stalin refused to destroy it. The Allies solved this issue at the end of the conference by agreeing that the entire German merchant and war fleet would be divided equally between the Soviet Union, the USA and Great Britain. Also, they had to hand over a certain number of vessels to those countries whose fleets had suffered the greatest losses in the battle against Germany. Most of the submarines had been sunk, some of them were divided among the Allied powers for technical and experimental purposes.

As for war criminals, the Allies had agreed in Potsdam that all the Nazi criminals would be arrested and then brought to trial, which would be as soon as possible. *“The major measure of de-Nazification on which the Big Three agreed was the holding of trials of German war criminals to bring them to “swift and sure justice”, ”* (Neumann, 1967, p.173). The trial was to be conducted in Nuremberg in 1946.

After discussing Germany, the Allies had to deal with the problems of Poland, its government and its western border. At the Yalta Conference it was agreed that the Provisional Government of National Unity would take control of Poland. At Potsdam, they had to decide whether this government would be recognized after the war. Churáň (2007) states that they agreed that the Provisional Polish Government would be dissolved, and free elections would be held based on universal and secret voting rights and all democratic and anti-Nazi parties would be able to stand for election.

More difficult question was the Polish western border. According to Wheeler-Bennett and Nicholls (1972), Churchill mentioned at the beginning of the conference that the Polish frontier question lay at the root of the success of the Potsdam Conference. Fenby (2008) states that Stalin insisted of inviting the representatives of the Polish Provisional Government because their presence would speed up the resolution of this issue. They had been invited to the table and had presented their proposal to the Big Three, but the Allies did not comply with their demands. Eventually, the Allies agreed that the final delimitation of the Polish western border would be decided at the peace conference *“that was never to meet”* (Neumann, 1967, p.173). Bruun and Lee (1964) state that until then, Königsberg would belong to the Soviet Union together with the adjacent territory in East Prussia and Poland would administer the rest of eastern Germany as far west as the Oder and western Neisse rivers.

„*The most important event which took place during the Potsdam Conference was never discussed openly by the Big Three* (Neumann, 1967, p.174). The war in Europe has ended, but the USA was still fighting the Japanese. Stalin had already assured the Americans at the Tehran Conference that when the war in Europe would end, the Soviet Union would enter the war against Japan. Wanner (2001) states that Stalin took the first step on April 5, 1945, by denouncing the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Agreement and moving Soviet troops to the Far East. He had also assured Truman that by mid-August 1945 the Soviet Union would launch an attack on Japan. However, Fenby (2008) states that the USA had not informed Stalin of their upcoming atomic weapon, which could mean that they would eventually not need Stalin's help. Bruun and Lee (1964) claim that Truman received a report in Potsdam on July 16, that the atomic bomb test had been carried out successfully and that this new weapon had much more destructive power than they had thought. „*Churchill noted the change in the President's attitude at the conference, the bomb, as he saw it, had produced a Truman who stood up to the Russians in a new and decisive manner*” (Neumann, 1967, p.175). Churchill knew about the atomic weapon from the beginning. The Western Allies began to wonder if they would ever need Stalin's help if they had such a powerful weapon. Eventually, they had revealed this secret to Stalin, who “*hoped the Americans would make good use of the new weapon against the Japanese*” (Neumann, 1967, p.175).

At the end of the conference, the USA, Great Britain and China issued the Potsdam Declaration where they gave the Japanese the last chance to give up: “*We call upon the government of Japan to proclaim now the unconditional surrender of all the Japanese armed forces, and to provide proper and adequate assurances of their good faith in such action. The alternative for Japan is complete and utter destruction*” (Wheeler-Bennett, Nicholls, 1972, p.377-378). Neumann (1967) explains that Japan had rejected this declaration, and on August 6th happened what Truman called "the greatest thing in history", the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima.

The Potsdam Conference was the last of the Big Three conferences. The issues that had not been resolved were postponed to the peace conference or were to be resolved by the Council of the Foreign Ministers. At the end of the conference, the Allies issued a report on the outcome of this conference. Wheeler-Bennett and Nicholls (1972) state that while the report spoke of the conference as having strengthened the relations between the three governments and expanded their cooperation, neither the British nor the Americans were satisfied with the results. On the other side, Neumann (1967) argues that Truman was

returning home convinced that the Soviet Union would not have the same strength in the future as the USA. Stalin was returning to Moscow as even more confident leader since his Red Army controlled most of Germany.

“The Potsdam conference marked the end of the war-time alliance in Europe. Hostilities there had ceased but the peace settlement was still a long way off” (Wheeler-Bennett, Nicholls, 1972, p.343). Feis (1960) states the new map of Europe was more of a product than a plan. The product of the spheres of influence created by the spheres of power. Written agreements, statements or exchanges of views were not so important. *“The task of the Big Three attempted was like untying a terrible knot, almost beyond the ingenuity of man to untie”* (Neumann, 1967, p. xii).

Bruun and Lee (1964) explain that one reason for the failure to make peace quickly was the difficulty of getting agreement among the Allies during and after the war. The war objectives and the political situation changed very quickly after victory had been reached. The peace-making was a long-drawn-out process which never quite ended but turned into the cold war between the Soviet Union and its wartime allies.

Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to analyse the World War II conferences, whose main tasks had been to restore peace in the world. These conferences brought together the representatives of the so-called anti-Hitler coalition - the USA, Great Britain and the Soviet Union, the world powers that despite considerable differences in ideologies had united to defeat their common enemy - Hitler. Their task was not easy. At the conferences, the Big Three discussed not only military operations, but also how to prevent a similar situation from happening again in the future. However, this was only possible if they would have overcome differences of opinion, which often seemed unsurpassed during the negotiations. Therefore, the first part of the thesis analysed the formation of this anti-Hitler coalition. Roosevelt and Churchill had been in touch since the beginning of the war because the US president needed to be informed about what was happening in Europe. Later, the two leaders even signed the Atlantic Charter, where they defined further cooperation. Their third partner Stalin joined them later. This section points out that interest of the Soviet Union, which later became part of the anti-Hitler coalition, had been different at the beginning of the war. The Soviet Union first signed a pact with Germany, where they divided their spheres of influence and agreed not to aid third parties in the event of war. What Stalin did not expect was that one-day Hitler would betray him and Germany would attack the Soviet Union. After “Operation Barbarossa”, Stalin had no other choice but to accept help from the Western Allies, the world powers that believed in a completely different ideology. This part of the thesis proved that this coalition had not been formed because its members had common military goals and interests since the beginning of the war, but this coalition had been formed purely because the enemy had appeared on the horizon, which they had to defeat together and therefore the conferences had been often accompanied by disagreements and diverging views between the Soviet Union and its Western allies.

The second chapter of this thesis focused on bilateral conferences between the USA and Great Britain, we described the agenda and the outcomes of the Casablanca, Trident and Quadrant conference. We also pointed out that Stalin criticized the results of these conferences, even when he had not attended the negotiations. His priority had been the opening of a second front, but the Allies decided to postpone this military operation. Roosevelt considered meeting with Stalin as one of his priorities as he felt the need to establish better relations for effective cooperation. The most important outcome of the Casablanca conference was the announcement of the so-called unconditional surrender of

Germany and Italy by which Stalin's Allies wanted to prove that Great Britain and the USA were determined to fight till the end. However, many critics considered this step negative, arguing that this statement had strengthened Germany's will to fight. The second part of this chapter dealt with the less substantial conferences in Washington and Quebec, which had been again attended only by Churchill and Roosevelt. The Allies had been already discussing the post-war division of Germany, but it was just an introduction to this issue.

The third part of this thesis focused on the meetings of the Big Three, which had been crucial for establishing peace in the world. We described and thoroughly analysed the conferences in Tehran, Yalta and Potsdam. Roosevelt's wish came true, and he finally met Stalin. The work pointed out that American president had been trying to gain Stalin's trust. Their different ideologies and views, however, emerged right on the question of German reparations, where it was clear to both allies that Stalin's craving for destroying the Germans was much bigger than that of his companions. Roosevelt's motive for improving relations with Stalin had been not only good post-war cooperation, but also the fact that he needed Stalin to help him fight Japan. He promised him so, but it was questionable whether he would keep his promise, as Stalin could not be fully trusted. At the end of the Tehran Conference, the Allies issued a statement describing their relationship as “friendly”. The next conference in Yalta was the second meeting held in Russia, and this also showed Stalin's partial supremacy over his allies. Roosevelt and Churchill had already noticed at the beginning of the conference that Stalin was ready to divide the spheres of influence in Europe. And this was clear not only at the conference, but also in the world, as the way the Russians fought and occupied the individual territories might already have indicated that Stalin's sphere of influence would enormously expand in the future. The divergent views of the Allies emerged mainly in dealing with Poland, its government and borders, the issues that had been very difficult to discuss with Stalin, who had not intended to make any concessions. The last conference was the Potsdam Conference, that had been crucial for the future organization of the world. However, the Big Three has changed as Roosevelt had died and was replaced by Truman and Churchill was replaced by Clement Atlee during the negotiations. The war in Europe was over and the Allies had been dealing with the question of post-war Germany, western Polish borders or the Soviet attack on Japan. Some issues had not been resolved and had been postponed to the peace conference that was never going to happen.

This thesis focused on the analysis of the allies' differing views on specific issues, the outcomes of the conferences, and ultimately examined the role of the Big Three, which

historians rate as unsuccessful. When the Allies had defeated the only thing they had in common, their paths immediately split. The work describes peacemakers as normal politicians who tried to do their best within the framework of their ideologies but as it turned out later, the differences in these ideologies were insurmountable.

Although the war ended in 1945, peace as such did not last long, since the conferences had already found disagreements that had never been resolved, but later caused the Cold War between the Soviet communism and western capitalism.

Resumé

Po skončení druhej svetovej vojny došlo vo svete k výrazným zmenám, na ktorých sa podieľali zástupcovia najväčších svetových mocností – USA, Sovietskeho zväzu a Veľkej Británie. Tieto svetové veľmoci vytvorili počas vojny tzv. protihitlerovskú koalíciu, v ktorej sa aj napriek značným rozdielom v ideológiách spojili v snahe poraziť spoločného nepriateľa – Hitlera. Zástupcovia týchto krajín sa v priebehu vojny stretávali na konferenciách, kde rokovali o spoločných postupoch vo vojne. Cieľom práce je analyzovať tieto konferencie, ich priebeh, výsledky a taktiež poukázať na rozdielne záujmy vyplývajúce z odlišných národných hodnôt predstaviteľov tzv. Veľkej trojky, v ktorých bolo občas veľmi ťažké nájsť konsenzus.

Pri vypracovávaní práce sme použili analytickú metódu. Najvýznamnejšie knižné publikácie použité v tejto práci napísali britskí a americkí autori - Herbert Feis, John W. Wheeler-Bennett, Anthony Nicholls, William L. Neumann, John Keegan, Geoffrey Bruun, Dwight E. Lee, J. Lyons, E. Lehrman, W. Churchill a i.

Prvá kapitola práce sa zaoberá formovaním protihitlerovskej koalície. Zástupcovia USA a Británie boli už od začiatku vojny vo veľmi úzkom kontakte, keďže americký prezident potreboval byť informovaný o dianí v Európe. V roku 1941 dokonca podpísaním Atlantickej charty definovali bližšiu spoluprácu a zaviazali sa, že budú robiť všetko preto, aby okupované štáty získali naspäť svoju slobodu. Ich tretí partner Stalin si najprv zvolil inú cestu. Podpísaním paktu s Nemeckom si spolu s Hitlerom rozdelili sféry vplyvu v Európe a dohodli sa, že v prípade vojny neposkytnú pomoc tretej strane. Avšak, sovietsky diktátor nečakal, že ho jeho spojenec v budúcnosti zradí a zaútočí na Sovietsky zväz. Po tomto útoku už Stalin nemal na výber a v snahe zachrániť svoju krajinu musel akceptovať pomoc, ktorú mu ponúkali západné veľmoci. Tie pochopili, že čelia väčšiemu nepriateľovi, ako je sovietsky komunizmus a za účelom porážky tohto nepriateľa im ostávalo už len jediné – spojiť svoje sily. Roosevelt chcel na začiatku vojny USA od tohto konfliktu dištancovať, avšak po útoku Japonska na americkú základňu Pearl Harbor začali Spojené štáty americké vo vojne aktívne participovať.

Prvá časť druhej kapitoly analyzuje bilaterálne konferencie, ktorých sa zúčastnil britský premiér W. Churchill a americký prezident F. Roosevelt. Jednou z Rooseveltových priorít bolo stretnutie so Stalinom, kde by utužil americko-sovietske vzťahy pre potreby lepšej spolupráce, avšak na toto stretnutie si musel počkať, keďže Sovietsky diktátor

odmietol účasť na prvej najvýznamnejšej konferencii v Casablance, ktorá sa uskutočnila v máji v roku 1943. Najväčším prekvapením na tejto konferencii bolo Rooseveltove vyhlásenie bezpodmienečnej kapitulácie Nemecka a Talianska. Druhá časť tejto kapitoly rozoberá menej podstatné konferencie počnúc tou vo Washingtone, kde Churchill s Rooseveltom diskutovali najmä o otvorení druhého frontu. Dospeli k záveru, že k tejto operácii dôjde najskôr až na jar v roku 1944. Stalin bol s týmto rozhodnutím nespokojný, dokonca to považoval za nedodržanie dohody, ktorú so západnými spojencami uzavrel. Na istú chvíľu prestal so spojencami komunikovať. Medzitým došlo k jednému z najväčších úspechov spojencov vo vojne, ku kapitulácii Talianska. Po konferencii vo Washingtone spojenci pricestovali do Quebecu, kde rozoberali otázku povojnového rozdelenia Nemecka. Roosevelt tvrdil, že chápe nemeckú mentalitu a odprezentoval svoj návrh rozdelenia Nemecka na viacero častí a elimináciu zbrojného priemyslu.

Tretia kapitola práce sa už zaoberá konferenciami Veľkej trojky, tj. Stalina, Roosevelta a Churchilla, ktorí sa prvýkrát stretli v Teheráne. Roosevelt už od začiatku konferencie vítal Stalina ako nového člena „rodiny“. Spojenci sa tu dohodli na presnom termíne vylodenia v Normandii, ktorý sa mal uskutočniť 1. júna 1944. Diskutovali taktiež o povojnových hraniciach a povojnovom rozdelení Nemecka, avšak v týchto bodoch sa nezhodli. Stalin požadoval, aby Nemci boli promptne potrestaní, tvrdiac, že je potrebné zabiť aspoň 50 000 nemeckých dôstojníkov. Churchill mu oponoval tým, že radšej sa zabije sám ako by mal súhlasiť s týmto krutým návrhom. Taktiež sa spojenci už podrobnejšie zaoberali vytvorením medzinárodnej organizácie, či otázkou Poľska, jeho vlády a hraníc. Stalin americkému prezidentovi sľúbil, že po tom, ako sa vojna v Európe skončí, Sovietsky zväz pomôže USA v boji proti Japonsku. V závere konferencie spojenci vydali Deklaráciu troch mocností, kde charakterizovali svoj vzťah ako „priateľský“.

Po konferencii v Teheráne sa Veľká trojka stretla v Jalte, na Kryme. Táto konferencia bola už v poradí druhou, ktorá sa uskutočnila na ruskej pôde. Hlavnými bodmi tejto konferencie bolo zničenie a následné rozdelenie Nemecka. Churchill hájil záujmy Francúzov a požadoval, aby určitá časť povojnového Nemecka bola zverená do rúk Francúzom. Argumentoval to tým, že v tejto vojne trpeli dosť a zaslúžia si podiel z okupovaného Nemecka. Spojenci nakoniec podporili tento návrh a rozhodli sa, že Nemecko bude rozdelené na okupačné zóny, ktoré budú spravovať víťazné mocnosti. Stalin sa zaujímal najmä o otázku reparácií, pričom požadoval celkové oslabenie nemeckého priemyslu a odstránenie toho zbrojného. Spojenci podpísali tajný protokol o reparáciách,

v ktorom definovali, že Nemecko bude platiť reparácie mocnostiam, ktoré vo vojne utrpeli najväčšie straty a podieľali sa na víťazstve. Ďalšou otázkou, ktorou sa Veľká trojka zaoberala, bola poľská východná hranica a vláda. V tejto záležitosti bol Stalin nekompromisný, keďže išlo o sovietsko-poľskú hranicu. Spojenci nakoniec akceptovali jeho návrh a súhlasili s tým, že poľská východná hranica bude tvorená Curzonovou líniou. Toto rozhodnutie neskôr viacerí kritici označili ako osudovú chybu Roosevelta a Churchilla. V prípade poľskej vlády bolo rozhodnuté, že Poľsku bude vládnuť Dočasná poľská vláda národnej jednoty, ktorá mala fungovať na demokratickom princípe. Veľká trojka sa dohodla, že nová medzinárodná organizácia, ktorej cieľom bude dlhodobé zabezpečenie mieru ponesie názov Organizácia Spojených národov. Spojenci taktiež podpísali Deklaráciu o oslobodzovaní Európy, ktorou sa zaviazali, že vo všetkých oslobodených krajinách budú zorganizované voľby na demokratickom princípe.

Posledná časť tejto kapitoly podrobne rozoberá konferenciu v Postupime, ako jednu z kľúčových, keďže vojna v Európe sa skončila a množstvo otázok zostalo nevyriešených. Zostava Veľkej trojky sa avšak zmenila, keďže po Rooseveltovej smrti sa novým prezidentom stal Truman a britský premiér Churchill bol počas rokovaní nahradeným labouristom Clementom Atleem. Veľká trojka hneď na začiatku konferencie zriadila Radu ministrov zahraničných vecí, ktorá mala pripraviť mierové zmluvy s porazenými štátmi. Najdôležitejšou bola otázka Nemecka. Spojenci museli podniknúť kroky, aby Nemecko oslabili, avšak nie natoľko, aby sa životný štandard obyvateľov znížil pod priemernú životnú úroveň európskych krajín. Spojenci sa dohodli na demilitarizácii, denacifikácii, potrestaní vojnových zločincov a odstránení nacistických prvkov zo všetkých úrovní spoločnosti. V otázke reparácii dospela Veľká trojka k záveru, že každá víťazná mocnosť si bude brať reparácie z vlastnej okupačnej zóny. Spojenci sa taktiež dohodli, že v Poľsku bude dočasná vláda rozpustená a zorganizujú sa tu slobodné voľby, ktorých sa budú môcť zúčastniť len demokratické strany. Otázka západnej poľskej hranice bola veľmi komplikovaná a preto sa mala riešiť až na mierovej konferencii, ktorá sa avšak nikdy neuskutočnila. Veľká trojka taktiež rozoberala postup Sovietskeho zväzu vo vojne proti Japonsku, pričom Stalin sľúbil, že do polovice augusta zaháji útok. Čo ale netušil, bolo, že tento útok nebude potrebný, keďže USA už vtedy vlastnili jednu z najničivejších zbraní ľudstva – atómovú bombu. Na konci konferencie Spojenci vyhlásili bezpodmienečnú kapituláciu Japonska. Avšak Japonsko sa nevzdalo, a vojna vo svete sa skončila až po tom, čo USA zhodili atómové bomby na japonské mestá Hirošimu a Nagasaki.

Práca v závere poukazuje na to, že hneď po tom, ako Spojenci porazili spoločného nepriateľa, ich cesty sa rozišli. Rozdielne názory a nezhody medzi západnými krajinami a Sovietskym zväzom, ktoré sa ukázali už na konferenciách neboli nikdy doriešené a o pár rokov vyústili do Studenej vojny.

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