

Stalin's Message of Peace (February 18, 1951)

Abstract

On February 17, 1951, Stalin gave an interview to *Pravda*, the official newspaper of the USSR's Communist Party, in which he insisted on the Soviet Union's "peaceful politics" and strongly criticized British Prime Minister Attlee. The interview was given on the eve of Soviet regional elections, and four days before the Berlin meeting of the World Peace Council, a Soviet-sponsored organization that emerged out of the Soviet policy of promoting peace campaigns around the world to oppose American "warmongering." The interview was given breathless positive coverage in the Soviet-controlled press for nearly a week (like this article in *Neues Deutschland*), and drew criticism from the British Foreign Office, which said that it was "a typical example of the Soviet desire to exploit the natural desire for peace." The Soviet Union's sponsorship of and involvement in the peace movement was a centerpiece of their foreign policy by the 1950s; they sponsored organizations like the World Peace Council in an attempt to brand the Soviet Union as peace-loving and the United States and their allies (like the United Kingdom) as warmongers.

Source

Today, as humanity finds itself in an extremely serious situation and faces the question of war or peace, Stalin, the wise leader of the forces for world peace, has seized the moment to speak. In his clear and forceful language, comprehensible to everyone, he exposes the root causes of the danger of world war and, at the same time, shows how humanity can avert this imminent danger. The world knows from experience that it should set great store in such statements by Stalin, which he has elaborated with scientific precision and certainty, invariably foreseeing and predicting the course of events. It is therefore only natural that the world should heed his words, that millions upon millions in all countries and continents should follow his remarks with passionate interest, and that they should discuss what conclusions every individual and all peoples should draw from them.

There can be no more convincing demonstration of the Soviet Union's love of peace than Stalin's description of the country's peaceful reconstruction activities, which require all the resources and efforts of the Soviet Union. And is it not the height of hypocrisy when British Prime Minister Attlee of the Labour Party attempts to justify the insane procurement of armaments by Great Britain and the US with the lie that the Soviet Union supposedly has not demobilized its troops after the war, but has instead continued to increase the size of its armed forces? There has been sufficient testimony, even from overtly anti-Soviet bourgeois correspondents, corroborating that the Soviet Union has reduced its army to normal peacetime levels and that it has not taken similar measures to those of the imperialist states, despite the steady increase in the size of their armed forces, their mad threats, and their arms buildup.

Numbers speak for themselves. The military budget of the US is currently 49 times greater than before the war, while the defense budget of England is 3.5 times greater. The share of military expenditures in the overall budget of the Soviet government currently stands at only 18.5 percent as opposed to 33 percent in 1940. By contrast, 75 percent of the American budget is allocated for military purposes, with the fantastic sum of 140 billion dollars to be spent on armaments over the next two years. Similarly, the British Labour government has increased military expenditures by 4.7 billion pounds over the next three years. Attlee and Truman need to lie about the Soviet Union, as such deceit enables them to drag their peoples into a new world war.

These lies are most abhorrent coming from the mouth of Attlee, who calls himself a Labour leader. He

knows very well that the peace-loving English people, especially the English working class, do not want war or an insane arms build-up, and will resist the Anglo-American drive towards war. He believes that through the use of lies and slander against the Soviet Union he can justify the American war policy to the English people, although it is contrary to the national interests of England. In point of fact, if Attlee were a supporter of peace, as he hypocritically claims to be, why has his government consistently rejected all Soviet proposals directed toward general disarmament and peaceful cooperation since 1946? Why, then, did he reject the proposals of the Soviet Union, China, and India for a peaceful settlement of the Korean conflict and instead side with the United States?

It is precisely the stance taken by governments with regard to the American-led war of aggression in the Far East that currently serves as the criterion as to whether they are peace-loving or not.

Based on incontrovertible historical experience, Stalin has insight into the power of the people. They cannot be intimidated by aggression or threat. Hence, his clear, unmistakable conclusion:

“If England and the United States of America definitively decline the proposals of the People’s Government of China for peace, then the war in Korea can only end in the defeat of the interventionists.” The world will recall that Stalin, with the same certainty, predicted the defeat of Hitler’s army at a time when Hitler and his generals were still in the throes of their first blitzkrieg successes. Today, Truman and Attlee rely on tanks, squadrons of planes, bombs and wonder weapons, just as Hitler did. But warfare also depends upon people. A predatory war, an unjust war, or a war of aggression can only end with the defeat of the aggressors, and this defeat will be delivered by the people.

The same soldiers of the United States and Great Britain, who fought both well and with conviction in the war against Hitler’s Germany and militaristic Japan, perceive wars of aggression, such as those against Korea and China, to be extremely unjust. For this reason alone, the defeat of aggressors and interventionists, wherever they may engage in conflict, is sealed.

Nor can British and American imperialism succeed in wrapping their plans of aggression in a mantle of justice and legitimacy by transforming the United Nations, created as a bulwark for the preservation of peace, into an instrument of war, indeed, into an instrument to unleash a new world war.

With a strong sense of confidence in the people’s power to promote peace, Stalin expresses the conviction that world peace can be maintained, despite all the machinations by the forces of aggression. Despite the threatening situation, he does not consider a new world war as inevitable, in contrast to the warmongers who would rather start it today than tomorrow. “At least at present, it cannot be considered inevitable,” said Stalin, responding to the *Pravda* correspondent in his interview. He then proceeded to indicate the path to be followed so that the peoples of the world can secure peace. “Peace will be kept and consolidated if the people take the cause of preserving peace into their own hands and defend it to the utmost. War may become inevitable if the warmongers succeed in trapping the masses with their lies, in deceiving them, and drawing them into a new world war. Therefore, a broad campaign for peace as a means of exposing the criminal machinations of the warmongers is now of prime importance.”

This unmasking of the warmongers’ criminal machinations and their deceptive lies is making progress day by day. The result is a growing resistance on the part of the masses against a war that is sought and prepared for by such aggressors. Consequently, these aggressive forces and their reactionary governments fear their own people, who do not desire a new war and who are increasingly prepared to fight for the preservation of peace. The warmongers must resort to ever new, ingenious methods of misleading the people and lulling their vigilance to sleep. In all capitalist countries, those who champion the idea of peace as well as their followers are increasingly being terrorized. This shows that the deceptive maneuvers of the warmongers are increasingly falling short of the mark.

The German people bears a very special responsibility for the defense of peace and has a particularly great task. Today, West Germany is the center of imperialist war preparations in Europe. If Eisenhower's plans are crushed there by the German people, there will be no war in Europe. The struggle of the German people against the establishment of a West German mercenary army, in any shape or form, as well as the striving of the German people to secure the unity of Germany and a just peace treaty, is, at one and the same time, a struggle to secure world peace. "There can be no doubt that the existence of a peace-loving democratic Germany side by side with the existence of the peace-loving Soviet Union excludes the possibility of new wars in Europe, puts an end to bloodshed in Europe, and has made it impossible for world imperialists to enslave the countries of Europe, thereby guaranteeing her lasting peace" (Stalin in his congratulatory telegram on the founding of the German Democratic Republic, October 13, 1949).

Over the next few days, the capital of Germany will have the honor of welcoming the World Peace Council. It has decided to meet in Berlin in recognition of the fact that a peaceful resolution of the German question and the prevention of a resurgence of German imperialism and militarism are of vital importance for the peoples of Europe and for peace.

Stalin has issued an urgent admonition to the people: They must take the cause of maintaining peace into their own hands and defend it to the utmost degree. They must organize a broad campaign for peace as a means to expose the criminal machinations of the warmongers. These actions will prompt those struggling for peace throughout the world, including those in Germany, to make the ultimate effort to mobilize all the nations within the global peace camp and inspire the World Peace Council to solve the great tasks it faces. As such, all nations and peoples can be sure that the great Soviet Union will continue both with its forthright policy of peace under Stalin's leadership at the head of the world's forces for peace and in its efforts to maintain peace and support all peoples against imperialist aggression.

Since its very founding, the Soviet Union has proven a thousand times over that the words with which Stalin concluded his interview with the correspondent from *Pravda* precisely depict the unshakable foundation of the Soviet Union's foreign policy: "As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, it will unswervingly continue to pursue a policy of preventing war and preserving peace."

Source of original German text: Gg. Kr., "Stalins Friedensbotschaft," *Neues Deutschland*, 6 (62), no. 41, February 18, 1951, pp. 1–2.

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Recommended Citation: Stalin's Message of Peace (February 18, 1951), published in: German History in Documents and Images, <<https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/occupation-and-the-emergence-of-two-states-1945-1961/ghdi:document-5221>> [July 08, 2025].