

## **BALKAN CONFLICT DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR**

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Since the autumn of 1940 dramatically escalated the fight imperialist powers in the Balkans. As Hitler bloc states as well as Britain gave exceptional importance to establishing its dominance in this part of Europe.

Nazi Germany regarded the Balkans as a base for war preparation against the USSR. Capturing Norway and Denmark and Finland making ally, Germany blocked the USSR from the northwest. Mastering the Balkan Peninsula was to ensure the southern flank of the German fascist troops. There was supposed to focus a large group of German army, which caused the blow through Ukraine towards the Caucasus. In addition, the Balkan countries have been the most important raw material for Germany and food base.

Balkan peninsula was regarded by the Nazis as a springboard for the implementation of plans for further expansion of the armed. From the Balkans Germany could fight against the armed forces of Britain and its allies in the Mediterranean, the Middle East and North Africa, to penetrate into Asia and Africa. Capture peninsula gave the Germans the opportunity to place on it its military and naval bases *vozushnye* and establish control over the central and eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea by preventing oil supplies to England from the Middle East.

Balkan peninsula was important for England, as it covered the British possessions in the Middle East. In addition, the authorities of Britain counted hoped to use human resources of Balkan peninsula and open on one of the fronts of the war with Germany.

In the fight for the Balkans during the second half of 1940 - beginning of 1941 Germany has had some success. Accession of Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria to the Tripartite Pact significantly strengthened its influence in the Balkans. But the position of major Balkan states like Yugoslavia and Turkey, was still uncertain. The governments of these countries are not affiliated with any one nor to the other group. Greece was also under British influence. The battle between the imperialist coalitions in the Balkans was for Yugoslavia, Greece and subordinate Turkey to its policy of domination.

As soon as the Italy-Greek War, England has taken attempts to put together the Balkans anti German bloc comprising Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia. However, the implementation of this plan encounters many difficulties. Turkey not only

refused to join in the anti-Hitler bloc, but also from its obligations under the Anglo-Franco-Turkish treaty of October 19, 1939 in Ankara. Held from 13 to 25 January 1941 Anglo-Turkish staff talks demonstrated the futility of attempts to bring England to Turkey real assistance to Greece. The authorities of Yugoslavia, even though refrained from joining the Tripartite Pact, but was not going to actively oppose against them.

England believed that could gain a foothold in the Balkans from the confrontation of Soviet and German interests. The British government hoped that this clash could escalate into armed conflict between the USSR and the "Third Reich" and thereby divert attention from the Nazi leadership of the Balkan Peninsula.

British policy had growing U.S. support in the Balkans. In the second half of January, Roosevelt's personal representative, a senior U.S. intelligence Colonel U. Donovan with a special mission arrived to the Balkans. He visited Athens, Istanbul, Sofia and Belgrade, urging governments of the Balkan states to adopt policies favorable to the United States and England [1, 180]. In February and March, American diplomacy is not the pressure on the Balkan countries, especially Turkey and Yugoslavia, achieving its main goal - to prevent the strengthening of positions of Nazi Germany and its allies. Governments Balkan states sent notes, memoranda, personal messages, etc. President All these activities are coordinated with the British government.

In February 1941 the British Foreign Secretary A. Iden and Chief of the Imperial General Staff D. Dill moved to the Middle East and Greece with a special mission. After consultation with the British command in the eastern Mediterranean, they arrived in Athens, where the February 22 agreement with the Greek government about the upcoming landing here the British Expeditionary Force. This agreement is in line with the plans of the British Defense Committee, according to which the Balkans gained while crucial. But the attempts of British diplomacy to win over Yugoslavia were not successful [2, 408-410].

Italian aggression against Greece, and then it's a bad outcome for Italy created a new situation in the Balkans. It served as a pretext for Germany revitalize its policy in this area. Furthermore, Hitler rushed to take advantage of situation has arisen that under the guise of helping the defeated ally rather to gain a foothold on the Balkan beachhead.

Performances of the Yugoslav people in early 1941 against the treacherous policy of Cvetkovic's government, promote the expansion of Hitler's aggression caused deep sympathy of the Soviet people and the anti-fascist forces worldwide. There was a great response to these statements, the Balkan countries and in Nazi-occupied countries of Europe.

Learning about the events on March 27, the fascist leaders decided to accelerate the implementation of its plans in the Balkans and to pass on the methods of political pressure to open aggression against Yugoslavia.

The Simovic's government that came to power did not undertake any methods to resolve the acute national problem, democratization of political life in the country. The next day, after coming to power Simovic banned anti-fascist demonstration, the amnesty of political prisoners was not carried out until the end, in Croatia it did not extend to the Communists.

People of Yugoslavia always seen friendship with the Soviet Union as guarantee to ensure the independence of their country and demanded an alliance with it. Given the mood of the masses, as well as wanting to get the support of the USSR and Yugoslavia to strengthen the position in the international arena, Simovic asked the Soviet government to conclude an agreement between the two countries. April 5, 1941 in Moscow signed the "Treaty of friendship and non-aggression between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia".

In June 1941, shortly after the German invasion of the Soviet Union Russian bureau chief in Yugoslavia Major-General M. Skorodumov suggested the German occupation authorities to form a Russian division and send it to the Eastern Front, but was refused. Later, in connection with the need to ensure the safety of emigrant families in conditions in Serbia waged guerrilla warfare, General Skorodumov made a proposal on the organization of the emigrants police squad to fight the guerrillas, Germans gave an agreement for that. However, September 12 Skorodumov unexpectedly announced the formation of separate housing for Russian Front and the mobilization of all conscripts aged 18 to 55 years.

This initiative was not approved by the German authorities, and already 14 September Skorodumov was arrested by the Gestapo. Nevertheless, under the patronage of the local military command corps was formed, but was renamed in Russian and subordinate to a security group in the administrative and economically Chief Commissioner for Trade and Industry in Serbia Gruppenfuehrer (General of SS troops in Nazi Germany) S. Neuhausen. Corps commander was appointed Lieutenant-General B. Shteyfon.

The main contingent of housing totaled officers, soldiers and Cossacks Russian Army Lieutenant General P. Wrangel Island, settled in 1921-1922. Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Approximately 10 percent of the total number of volunteers was Russian youth, who grew up far from their homeland. In total, during the war passed through the Russian housing more than 17 thousand people.

By November 1941 the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment of Russian security group was finally formed after November 19, the show moved from Belgrade to Loznica; 2<sup>nd</sup> Regiment was formed in January 1942, and the third - mainly due to the contingent arrived from

Bulgaria - to May. April 29, 1942 began the formation of the 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment. November 30, 1942 by the special order of the German command Russian security group has been incorporated into the Wehrmacht with the renaming of Russian protective housing.

Originally, training of personnel of the produced statutes of the Russian Imperial Army, but soon due to changes in combat tactics had to go to the statutes of the Red Army. With the inclusion of housing in the German Wehrmacht were introduced statutes. Command staff prepared in the 1st Russian Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich Cadet Corps. In addition, the shelves were cadet company, which has been kept in the youth who have not completed military training.

The main task was to protect the housing mines, railways and other military and commercial facilities. Operationally shelves subordinated directly to the heads of the compounds were responsible for a certain area 1 and 2 shelves - 704<sup>th</sup> German Infantry Division and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment - 1<sup>st</sup> Bulgarian occupation corps.

Companies and battalions carried garrison guarding the cities and railway lines being scattered blockhouses (bunkers). Regimental headquarters were stationed away from their offices, and the last is actually not been subordinated to them.

Since the beginning of 1944 the housing restrained offensive partisans I.Tito almost throughout Serbo-Croatian border, and in the fall with the individual parts of the German offensive reflect supported Yugoslav partisans Soviet troops of the 57th Army, incurring heavy losses. During these battles of individual battalions and corps were created fully operational regiments under the command of Russian - 1<sup>st</sup> Cossack, 4 and 5 (Consolidated).

Germany surrenders body caught in Slovenia. Colonel A.Rogozhin, who replaced the deceased April 30, 1945 B.Shteyfona, said that never surrendered weapons to Titoites or Soviet representatives and will make its way to the British. Within four days, the housing units were able to separately break into Austria, where on May 12 in Klagenfurt area surrendered to British forces. By this time in the Russian part of the housing had 4.5 thousand people [3, 416].

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