

Reflections

THE RIBBENTROP - MOLOTOV PACT OF AUGUST 23, 1939



J. von Ribbentrop, J. Stalin and V. Molotov after signing the Nazi-Soviet Non-aggression Pact in Kremlin, Moscow, August 23, 1939 (Wikipedia)

The **Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact** is the **informal name** of the treaty **signed by German foreign minister Joachim von Ribbentrop and Soviet foreign minister Vyacheslav Molotov.**

Officially its name was the **Treaty of Non-aggression between the German Third Reich and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)**, signed late that August 23rd evening in Moscow, and it constituted **the most important secret arrangement leading to the start of World War II**, a war which **claimed between 50 and 80 million lives** (including those brutally murdered by both signatories).

In addition to the statement of non-aggression, **the treaty included a secret protocol**, which was not known for a long time and divided **Central and Eastern Europe** into two *zones of influence* - Soviet and Nazi German zones. It divided the territories of **Poland, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland.**

As an **immediate result** of this treaty, **Germany invaded Poland** from three directions (west, north and south) on September 1, 1939. After the Soviet-Japanese ceasefire, which started on September 16, **the Soviet Union invaded Poland** (from the east) on September 17.

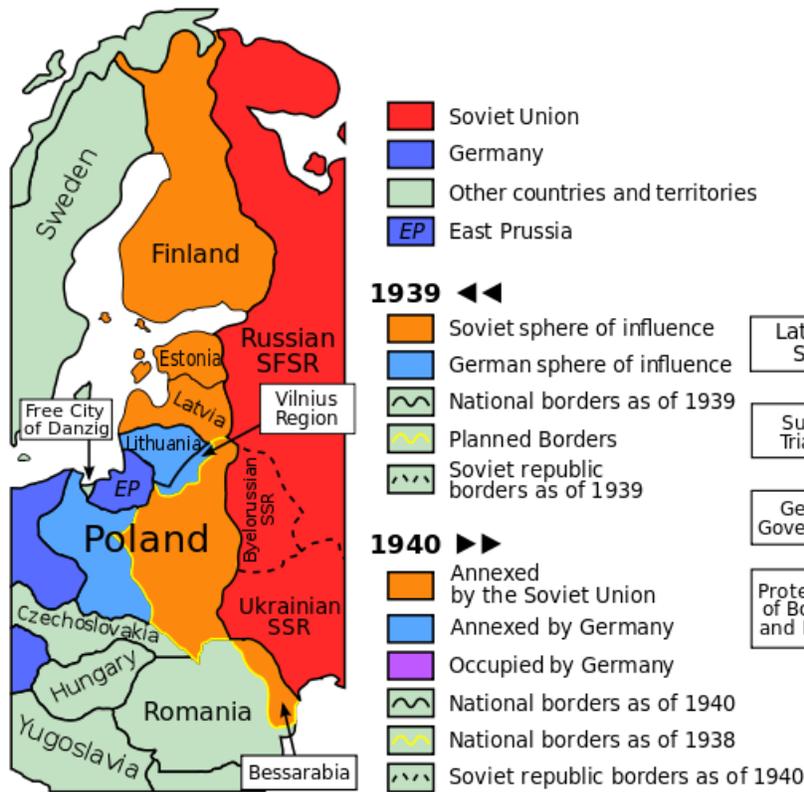
On November 30, **Soviet troops attacked Finland along its entire eastern border** starting the bloody Winter War of 1939-1940.

The Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact brought to an end the Europe that had taken shape after the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. It had a **direct impact on the Second World War, the division of Europe, and the subsequent Cold War.**

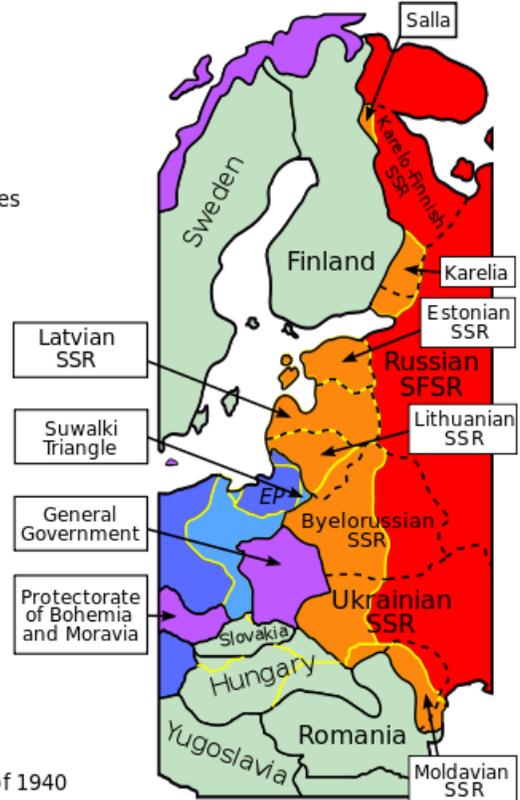
The **new conflict in Ukraine** is a chilling reminder that **Putin's Russia follows in the footsteps of the USSR.** It makes use of **manipulation and brutal force, to reconstitute the Evil Empire.**

Every year on August 23, Canada observes the Black Ribbon Day to commemorate the victims of Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia, two nakedly totalitarian regimes.

Planned division of Central Europe according to Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact



Actual territorial changes 1939-1940



Planned and actual changes of territories in 1939 - 1940 - time frame (Wikipedia)