

## **Partisan Movement**

During the Great Patriotic War more than 1 million armed partisans (more than 6 thousand two hundred partisan detachments) fought in the temporarily occupied territories; a large number of Soviet people participated in underground anti-fascist organizations provided assistance to the partisans.

The central headquarters of the partisan movement was established on May 30, 1942. Since the spring of 1943, the actions of the partisans began to be coordinated with the offensive operations of the Red Army.



### **Reasons for Emergence of Partisan Movement**

The Germans tried to implement their OST plan, according to which:

- All residents of the European part of the Soviet Union had to move beyond the Urals. 14 million German citizens were supposed to settle on the liberated territory.
- The population who found themselves in the territories occupied by the Germans was subject to economic exploitation, and physically strong people were subject to being sent to Germany to work in concentration camps.
- Economic collection from villages. In the occupied territories the Germans established for each village their own rate of "tax" in the form of the number of products that this village should hand over monthly in favor of Germany.

- Mass extermination of all Soviet prisoners of war and carrying out terror against the civilian population in order to intimidate them in order to keep them under control.

During the war the partisans organized more than 20 thousand wrecks of enemy trains, undermined 58 armored trains, destroyed more than 10 thousand steam locomotives and 110 thousand cars, blew up or burned more than 12 thousand railway and highway bridges, destroyed more than 65 thousand cars and hundreds of thousands of tons of fuel, undermined or damaged more than 2300 tanks and armored vehicles, shot down and destroyed more than 1100 aircraft at airfields, destructed more than 17 thousand km of communication lines.



The partisans disrupted the activities of the occupiers to export food, raw materials and equipment, timber, etc.from the Soviet territories. The German-Fascist commanders were forced to deploy a significant number of troops in the occupied territory. Since the middle of 1942, up to 10% of the German ground troops stationed on the Soviet-German front were diverted to fight against the partisans. In 1943, the German commanders used about 25 divisions of the active army against the partisans (except for the police, SS and SD formations and 500 thousand soldiers of auxiliary units).



The partisans attacked enemy communications, attacked retreating Fascist units, saved and protected Soviet people from being hijacked to Germany, took measures to preserve cities and villages, cultural values and factories from looting and destruction.

### **Oath of Red Partisan**

I, a citizen of the Great Soviet Union, the faithful son of the heroic Russian people, swear that I will not let out of the hands weapons until the last fascist in our land will be destroyed.

I swear to perform orders of all my commanders and bosses, strictly observe military discipline.

For the burned cities and villages, for the death of women and children, for torture, violence and bullying over my people, I swear to revenge the enemy cruelly, mercilessly and tirelessly.

**Blood for blood! Death for death!**

If, in its weakness, cowardice or an evil will, I break this oath and the interests of the people, let me die a shameful death from the hand of my comrades.

The partisans took refuge in the forests. The safest places to live were dense, spruce or mixed forests: they hid well the fire from the campfires and completely blocked the dislocation sites from prying eyes. It was important to have a water reservoir near the site. At times, hiding from the German raids, the fighters had to constantly change their location and spend the night right under the open sky. In winter, in order not to freeze, they lay down directly on the campfires, throwing large spruce branches on top. Such a simple way helped the fighters to keep warm.

And in the summer, hiding from mosquitoes and heavy rains, the partisans built huts!

### **Headquarters Dugout**

One of the most impressive expositions of the museum "Steps of Memory" is the hall dedicated to the partisan movement during the Great Patriotic War. In the center of the complex there is a headquarters dugout.



A table made of boards, a large metal kettle, a tablet with a map of the offensive. Here the leadership of the partisan detachment held a meeting, planned sabotage, handed awards to the fighters. The red banner of the detachment with a hammer and sickle always hung on the wall, next to portraits of Lenin and Stalin.

As a rule, the headquarters dugouts had their own radio stations which we see in the exhibition. The dugouts were heated by a small cast-iron stove. It is unlikely that she could completely warm the room. On the tables there were aluminum bowls, mugs, which were very few, so they made do with bowls hollowed out of wood, and someone had soldiers' pots. Bunks of two floors were usually covered with straw. Winter clothing and shoes – boots and woolen boots called "valenki". Sometimes there was even a bathhouse in the detachment – but it

was very rare. The partisans usually washed themselves either in the snow or in a pond, and their clothes were treated for lice with smoke.



The detachment leader is dressed in a military uniform, the rest of the detachment members wore ordinary clothes.